

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES IN PERFORMANCE 20

Andrzej Dąbrówka

Theater and the Sacred in the Middle Ages



PETER LANG

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The book presents a theory of relationships between the forms of devotion and early drama genres. The historical background is the circumstances of the Church becoming independent of the Empire. A theological and philosophical aspect of the transformation of piety at the time was the specification of the ontological status of the sacred (spiritualization) and "shifting it to Heaven" (transcendentalization). In opposition to a theory of Western civilization as a process of increasing individual self-control, the author argues for the need to take into account purely religious conditions (the idea of recapitulation). This allows the author to develop a holistic aesthetics for the religiously inspired creativity in the period spanning the 11th-15th centuries and to propose a new typology of medieval drama.

The Author

Andrzej Dąbrówka is Professor at the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences. His writings and scholarly editions cover medieval literary theory, early drama and theater, theory of historiography, medieval chronicles, preaching, Netherlandic studies, literary medievalism, and digital humanities.

Theater and the Sacred in the Middle Ages

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Translated by Jan Burzyński and Mikołaj Golubiewski



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Part I. Literature and History

The role of literature as a witness to history has changed as radically as the assessment of this role. After the Middle Ages – this naïve phase, in which literary and historical texts were utterly indistinguishable – researchers and writers have increasingly tended toward a strict separation of literature from fact-based sources worthy of scientific research.

Still, the true beginning came from the opposite position: the point was not to exclude something from the scope of scientific interest to ensure the truthfulness of science, but it was to place scientific knowledge outside the realm of theology to protect the latter's independence and superiority. This view is still prevalent in the Middle Ages and manifests itself in the distinction between logic and metaphysics. Though attributed to William Ockham, the distinction itself developed during a long debate. The significant moment for its development was the year 1277, when the bishop of Paris condemned Averroists and banned Thomism, rather conventionally than for any substantial reason (see chapter 10.4).

The seed of systematic criticism of the text diffidently planted by Abelard flourished with the Humanists. The successive phases of expanding the source base (the Enlightenment and Positivism) have been interwoven with phases of doubt in the power of human reason (Baroque, Romanticism, Modernism) until the loss of illusions about the rules of scientific research and science's monopoly on rationality. After all, when Thomas S. Kuhn, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1968), finally described real science, not the ideal one,¹

1 Here, I summarize the results of analyses by the science theoretician, W. Stegmüller, included in his *Theorienstrukturen und Theoriendynamik* (Berlin 1973) and the textbook *Hauptströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie* (Stuttgart 1979). For a review of the history of relations between literature and history, see K. Heitmann, *Das Verhältnis von Dichtung und Geschichtsschreibung in älterer Theorie*, in: Haupt (ed.) 1985: 201–244; P. Zumthor, “Le Texte Médiéval et l’Histoire. Propositions Méthodologiques,” *Romanic Review* 1973, 64, pp. 5–15; from the viewpoint of literary genealogy: J. Knape, ‘*Historie*

many embarrassing things came to light. The very things which were earlier used to disqualify literature as a source of knowledge: that there are no impartial participants in science, that there are no observations independent of theory, and even that there is no way of reconciling differences between theories, which is why scientific revolutions take place through processes that are far from the rational, often affected by such mundane circumstances as some scholars losing their employment in favor of others.

Thus, there appeared evidence that science is just another cultural system – like religion, politics, art, literature and even language – subject to similar rules: innovations gain supporters due to the quest for novelty, for “religious conversions” (Thomas S. Kuhn’s expression; qtd. after Fuller 1992: 247, fn. 22), and persist by virtue of their incomparability with the old, their ability to reappear in ever new variants, and intensive propaganda, the promotion of faith. Not because the old solutions were worse, but because the number of their followers kept decreasing until they finally died out (Stegmüller 1979: 747). Max Planck went as far as to formulate the bitterly humorous law of “the displacement of theory through the extinction of its supporters” (Stegmüller 1979: 747).

Nowadays, we return to literature in search for evidence recognized by more recent theories, which cannot help but work despite doubt in the credibility of many, though not all, documents – even those written on exquisite parchment in most solemn Latin, embellished with tassels of most distinguished seals. Indeed, criticism did not spare the seals, too, which were exposed as little propaganda vessels.

Confronted with the old text in such conditions, we must constantly wonder: What allows us to understand it, what can and cannot be “learned from it,” what kind of knowledge does it provide? And, whether this knowledge was deliberately inserted in the text or accidentally slipped into it? Finally, can we reach it through cooperation with the author or by using special tools? To get a sense of the situation, let us listen to a story.

im Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit: Begriffs- und Gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen im interdisziplinären Kontext, Baden-Baden 1984; F. P. Knapp, “Historische Wahrheit und poetische Lüge. Die Gattungen weltlicher Epik,” *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift* 1980, 54, 581–635.

1. A Philological Exercise

1. According to the wolf best informed in the history we wish to recount, the fox initiated the quarrel and brought about disagreement. And it was

on a day at Whitsuntide
when trees and shrubbery alike
were dressed all over with green leaves.
Nobel the King had had
his court-day proclaimed everywhere,
which, he thought, – all being well –
would greatly increase his fame.
Then came to the king's court
all the animals, large and small,
except for Reynaert the fox alone.
He had behaved so badly at court
that he did not dare go.
Whoever is knowingly guilty, is afraid.
This was the case with Reynaert
and that is why he avoided the king's court
where his esteem was low.
When the entire court had gathered
there was nobody, except the badger,
who did not have some reason for complaining of
Reynaert, the scoundrel with the grey beard.
Now a charge is made against him.
Ysingrijn and his relatives
took up their positions before the king.
Ysingrijn began at once
and said: "My Lord King,
for the sake of your nobility and of your honour,
and for the sake of justice and of mercy,
take pity on the harm
inflicted upon me by Reynaert,
through whom I have often incurred
great humiliation and loss.
Take pity especially because
he has had his way with my wife
and has maltreated my children so badly
that, by pissing on them where they lay,
two of them lost their sight
and are now totally blind.

In addition, he later disgraced me.
It had by then come to such a pass
that a day had been appointed
when Reynaert should swear
his innocence in court. But as soon
as the relics were brought,
he changed his mind
and escaped us in his stronghold.
My lord, this is well known among the highest
of those who have come here to court.
Reynaert, that vicious animal,
has done me so much harm;
I am quite convinced:
if all the cloth now made in Ghent
were parchment, I should not have
enough to describe it all.
That is why I prefer to be silent about it,
but my wife's disgrace
must neither be overlooked,
nor not hushed up, nor remain without revenge.”
When Ysingrijn had spoken thus
a small dog stood up, called Cortoys,
and complained to the king in French
how a while ago it had been so poor
that it had had nothing left
one winter when there was a frost
except for one sausage
and that Reynaert, the scoundrel,
had stolen that very sausage from him.
Tybeert the cat was roused to fury.
This is how he began his speech
and he jumped into the middle of the circle
and he said: “My Lord King,
because you bear Reynaert ill will
there is no one here, young nor old,
or he has something to charge him with before you.
What Cortoys is complaining of now
happened many a year ago.
The sausage was mine, but I don't complain.
I had got hold of it craftily
when one night, looking for something to bag,
I went into a mill
where I stole the sausage
from a sleeping miller.

If Cortoys profited by it at all
this was entirely my doing.
It would only be right to dismiss
the complaint that Cortoys makes.”
Pancer the beaver spoke: “Do you think it right,
Tybeert, that the complaint should be dismissed?
Reynaert really is a murderer
and a cheat and a thief.
Also, there is nobody he likes so much,
not even my lord the king,
that he would not wish him to lose
life and honour if that might get him
a succulent bite of a chicken.
And a trap, what do you say of that?
Did he not yesterday, in broad daylight,
perpetrate one of the worst crimes
ever committed by any animal
against Cuwaert the hare, standing here?
For at a time when the king’s peace
and safe conduct have been proclaimed,
he promised to teach him the creed
and to make him chaplain.
Then he made him sit
tightly between his legs.
Together they began
to practice spelling and reading
and to sing the creed loudly.
It so happened that at this moment
I passed that place.
Then I heard them singing together
and went in that direction,
at a great speed.
Then I found master Reynaert there
who had finished
his earlier lesson
and was up to his old tricks
and he had Cuwaert by the throat
and would have bitten his head off
if I had not accidentally
come to his aid at that moment.
See here the fresh wounds
as evidence, lord king,
which Cuwaert sustained by his doing.
If you leave unpunished in this way

the disturbance of your peace,
 ignoring the verdict of your barons,
 it will be held against your children
 for many years to come.”²

2. Let the books continue the thread of this famous Romance-Germanic story. We, in turn, shall focus on gaining knowledge from the quoted passage. Vassals are gathering before the king during an annual assembly. The assembly is also the time for resolving their disagreements. The injured parties press charges in person, and the accused will have to defend himself without any mediators. Our negative³ (?) hero is not eager to do this, but finally, when summoned for the third time, appears before the court, for otherwise he would be outlawed.⁴ Reynaert defends himself with an impassionate speech which presents him as an epitome of innocence. The arbiter of guilt weighs arguments – and pronounces the death sentence. As we learn from the further part of this story (in which the influence of the Flemish author is much more evident), the protagonist, right before facing gallows, managed to interweave his public confession with a new plot to win back his freedom. Although this may seem not to make much difference to the convict, the manner in which one left this world was quite commonly normalized and ethically charged. For our purposes, I register a critical civilizational sign that in the discussed court procedure the execution was regulated and did not assume the humiliating form of lynching.

The Reynaert story, which has entertained listeners, and then readers, throughout the centuries, is not of literary value only. Many books⁵ and a host of papers⁶ were devoted to the study of values, yet nothing indicates that the future

2 Bouwman, A., Besamusca, B., *Of Reynaert the Fox: Text and Facing Translation of the Middle Dutch Beast Epic Van Den Vos Reynaerde*, Amsterdam 2009, pp. 42–43.

3 Cf. Lurker 1989: 117 (entry: “Fox”).

4 The Salic law (Title LIV) pronounces such an individual guilty, the king refuses to take care of him, his whole property is confiscated, and whoever shelters him – including his wife – is fined (Geary 1985: 155).

5 Among the more recent ones, see, for example, H. R. Jaus, *Untersuchungen zur mittelalterlichen Tierdichtung*, Tübingen 1959; J. Flinn, *Le roman de Renart dans la littérature française et dans littératures étrangères*, Paris 1963; G. H. Arendt, *Die satirische Struktur des mittelniederländischen Tierepos Van den Vos Reynaerde*, Köln 1965; E. Rombauts et al., *Aspects of the Mediaeval Animal Epic*, Leuven 1975; A. Th. Bouwman, *Reinaert en Renart. Het dierenepos Van den vos Reynaerde vergeleken met de Oudfranse Roman de Renart*, Amsterdam 1991.

6 See, for example, W. Foerste, *Von Reinaerts Historie zum Reinke de Vos*, “Niederdeutsche Studien” 1960; D. B. Sands, *The Flemish Reinaert, Epic and Non-epic*, in: *The epic in Mediaeval Society*, H. Scholler (ed.), Tübingen 1977; L. Peeters, *Hinrik van Alckmer*

will not bring anything new in this regard. Contemporary and future scholars belonging to the international association for researching the animal epic will surely take care of it.

Motivated by cautiousness, we shall not ask what the author (or authors) included in the story to pursue their purpose. Instead, we should search for what they could not leave out were they to expound their theme. This is a particular kind of verification of the source reliability: to make use of those ways of transmission and vehicles of meaning without which communication would not be possible at all. This point is where the author is least free to “cheat and deceive,” where the quest for unarticulated assumptions seems less effective a strategy, and where Peter Kosso discerns an additional source of information and a test of its reliability (1992: 34).

3. GOD AS WITNESS. Unwittingly, as it were, the author presented a specific historical type of the criminal process which legal historians describe as the accusatory procedure (Levack 2006:20). Let us note that the King-Arbiter pronounced the harsh sentence without ever conducting an investigation, let alone verifying the accusations or the defense’s arguments. This is not a mere literary schematization or exaggeration, far less an effect of negligence.⁷ Moreover, as we know from other sources,⁸ the early medieval trial, rooted in the Germanic legal tradition, did not consist in the court’s stating the facts but it was based on inferring the defendant’s guilt from certain signs.⁹ These signs were usually the

and medieval tradition, “*Marche Romane*” 1978, 28; Jean-Marc Pastré, *Zum Stil der deutschen und niederländischen Bearbeitungen des Reinaert-Stoffes*, “*Niederdeutsche Studien*” 1981, 27; P. Wackers, *The Use of fables in Reinaert’s Historie*, “*Niederdeutsche Studien*” 1981, 27.

- 7 Władysław the Elbow-high “punished those who stood against his power with frightening severity;” King Casimir the Great ordered to “throw [Maciek Borkowic] into the castle’s dungeon, where he died a slow, cruel death of starvation” (Borucki 1979: 11).
- 8 Although, we should mention that legal historians often discuss the Reynaert story. See J. Graven, *Le proces criminel du Roman de Renart. Etude du droit criminel féodal au XIIème siècle*, Geneva 1950; F. R. Jacoby, *Van den Vos Reynaerde. Legal Elements*, Monachium 1970; J. Deroy, “Le discours du chameau, légat papal dans le Roman de Renard,” in: *Third International Beast Epic, Fable and Fabliau Colloquium*, eds. J. Goossens, T. Sodmann, Köln 1981, pp. 102–127; S. Krause, “Le Reinhart Fuchs, satire de la justice et du droit,” in: *Comique, satire et parodie dans la tradition renardienne et les fabliaux*, eds. D. Buschinger, A. Crépin, Göppingen 1983, pp. 139–151.
- 9 Actually, it was always a matter of facts – only their definition changed. As from the eighth century the idea of (material) truth began to acquire meaning in the law of the Langobard kingdom – enshrined in *Edictus Rothari* (643) – a new type of evidence was allowed, for instance, in writing; after the Franconian conquest, the role of the court

pleadings of the parties. When it was impossible to arrive at certainty, signs from God were invoked as a last resort. An elementary form here was the drawing of lots which revealed the hidden truth, as described, for instance, in the First Book of Samuel (14, 40–42).

Different types of actions were undertaken to provoke God's intervention and thereby replace contradictory words with indisputable "facts." People of honor could support the defendant's pleadings by affirming his innocence under oath. The Carolingian capitulary of Herstal (779) allowed verifying the charge of oath-breaking through the ordeal of the cross: both the accuser and the accused stood before the cross and stretched out their hands; the one who first lowered his arms was pronounced guilty. "If the swearer wins, the accuser is to pay the equivalent of his wergeld."¹⁰

Already in the earliest sources, namely in Gregory of Tours, we find a prototype of the ordeal of the cauldron: a saint was to pluck his ring from a boiling cauldron, merely stating that the water was moderately hot, while the other man had his hands boiled (De Nie 1985: 104). In such cases, courts resolved conflicts in favor of those who had successfully passed the ordeal: if after three days there were no signs of infection in the burned hand, this was considered a manifestation of God's help.¹¹ Iseult proved the truth of her oath "on the relics of the saints" by undergoing the ordeal of hot iron: "The iron was red, but she thrust her bare arms among the coals and seized it, and bearing it took nine steps. Then, as she

gradually increased, which was already an adjudicating panel appointed by the ruler (Bruyning 1985: 195–196).

- 10 The Carolingian capitulary (*capitularium*; ordinances of the central administration sent as circular letters to local centers: dukes, bishops, and plenipotentiaries – *missi*). Quoted after P. J. Geary (1985: 280). The *wergeld* was a fine paid as reparation for killing a freeman. The amount of the fine depended primarily on the status and age of the victim; it was also used as a conversion unit for other crimes – as in the example discussed above (K. Colberg in *Sachwörterbuch der Mediävistik* 1992: 903). P. J. Geary (1985: 313–338) provides a selection of the Carolingian capitularies. A. Franz (1961: 345–347) cites a number of historical examples of the ordeal of the cross used in the eighth and ninth centuries.
- 11 R. Krohn in *Sachwörterbuch der Mediävistik*, p. 311 (s.v. *Gottesurteil*). In the ordeal of bread, the participant's trouble with swallowing was the evidence of guilt (based on Russian accounts, A. Franz [1961, 336] describes a case from an Orthodox church in Novgorod: a thief who stole church vessels was subjected to this ordeal).

cast it from her, she stretched her arms out in a cross, with the palms of her hands wide open, and all men saw them fresh and clean and cold.”¹²

Hans Sachs depicts this ordeal in a cracked mirror of farce: a clever man conceals in his hands a stick of wood on which he carries the glowing piece of iron.

A common form of the judgment of God in high society, especially in the case of ladies, was the purifying oath.¹³ However, as the story of Iseult makes clear, sometimes the oath had to be supported by the judgment of God: “By these holy things and all the holy things of earth, I swear that no man has held me in his arms except King Mark, my lord, and that poor pilgrim. King Mark, will that oath stand?” – “Yes Queen,” he said, “and God see to it!”¹⁴

It is worth noting the smart solution employed to reconcile the literary effect with Christian values: the protagonist could not openly lie and survive the judgment of God. Iseult staged herself being carried by her lover who was dressed up as a pilgrim. Thus, she formally confirmed the truthfulness of the oath. In the romance story of Amis and Amiles, the trick used to ensure the formal truthfulness of the oath was the substitution of the protagonist by his friend who looked almost like him. The friend could deny, with a clear conscience, the accusation of having an affair (substituting his own material truth for the discussed one) and win the duel with God’s help. Elsewhere, the act of confession served this purpose: the culprit won the trial because he had morally purified himself. Some legends say that the culprit would later lose were he to repeat the sin of which he was accused and which he confessed (Franz 1961: 330–331).

The Song of Roland (274–285) contains a classic description of the judicial duel which usually occurred between men. Defending the honor of his friend Ganelon, who was accused of betrayal, Pinabel dies in a duel with Thierry; the religious framework and sanction which the Church renounced in 1215 is evident here: “As soon as they are ready for the combat, they confessed themselves and received absolution and blessing; they have heard their masses and received communion and gave large offerings to the churches” (280). Men could also

12 *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult retold by J. Bédier*, trans. H. Belloc, Mineola, New York 2012, p. 65.

13 A painting by J. Simmler presents queen Hedvigis of Anjou’s oath “on the Bible” (Borucki, an illustration after p. 32). Besides women, the clergy as well as people who were too young, too old or disabled could use representatives. Germanic legal codes regulated the work of paid representatives called “campiones” (Franz 1961: 343 with references).

14 *Ibid.*, p. 64.

duel in the name of accused women. A victory had legal consequences: a ruling in favor of the party represented by the winner. The Flemish historian Galbert of Bruges provides an interesting example of the historical role which the duel played as a means of resolving political disagreements,¹⁵ namely – the description of the revolt against the Count of Flanders, Wilhelm Clito, in 1128. When the main leader of the revolt, Iwein of Aalst, called for summoning an extraordinary tribunal which would determine whether the ruler had broken his obligation to care for his subjects, Count Clito rejected this demand and instead challenged Iwein to a judicial duel (van Caenegem 1990: 106).

4. *LEX TALIONIS*. If the accused managed to extricate himself from trouble, he was acquitted. Therefore, he could exercise the right to retaliation (*lex talionis*) and demand punishment.¹⁶ I have earlier referred to the fine imposed on wrongful accusers. In our story (and here I go beyond the quoted passage to satisfy the Reader's curiosity), Reynaert's main accusers became the target of his vengeance, which was not procedural, but malignant and bloody. Because the protagonist undertook a penitential pilgrimage to Rome,¹⁷ no one could interrupt his actions. For the vow of undertaking a pilgrimage was binding and only a bishop could dispense from it (Chélini, Branthomme 1996: 139). It was even appropriate to help him get a traveling bag. Those who made the vow received pilgrim's attributes from a bishop at the end of a special liturgy whose description from eleventh century is quoted in Chélini and Branthomme (1996: 138–139). It was best to sew the bag of leather. The fifth chapter of the codex *Liber Sancti Jacobi* (ca. 1139)¹⁸ provides a collection of elementary hagiographic texts and

15 For more, see V. Udwin, *Between Two Armies: The Place of the Duel in Epic Culture*, Leiden 1999.

16 See Levack 2006: 76. J. Weismann, *Talion und öffentliche Strafe im Mosaischen Recht*, Leipzig 1913. For general information about divine judgment, see, among others, H. Glitsch, *Gottesurteile*, Leipzig 1913; S. Hardung, *Die Vorladung vor Gottes Gericht*, Bühl—Baden 1934; Ch. Leitmeier, *Die Kirche und die Gottesurteile*, Wien 1953; H. Fehr, "Die Gottesurteile in deutscher Dichtung," in: *Festschrift G. Kisch*, Stuttgart 1955; H. Nottarp, *Gottesurteil-Studien*, München 1956; H. Liermann, *Die Gott-heit im Recht*, München 1969; R. Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal*, Oxford 1986.

17 D. J. Birch (*Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages*, Woodbridge 1999) presents this as a real event.

18 W. M. Whitehill, *Liber Sancti Jacobi. Codex Calixtinus*, Vol. 3, Santiago de Compostela 1944 (critical edition). N. L. Frey discusses various stories of pilgrims to Compostela (See: *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago*, Los Angeles 1998).

information for pilgrims to Compostela. As the codex explains, the pilgrim's bag must be made of animal leather "to remind him that he should mortify his body" (Chélini, Branthomme 1996: 123, 138); deer's leather bags were most highly valued. Reynaert, in turn, received a bag sewn of a piece of skin taken from a bear's back. Ysingrijn and his wife had to give the pilgrim a pair of shoes each. This demand did not seem unreasonable; after all, they had two pairs apiece – the author should be commended here for his clever use of the tension inherent in the fairytale figures, which are four-legged and human at the same time.

5. TRIAL BY ORDEAL. The presence of a priest, who gave appropriate blessings, underscored the providential character of the judgment of God. Adolf Franz (1961: 307–364) discussed a whole range of occasional benedictions. Among the texts he quoted from various sources were whole offices, sometimes preceding regular services, intended for the following occasions: duels (*Benedictio clipei et baculi hominis proficientis ad duellum*, pp. 364–365), the ordeal of glowing iron (*Iudicium ferri igne ferventis*, pp. 369–372), the ordeal of boiling water (*Benedictio aquae ferventis ad examinandum iudicium*, p. 373), the ordeal of cold water, or "ducking" (*Ordo iudicis aquae frigidae*, pp. 378–384), and finally the ordeal of the blessed morsel (bread and cheese) and the ordeal of the hanging bread (*Iudicium panis et casei et panis pendentis* – pp. 384–385); the first one consisted in swallowing,¹⁹ while the second was a trial by lottery: people conjured a moldy loaf of bread hanging from a hook to spin round in the presence of the accused or at the sound of his name mentioned alongside the names of other suspects. The latter form of ordeal was similar to the ordeal of the Psalter in which a book was used instead of bread.²⁰ Finally, in the ordeal of measuring (*Ordo iudicii in*

19 S. L. Keefer has discussed it in detail against the backdrop of different types of ordeal. The author quoted many details from the Anglo-Saxon tradition as shown by six Pontificals (see p. 245). He takes into consideration a version of the eleventh-century Cracow Pontifical, which contained a very complex liturgical program (see MS 2057 of the Jagiellonian Library: *The Cracow Pontifical*, ed. Z. Obertyński, Manchester 1967–1971). Toward the end of his paper (pp. 255–264), Keefer quotes a scenario of the "exorcism of bread and cheese" from MS 391 of the Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, which makes up for omissions found in the Cracow MS and provides an English translation of the successive steps.

20 Psalter, bible, or missal; for detailed descriptions with reference to sources, see Franz 1961: 338, 362 and 391–392; W. L. Braekman 1997: 334. Braekman quotes examples of these ordeals in later practices of detecting criminals (usually thieves) through magic and divination: see pp. 332–341 (the ordeal of the psalter or bread, with a more secular variant a sieve hanging from the top of shears) and pp. 346–348 (the ordeals of cheese and measure). An attempt to guess the result of the draw from the rotation of a missal

mensura, pp. 390–391), God was asked to expose the culprit by extending the tape with which he was measured (Franz 1961: 362). For the record, it is important to mention the ordeals which never entered the liturgical tradition and became only a non-ecclesiastical legal habit – for example, the so-called trial of the bier: the accused of murder was forced to touch the wounds of the deceased, swearing that he was not the killer;²¹ as we can see, this is a reinforced version of the purifying oath; in the same vein, one may describe the trial of the Eucharist used chiefly among the clergy and monks: quite similarly as in the trials by food, those who took the sacrament without difficulty were considered innocent; the suspect, if guilty, would not be able to swallow the host and might even die by choking on it – here we witness a transition to a different category, from the judgment of God to the divine punishment.²²

Since the order forbidding the clergy to give benedictions at trials by ordeal, the procedure started losing its legal force, even though it was still in use in lay courts and then the “witchcraft” proceedings of the “people,”²³ in which “ducking” (the ordeal of cold water) was the most favorite form of trial. Drowning was a sign of innocence – pure water would not accept a criminal (Franz 1961: 355) – or at least indicated that the accused was deprived of Satan’s help. The trials survived even longer in different magic practices and tawdry divination (Braekman 1997: 333). It would not be far from the truth to link pendulum divination, which now blossoms before our eyes, to the trials with spinning objects.

The ban imposed on the clergy sparked a general reform of the European criminal process. It first appeared in Canon 18 of the Fourth Lateran Council, incidentally, as it were, within a broader strategy of gradually excluding the

hanging on a key (pressed into a heavily bound book) was also recorded as late as ca. 1900 in Bruges (Braekman 1997: 333, fn. 63).

- 21 See H. Ewers, *Die Bahrprobe*, Bonn 1951; S. Anger, “Die Bahrprobe in Sage und Rechtsbrauch”, in: *Die Heimat*, 1967, 74, pp. 12–13.
- 22 A. Franz 1961: 340–341 provides a specific theological explanation of this trial; also see P. Browe, “Die Abendmahlprobe im Mittelalter,” in: *Historisches Jahrbuch* 1928, No. 48, pp. 193–194. For a large collection of formulas, see K. Zeumer in the series *MGH, Leges*, sec. V. *Formulae*, pp. 604–722; Franz (1961: 364, fn. 1) has listed other editions.
- 23 In fact, it was not the people but a local heir who inspired the so-called last witch trial in Poland in August 1775 (see B. Baranowski, *Nietolerancja i zabobon w Polsce w XVII i XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1987, pp. 179–186). Based on her analysis of Silesian sources, K. Lamprecht also drew the conclusion that “a quite arbitrary influence of local factors” was one of the reasons behind the intensified persecution of witches (see K. Lamprecht, *Hexenverfolgung und Zaubereiprozesse in den schlesischen Territorien*, Köln 1995).

clergy from all fields of activity related to bloodshed – the judiciary, military,²⁴ or even those in which one could be exposed to blood (like surgery).

No cleric may pronounce a sentence of death, or execute such a sentence, or be present at its execution. If anyone in consequence of this prohibition (*hujusmodi occasions statuti*) should presume to inflict damage on churches or injury on ecclesiastical persons, let him be restrained by ecclesiastical censure. Nor may any cleric write or dictate letters destined for the execution of such a sentence. Wherefore, in the chanceries of the princes let this matter be committed to laymen and not to clerics. Neither may a cleric act as judge in the case of the Rotarii, archers, or other men of this kind devoted to the shedding of blood. No subdeacon, deacon, or priest shall practice that part of surgery involving burning and cutting. Neither shall anyone in judicial tests or ordeals by hot or cold water or hot iron bestow any blessing; the earlier prohibitions in regard to dueling remain in force (*Clerics to dissociate from shedding-blood and duels*, Canon 18 of the Fourth Lateran Council).²⁵

The older accusatory procedure has given room to the emergence of new systems of criminal procedure: an “inquisitorial system” in Continental Europe and a “jury system” in England. A novelty was vesting the court – and thus a different party than the harmed – with the power to act in an accusatory capacity;²⁶ in the English system, the criminal procedure split into the “persecution” phase (with a presenting jury) and the “trial” phase (with a professional judge).²⁷

24 In this case, clever alternatives were devised. For example, bishop Odo [of Bayeux], half-brother of William the Conqueror, fought at his side with a mace, which could kill without shedding blood (Nadolski 1976: 424–425).

25 See Geary 1985: 468.

26 The King’s right to open an investigation (*inquisitio*) was already in use in the early Middle Ages (Bruyning 1985: 197); see the next footnote. P. Flade, *Das römische Inquisitionsverfahren in Deutschland bis zu den Hexenprozessen*, Leipzig 1902; R. Schmidt, “Königsrecht, Kirchenrecht und Stadtrecht beim Aufbau des Inquisitionsprozesses,” in: *Festgabe... R. Sohm*, München 1915; E. Mayer, *Geschworenengericht und Inquisitionsprozess im Ursprung dargelegt*, München 1916; E. Carsten, *Die Geschichte der Staatsanwaltschaft in Deutschland bis zur Gegenwart*, Breslau 1932; G. Kleinheyer, *Zur Rechtsgestalt von Akkusationsprozess und peinlicher Frage im frühen 17. Jahrhundert*, Opladen 1971; F. Meckbach, *Inquisitionsrichter und Staatsanwalt – ein Vergleich*, Augsburg 1976. “The inquisitorial trial is only a form which reflects the realization that the officials are entitled and obligated to prosecute crimes;” in France, throughout the first half of the thirteenth century, the accusatory procedure was still in force (Stein 1875: 574).

27 For more detailed accounts of the evolution of English law against the backdrop of social changes, see J. Hudson, *The Formation of the English Common Law: Law and Society in England from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta*, New York 1996 (eleventh to thirteenth centuries) and (for the fourteenth century) A. Musson, WM

This change was significant: as long as only the harmed were eligible to make accusations, certain illegal acts remained untried until the victim went to court. The Carolingian legal system introduced the institution of *missi dominici*, who were roving plenipotentiary inspectors authorized to enforce the law among all imperial subjects and to search for untried offenses throughout the Empire (Bruyning 1985: 197).²⁸ However, it was as late as the thirteenth century when European judicature started implementing the procedure of prosecution *ex officio*, initially limited only to public offenses; the accusatory procedure with the right to retaliation was still applied in private cases (van Caenegem 1990: 101–102). The attitude of Robbrecht, the villain in the Dutch romance drama *Esmoreit* from the end of the fourteenth century, may indicate that criminals were not very afraid of the prosecution *ex officio*. When accused by his nephew, Esmoreit, of selling him to slavery and harming his mother with a false charge in the past, Robbrecht replied: “I may joust if any man dareth to accuse me of these crimes.” Even an invocation of the judgment of God (here in the form of a judicial duel) required the accuser to reveal himself and make a formal statement.

According to the new procedure, the court could initiate proceedings on its own initiative (based on observation, gossip, or denunciation), even if no one claimed to be harmed, as in the case of heresy. Bringing an action against any defendant, the court took responsibility both for handling the case properly (investigation and interrogation) and pronouncing guilt. Since judges no longer resolved cases based solely on evidence provided by the parties, they could not appeal to a higher power if the evidence was insufficient to prove guilt. What is more, the court had to collect evidence and transcribe the proceedings to have written records, which could also serve the defendant if he wished to file a complaint against the judge.

Since against the false assertion of an unjust judge the innocent party sometimes cannot prove the truth of a denial, because by the very nature of things there is no direct proof of

Ormrod, *The Evolution of English Justice: Law, Politics and Society in the Fourteenth Century*, New York 1999. R. Fleming (*Domesday Book and the Lain: Society and Legal Custom in Early Medieval England*, Cambridge 1998) discusses the functioning of earlier common law rules.

28 “And the *missi* themselves, as they wish to have the favor of Almighty God and to preserve it through the loyalty they have promised, are to make diligent inquiry wherever a man claims that someone has done him an injustice” (a decree of 802). Geary 1985: 332; see below a discussion of the Polish *sąd oprawcy* (literally: “the tormentor’s court”). H. Conrad, *Die Gestalt und soziale Stellung des Richters im Wandel der Zeit*, Bad Homburg 1960.

one denying a fact, that falsity may not prejudice the truth, and injustice may not prevail over justice, we decree that in an ordinary as well as extraordinary inquiry (*judicium*) let the judge always employ either a public person (if he can be had) or two competent men who shall faithfully take down in writing all the acts of the inquiry, namely, citations and delays, refusals and exceptions, petitions and replies, interrogations and confessions, the depositions of witnesses and presentation of documents, interlocutions, appeals, renunciations, decisions, and other acts which take place must be written down in convenient order, the time, places, and persons to be designated. A copy of everything thus written is to be handed to each of the parties, the originals are to remain in possession of the writers; so, if a dispute should arise in regard to any action of the judge, the truth can be established by a reference to these documents. This provision is made to protect the innocent party against judges who are imprudent and dishonest. A judge who neglects to observe this decree, if on account of this neglect some difficulty should arise, let him be duly punished by a superior judge; nor is there any presumption in favor of doing things his way unless it be evident from legitimate documents in the case (*Written records of trials to be kept*, Canon 38 of the Fourth Lateran Council).²⁹

Thus, the judge became a *de facto* party. He was interested in identifying the culprit; otherwise he exposed himself to the charge of inefficiency. In Poland, a striking example of the implementation of this idea of judicature was the institution of so-called *maleficorum iudex* (Polish: *sąd oprawcy*, literally: “the tormentor’s court”) – a special officer appointed by a starost (in the name of the king) in order to investigate, persecute, and punish the most dangerous offenders; the nobility’s opposition resulted in the cancellation of such courts, which left behind only an echo of their expressive name (Borucki 1979: 21). The removing of responsibility from individuals as private accusers (an institution which still functions today) had far-reaching consequences; an accuser who lost a case was no longer exposed to the accused’s retaliation. Together with the institution of secret denunciation, this became a hotbed of numerous substitute trials caused by ungrounded slanders. The most important change was the qualification of two witnesses’ statements³⁰ and a guilty plea as criminal evidence. The ultimate and lawful way of obtaining a guilty plea was by torturing of the suspect.³¹ Wolfgang Schild describes torture as an emergency solution, which courts

29 See Geary 1985: 473.

30 In different cases, a different number of witnesses was required, e.g. only four witnesses could exonerate someone accused of usurping a noble title (Borucki 1979: 32).

31 J. Willmann, “Die Hauptbeweismittel im Strafverfahren der Stadt Freiburg i. Br. von ihrer Gründung (1120) bis zur Einführung des neuen Stadtrechts (1520),” *Goltdammers Archiv für Strafrecht* 65/1918, p. 484 ff; W. Schünke, *Die Folter im deutschen Strafverfahren des 13. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, Münster 1952; J. Langbein, *Torture and the Law of Proof*, Chicago 1976; M. Ruthven, *Torture*, London 1978.

started to apply after the rejection of the institution of the purifying oath and the judgment of God as measures of inquiry source of evidence (1980: 160).³²

The very formation of the inquisitorial procedure – understood as an ex officio prosecution of crimes and asserting of the material truth by the court – was related to the needs of German municipal governments struggling against massive criminal activities (Schild 1980: 158; see pp. 160–162 for an outline of the typical course of interrogation with torture).

6. THE PROHIBITION OF THE ORDEAL: ITS FUNCTIONS AND EFFECTS. The prohibition from having contact with blood imposed on the clergy an obligation to implement the Old Testament prohibitions which did not enter the New Testament. Thus, one may assume that this was a maneuver meant to preserve certain elements of the Old Testament's heritage and reconcile them with the Evangelical Gospel tradition.

The ban was meant to serve innovative functions which produced numerous current and long-range effects. One may link all these effects to the formation of a new type of priesthood – more professional and pastoral, but not deprived of Biblical (that is to say, Old Testament) authority. Hugh of St. Victor provides a clear example of this combination of breakthrough and continuity by developing his conception of two epochs separated by the Incarnation.

For the Incarnate Word is our King, who came into this world to war with the devil; and all the saints who were before His coming are soldiers, as it were, coming before their King, and those who have come after and will come, even to the end of the world, are soldiers following their King.... And although in a multitude as vast as this the kind of arms differ in the sacraments and observance of the peoples preceding and following, yet are really serving the one king and following the one banner; all are pursuing the one enemy and are being crowned by the one victory.³³

Hugh's commentary still echoes the motif of Christ the King, but now His weapons are only sacraments and rites. As an Augustinian, Hugh was a proponent of the

32 “Die Folter war eine Verlegenheitslösung, die einzige Möglichkeit, in dem neuen Verfahren einen zunächst leugnenden Beschuldigten schliesslich doch noch verurteilen zu können, nachdem die alten formellen Beweismittel – Eid mit Eideshelfern und Gottesurteil – ihren Sinn und ihre Glaubwürdigkeit verloren hatten.”

33 Hugh of St. Victor, *Hugh of Saint Victor on the Sacraments of the Christian Faith: (De Sacramentis)*, trans. R. J. Deferrari, Eugene, OR, pp. 3–4. “Verbum enim incarnatum rex noster est qui in hunc mundum venit cum diabolo pugnaturus.... Et licet in hac tanta multitudine diversae armorum species in sacramentis et observationibus praecedentium et subsequentium populorum omnes tamen uni regi militare et unum vexillum sequi probantur, et hostem unum persequi et una victoria coronari.”

Gregorian Reform – even Pope Boniface VIII cited his words in the bull *Unam sanctam* (1302) which conditioned salvation on obedience to the papal authority (Cantor 1993: 495). This very radical postulate meant that the Church went on an offensive after the period of struggling to strengthen its position in relation with lay power, and especially to exclude the priest from the network of social relationships and confer on him broad and exclusive authority in pastoral and liturgical matters. The organizational transformations (which I shall discuss in a more detailed manner) are inextricably bound to a number purely religious phenomena. Our text sample provides a case in point: “as the relics were brought.”³⁴

7. CONTROL OVER RELICS. The cultural role of relics will be a recurrent topic in our discussion. Ysingrijn mouthed a very symptomatic expression which seemed obvious to him. He demanded a solemn oath of innocence sworn on “relics,”³⁵ just as here and there people swear on “the Bible,” “crucifix” or all that is “holy,” treating these notions merely as figures of speech. The oath “on relics,” brought specifically for this purpose, has become more difficult since the Church prohibited the removal of relics from reliquaries. Canon 62 of the Fourth Lateran Council did not eradicate this habit, but it gave rise to a significant transformation of the role of relics:

From the fact that some expose for sale and exhibit promiscuously the relics of saints, great injury is sustained by the Christian religion. That this may not occur hereafter, we ordain in the present decree that in the future old relics may not be exhibited outside of a vessel or exposed for sale. And let no one presume to venerate publicly new ones unless they have been approved by the Roman pontiff. In the future prelates shall not permit those who come to their churches *causa venerationis* to be deceived by worthless fabrications or false documents as has been done in many places for the sake of gain (*Regarding saints' relics*, Canon 62 of the Fourth Lateran Council).

Thus, relics gained greater durability, and their current owners found their position strengthened – with the exception of those who wanted to trade them on the market as devotional items (there were workshops in the Middle East which specialized in the production of such objects). Granting bishops the exclusive right to recognize the authenticity of relics was a normalization measure for both sides: since then, the faithful gained greater confidence that they worshiped authentic relics and all decisions regarding canonization or admission to cult came

34 “Also die heleghe waren brocht” (line 84). This motif is omitted in Goethe’s version.

35 The *Sachsenspiegel* code of 1300 presents dozens of such scenes, e.g. *Sachsenspiegel* 1970, ff. 1^v no. 3, 2^v no. 3, 3^r nos. 3 and 4, 3^v no. 1, 4^v nos. 1 and 4, 5^r no. 1, etc.; it is always a standard box on a plinth.

from a single center. This was also important in historical terms: on the one hand, it contributed to the centralization of the Church after the centuries-old phase of Episcopal churches – a process initiated by the Gregorian Revolution (Van Engen 1986: 532)³⁶ – while excluding, on the other hand, secular rulers from yet another realm of church affairs. As we remember, the exchange of relics was part of the protocol of royal visits: Emperor Otto III gave Boleslaw the Brave a nail from the Cross and the lance³⁷ of St. Maurice, receiving St. Adalbert's arm in return. In fact, the prestige of entire church provinces and states depended on the possession of the relics. Such a drastic replacement of the holder would not have been possible without problems and must have had far-reaching consequences.

8. INVESTITURE. Here we touch probably the most important mechanism of the historical process in medieval Europe, namely – the shattering of the ancient, already Roman, then Carolingian and Ottonian sacro-political unity of the Western Empire (Heer was the first to introduce the concept, 1949: 194). The political side of this process was the Investiture contest³⁸ – a conflict over the ability to appoint church officials, which after the decline of the Carolingian Empire became a standard prerogative of secular rulers (Mercier 1986: 129–131). In the fictional universe of our passage, this is beyond the pale of doubt, as Reynaert promises, “and to make him chaplain.”³⁹ However, the charge is not of holding a church office but of deceit – and the resulting attempt on one's life.

It is precisely the Roman Church's policy of opposition to this feudal practice (simony and secular investiture) that we call “Gregorian Revolution.”⁴⁰ The

36 G. Constable described this period as the “Reformation of the Twelfth Century” (*Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, New York 1996).

37 I quote these names without investigating the authenticity of these relics; perhaps, it would be more apt to say: “the so-called lance;” but, then again, leaving the nail without any further qualification would make an impression that I vouch for its authenticity. What should we do with the five skulls of St. Thomas Aquinas? (See below).

38 For general and cross-section elaborations, see: Tellenbach 1988 (recommended for its insightfulness and conciseness) and U. R. Blumenthal, *Der Investiturstreit*, Berlin 1981; I. Schmale-Ott published a two-volume collection of source texts: *Quellen zum Investiturstreit*, Darmstadt 1980–1984). For detailed monographs, see J. Howe, *Church Reform & Social Change in Eleventh-Century Italy: Dominic of Sora and His Patrons*, Philadelphia 1997; P. G. Justice, *Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh Century*, Leiden 1997; M. Stroll, *The Imperial Abbey of Farfa: Target of Papal and Imperial Ambitions*, Leiden 1997.

39 “Ende soudene maken capelaen” (line 143).

40 N. R. Cantor describes it as a global one. According to his account, four cardinals and popes were behind the conception of the revolution: cardinal Humbert (ca. 1000–1061), St. Peter Damian (ca. 1007–1072), cardinal Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII),

organizational (liturgical, canonical) exclusion of kings (as well as local secular rulers of all levels) from the Church⁴¹ meant that they started gradually losing influence on the appointment of church offices.⁴² By regulating the manner of pope's election (1059)⁴³ and prohibiting secular interventions in church

and Paschal II (Cantor 1993: 243–276). The participation of local churches (on the example of Verona) was noticed by M. Miller, see fn. 471 (chapter 14, section 11).

- 41 Since 1235, the ruler no longer participated in cult activities (Petersohn 1994: 118). “The lay princes were driven out of the ecclesiastical sphere, and from now on their power was purely secular” (Tellenbach 1966: 125); in the material realm, in the case of private churches or parish staffing, certain patterns persisted. See further a discussion of Thomas Aquinas’ theological justification of the superiority of the priest over the king (Subsection 6.2). “In the twelfth century, at the latest, *rex et sacerdos* of the Carolingian period became a thing of the past – not only because of the Church’s Gregorian emancipation but also because of significant changes in human mentality which left no room for the trials of God or the King-Wizard. As we know, the Church itself limited the authority of the anointed by using different oils; more precisely – different for bishops’ consecration, different for the king, who was left with the catechumens’ oil only. This devaluation found its expression in a separate decree of Innocent IV” (Gieysztor, 1978: 17).
- 42 The beginning of the actual limitation of secular investiture came already after St. Leo IX (1049–1054), from which began a period of relative stabilization of the papacy after the nightmares of the previous 150 years (for instance, in 897, there were five popes successively removed or murdered; Mercier 1986: 119). “The object of the so-called Investiture Contest was to drive the laity out from the position which several hundred years of royal theocracy and of the proprietary system had given them.” An important aspect of the changes was also putting the bishop and the pope at the disposal of private churches and monasteries owned by the clergy (Tellenbach 1966: 117).
- 43 Nicholas II prescribed regulations according to which the pope could be elected only from among the cardinals; the Church finally approved these regulations at the Third Lateran Council (1179) – the pope could be elected only by the cardinals by a two-thirds majority of votes (Mercier 1986: 128 and 150). Analogous regulations, making the election of the emperor the sole prerogative of five princes electors (two lay: Czech and Palatinate; and three archbishops: Mainz, Cologne, and Trier), and two free cities (Frankfurt and Nuremberg) only contains the Golden Bull of Emperor Charles IV of 1356; *Bulla aurea Karoli IV imperatoris anno MCCCLVI promulgata. Die Goldene Bulle Kaiser Karls IV vom Jahr 1356*, ed. by W. D. Fritz, *MGH, Fontes iuris germanici antiqui* 11, 1972. It is worth mentioning that (Italian) local governments’ response to being taken over by the Church was the conviction that the mayor’s election was under the patronage of the Holy Spirit – as evidenced in London after 1406 (C.L. Kingsford, *Prejudice and Promise in 15th Century England*, Oxford 1925, p. 108) and later in Bristol (*The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, by Robert Ricart, *Town Clerc of Bristol*, ed. by L. Toulmin Smith, London 1872, p. 414, qtd. after M. James 1983: 21, fn. 68).

affairs – in particular, by limiting the institution of private churches⁴⁴ and, in principle, rejecting church offices if appointed by secular rulers⁴⁵ – the Church has begun cutting a separate path for itself.⁴⁶ Moreover, marked by stormy twists and turns, the Church has pursued a “normal” foreign policy on this path: it often gained and changed its allies, formed and smashed coalitions, sometimes defended kings against the emperor, other times the emperor against kings, supported princes against kings, the anti-emperor against the emperor, received support from kings against local rulers – and even these configurations did not exhaust all the possibilities that were yet to arrive when municipal governments entered the political scene. The declaration of the pope’s authority over the emperor had a fairly long tradition. Already St. Ambrose said that “the Emperor is within and not above the Church,”⁴⁷ and the new doctrine of Rome’s infallibility severely hindered the political pursuits of rulers. No less painful was the fact that they have lost the sacral legitimation of power, especially given their still-fresh memory of the efforts they have put to achieve and maintain it, which culminated in the establishment of a hieratic (vicar) – or even prefigurative – relationship between the emperor and Christ.⁴⁸

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- 44 Pope Eugene II legalized this institution in 826, but the Gregorian reform revoked it. Cf. P. Dinzelbacher, *Sachwörterbuch der Mediävistik*, pp. 198–199, *Eigenkirche* (including references).
- 45 The postulate contained in the treaty *Adversus simoniacos* (1058) by cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida, condemning simony as a heresy disrupting the apostolic continuity, became a core of Gregory VII’s lost memorandum of 1073, later repeated in the bulla *Dictatus papae* in 1078. This policy in general should be seen against the backdrop of contract network which grew since the tenth century and which became the essence of the feudal system. J. Lynch, *Simoniacal Entry into Religious Life from 1000–1260*, Ohio, 1976, investigates the extent of the phenomenon.
- 46 For more recent works on the history of the Church, see J. A. F. Thomson, *The Western Church in the Middle Ages*, London 1998 (period from the mid-fifth to the beginning of the sixteenth century); P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, AD 200–1000*, Oxford 1996; all Christian Churches are included in the lexicon ed. by F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Oxford 1997. History of church law: W. M. Ploch, *Geschichte des Kirchenrechts*, Vol. 1–5, Munich 1960–1970.
- 47 Ambrose of Milan, *Political Letters and Speeches*, trans. J.H.W.G. Liebenschuetz, Liverpool 2005, p. 159.
- 48 Roman Michałowski (1997) found a record of such a practice toward Otto III and English kings in the documents and iconography of the ninth and tenth centuries. There were also later political thinkers who sustained this theory in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Constable 1995: 246–247).

We might suggest, somewhat cynically, that it is precisely due to this circumstance that we enjoy an extensive body of new quality literature and grand representative art. They were to become the tools in what was really at stake in the Investiture contest, which was a struggle for souls.⁴⁹ Characteristically enough, it was the court of Frederick Barbarossa that initiated the knight culture on German soil with two grand celebrations (Mainz, 1184⁵⁰ and 1188), breaking off twenty-year efforts to subordinate Papacy to the Roman Emperor (Wies 1996: 262). In the process of this struggle, the imperial chancellery introduced a symptomatic term of *sacrum imperium* to counterbalance the *sacra ecclesia* (Wies 1996: 114).⁵¹ Heinrich von Veldeke in *Eneide* and Hartmann von Aue in *Erec* translated the theory of the Trojan genealogy of the Staufer dynasty, which Barbarossa's chaplain Godfrey of Viterbo formulated in *Speculum regnum* (ca. 1183; MGH SS: 22, 21–93), into the language of epic. The first poet came closer to Frederick's centralist view on the role of knighthood as the emperor's adornment. Hartmann, in turn, preferred the vision of a "royal-princely republic" (Thomas 1989: 102). The exclusion from cult activities, however painful, gave secular rulers a considerable advantage over the people of the Church: they could have as many portraits as they wished. It was Philip the Fair, the vanquisher of Boniface VIII, who first understood and employed this strategy: the Pope who, in his conceit, had placed

49 In this way, F. Heer highlights the importance of the pope-emperor controversy; cf. canon 27 of the Fourth Lateran Council: to guide souls is a supreme art – *ars artium regimen animarum*, the aphorism by Gregory of Nazianzus, later adopted by Gregory the Great in *Regula Pastoralis*; qtd. after J. Longère, *La pénitence selon Guillaume Durand* (Gy [ed.] 1992: 106). For a discussion of the repercussions of this dispute in the liturgical drama, see J. Marlin, "The Investiture Contest and the Rise of Herod Plays in the Twelfth Century," *EDAM* 2000, 23.1.

50 Gislebert of Mons described it around 1196 as *curia celebris* (*La Chronique*, L. Vanderkindere, Brussels 1904); similar description from 1200 can be found in *Chronica regia Coloniensis*, G. Waitz in: MGH, *Scriptores in usum scol.*, 1880; for other sources, see H. Thomas, "Matière de Rome – Matière de Bretagne. Zu den politischen Implikationen von Veldekes "Eneide" und Hartmanns "Erec," *ZdPh* 108/1989, Sonderheft, pp. 82–83.

51 J. Deer, "Das Kaiserbild im Kreuz," *Schweizer Beiträge zur Allgemeinen Geschichte* 13/1955, p. 48 ff; W. Dürig, "Der theologische Ausgangspunkt der mittelalterlichen liturgischen Auffassung vom Herrscher als Vicarius Dei," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 77/1958, p. 174ff.; O. Hiltbrunner, "Die Heiligkeit des Kaisers," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 1968, p. 2ff; Y. Congar, "Zwei Faktoren der Sakralisierung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens im europäischen Mittelalter," *Concilium* 5/1969, p. 520ff; G. Koch, *Auf dem Wege zum Sacrum Imperium*, Wien 1972; A. Dempf, *Sacrum Imperium*, Darmstadt 1973.

his figures in several churches, was accused of trying to turn his person into an object of worship;⁵² at the same time, the king was the first ruler to disseminate his images on a large scale without a fear that someone would condemn him for idolatry (Camille 1989: 281). Phillip could feel secure for everyone knew he was no longer a priest and did not initiate prayers in the church.

It was important that relics regained their extraordinary charm for quite a fundamental reason: so long as they remained an object of unbridled trade, it was hard to claim their supernatural quality. Craftsmen and merchants became the holders of holiness which turned into a commodity. However, the laws of the market also operated back then, and the market's curse – as we know only too well – are counterfeits of products made by renowned companies. In turn, these companies tend to mobilize all their political influence to combat unfair competition. The market convention makes it possible to contend that there was a genuine demand for all kinds of relics, just as today the average consumer does not disdain counterfeits. Relics were special goods, and hence it was not so much economic as political and doctrinal factors that influenced both their origins and distribution. If we follow St. Thomas Aquinas' position⁵³ (which was slightly later than the Fourth Lateran Council, but all previous conceptions were only more radical), "it is God alone Who can still the desires of man and make him happy and be the fitting reward for a king."⁵⁴ It was risky because the kings received an invaluable hint on how to "make people happy" while eliminating the Church from the "reign over souls." Whoever was able to satisfy desires or needs (however defined), entered this restricted and extraordinary area. At this point, the Church opened a front of doctrinal struggle, less spectacular, though no less fierce than a political dispute. The pioneer in this struggle was Christ himself who knew what he was doing when he drove away merchants from the temple (John 2: 14–16). The apostles Peter and John introduced the principle of incorruptibility to the new Church (Acts 8:18); rejecting the proposition of Simon

52 C. Sommer, *Die Anklage der Idolatrie gegen Papst Bonifaz VIII. und seine Porträtstatuen*, Freiburg 1920.

53 After his death, Aquinas probably became subject to this mechanism, too; a theologian, who briefly calculated the relics of his skull, concluded that Thomas must have had at least five heads.

54 "Solutus igitur Deus est qui hominis desiderium quietare potest, et facere hominem beatum, et esse regi conveniens praemium." Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship. To the King of Cyprus*, trans. Gerald B. Phelan, revised by I. Th. Eschmann, O.P., Toronto 1949, p. 64. For more about advisory writings, see J. Ferster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England*, Philadelphia 1996.

the Magician, who offered them money for the gift of Holy Spirit (a prototype of Confirmation), they have set the standard for all sacraments which were not to be sold but came free. However, the history of the definition of needs has taken such a course that it is hardly possible today to get through crowded shopping streets in Western cities, even though merchants do not gather in churches (which are rather deserted) but elevate their own, no less impressive temples.⁵⁵

The centralization of the papal authority was later fortified by the canon law code⁵⁶ – Gregory VII⁵⁷ pursued this already as a cardinal, laying the foundations for the future papal absolutism and rejecting other legal traditions of the early Middle Ages (Cantor 1993: 258). In turn, this meant that local churches could no longer easily attract the faithful by establishing new forms of cult. To reinforce their prestige, they had to put more effort into spiritual matters, mainly through sermons and hagiographic work.

Thus, the restrictions imposed on the public circulation of relics left a vacuum which had to be filled. One may say, only half-jokingly, that in the stabilized conditions even relics had changed their behavior: from then on, they had to acquire a stronger miraculous charm to attract the faithful. Analyzing the body of the illustrated hagiographies from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Barbara Abou-El-Haj associates their form with “the rivalry of cults during the centuries of pilgrimages” (1994: 67). In the thirteenth century, the most important

55 It would be worth to compare the cubature of Saint Peter’s Basilica with some of America’s largest supermarkets – if only as a joke! Proponents of cliometrics would finally obtain a strict measure of religiosity. It is symptomatic, however, that this evidently secularizing process may assume a “sacral” form: a new shopping center for 1,000 stores is advertised as a “Shopping Cathedral” (*Een kathedraal van het kopen*, Amsterdam-Bijlmermeer, ca. 1990) and no one is surprised.

56 In 1999, Wilfried Hartmann and Kenneth Pennington began publishing a new series devoted to the history of canon law in the Middle Ages: *The History of Medieval Canon Law*. The first volume is a bibliography of early Christian and Carolingian manuscripts and literature of the Gregorian Reform: L. Kéry, *Canonical Collections of the Early Middle Ages (ca. 400–1140)*, Washington 1999. Many journals deal with the history of canon law, including *Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht* (from 1857), *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* (from 1971, in 1955–1970 as an addition to *Traditio*), *Revue du droit canonique* (from 1951). An excellent introduction to the sources literature (including official legal documents) is the textbook edited by H. Coing et al., *Handbuch der Quellen und Literatur der neueren europäischen Privatrechtsgeschichte*, Vol. 1: *Mittelalter (1100–1500): Die gelehrten Rechte und die Gesetzgebung*, Munich 1973.

57 Cf. H. Cowdrey, *Gregory VII, 1073–1085* (Oxford 1998); see also *Studi gregoriani per la storia di Gregorio VII e delle riforme gregoriane*, Roma 1947–1960.

pilgrimage routes became fixed: Compostela, Mont-Saint-Michel, Rocamadour (Chélini, Branthomme 1996: 123, 127, 131); this was accompanied by the greatest flourishing of the hospice system (p. 143) and the development of religious confraternities gathering pilgrims (p. 150). However, new pilgrimage destinations, which emerged toward the end of the Middle Ages, were no longer bound with relics (p. 168); we shall explain this question later on (see Chapter 9.1–3).

9. SATIRICAL SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE. In the short passage of the satirical text quoted above, we have captured signs of some changes in the areas of basic social life: law and religion. It is not surprising that they appeared together in the same text. However, we may pose the following questions: did it have to be this way and how were they associated with each other? Both these fields witnessed profound and complex transformations, whose essence (that is, both cause and purpose) consisted in limiting (localizing, containing) the place of the sacred in the whole culture of the late Middle Ages. Contrary to popular opinion – not uncommon also among historians – this was not a symptom of a diminishing of its role; in other words, of secularization. In what follows I shall explain how this was possible.

Before we start the actual work (an inquiry into Reynaert's story is not our goal), let us note a few other points which may tell us something about the society of the time. The institution of nuclear family, in which everyone creates their own household after marriage, seems to be quite stable.⁵⁸ Both the wolf and the

58 The other types are the patriarchal family (parents together with married sons) and the core family (one married son remains with his parents). The prevailing theory of the progressive nuclearization of the family forced by the capitalist economy is questionable: Burke 1992: 54 with a reference to A. M. van der Woude, "The Household in the United Provinces," in: *Household and Family in Past Time*, ed. P. Laslett, Cambridge 1972, pp. 299–318. It is possible that this type of family, culturally constructed, was already known in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and that it favored the development of the capitalist economy (not the other way around). The constructor, of course, was the Church which preferred adult marriages, as they were economically self-sufficient, although difficult to achieve due to the rules of kinship whose aim was to make it easier to inherit for those who had legal descendants: J. Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*, Cambridge 1983. Given the diversity of data, P. Stafford (1998: 103–125) posits short-term and cyclical changes and returns of certain models in different places and circumstances, instead of a gradual evolution of the traditional model. Weinstein and Bell (p. 246) are convinced that affective families (held together by emotional bonds) existed already in the thirteenth century.

fox are almost exemplary husbands and undeniably caring fathers (in Reynaert's case, it becomes evident in further parts of the text). Defending his wife's (and, of course, his own) honor, the wolf acts under the influence of strong moral order. It seems that this family model was traditionally paternalistic since its very inception.⁵⁹ Feudal relations were quite clear: vassals hardly exhibited any excessive respect and even the Francization of the nobility was noticed (the King of France was the senior of the Flemish nobility, while the rest of the Netherlands was usually dependent on the Empire). A sense of private ownership was already quite strong (with the stigmatization of minor thefts; in our text, we learn this on the grotesquely exaggerated example of the three successive owners of a piece of sausage). The church calendar was binding while dates were defined according to the holidays: Green Week, which closed the cycle of great liturgical celebrations, was also the special date when the king met with his vassals (and hence it was the court day, too). The promise of a church career ("and to make him chaplain...") could be tempting for people while lulling their vigilance.⁶⁰ Finally, let us make an observation regarding the field of economic history: the cities relied on the production of large quantities of canvas. Just as in the case of all other points we have already discussed, our author shares this information in passing, as a fact obvious to every Fleming; thus, we learn additionally that people of the time still used parchment, not paper, for writing.

59 For a review of the history of feudal law, see Weimar 1990: 31–98.

60 And it is so to the point that they want to take lessons in the position of readiness to receive corporal punishment (Lulofs, line 145: "he squeezed him strongly with his legs", *Vaste tusschen sine beene*).

2. Language and History: The Cognitive Turn

1. OBJECTS OF HISTORICAL INQUIRY. If someone collected more such messages and wanted to write a story of a certain period in the history of Flanders, the person might face opposition and hear that there is no unity between the word and the referent: “the text has no reference to an external reality, but is contained within itself.... [it] is seen not only independently of its relation to the external world, but also independently of its author.”⁶¹

The author should be eliminated as an important factor in the production of texts. There is no intention in texts. There is no reality, only language exists (Iggers 1997: 133). This is the radical self-definition of the methodological position known as the linguistic turn. The idea based mainly on the radically structuralist theory of language and society. “Man moves within the framework of structures ... which he does not determine, but which determine him.” For historiography, this meant a world devoid of meaning, human perpetrators, human actors, and all coherence (Iggers 1997: 121). Moreover, the structuralist undermining of the idea of the continuity of history contributed to the development of a tendency among historians to “lead toward a cross-sectional rather than a processual ordering of historical life” (Schorske 1998: 232).

In this atmosphere, readers misunderstood Hayden White’s theory of historical imagination as a reduction of historical writing to literary fiction. That is not what White intended. He did admit that the way of coding facts in chronicles is identical to the story structures used in narrative prose (emplotment; White 1978: 46). But this was not a denunciation of history or an accusation that history is an activity which explains nothing. On the contrary, the fictionalization of history has a positive function; we may perceive it as an explanatory operation based on the same principle with which great works of fiction shed light on the world that we inhabit alongside the author. In both historical and fictional writing, we recognize forms of consciousness which serve to constitute and colonize the world in which it seeks to dwell comfortably. By encouraging historians to recognize the presence of an element of fictionality in their narratives, White did not intend to degrade historiography to the role of ideology or propaganda but to help historians break free from “ideological preconceptions,” which they do not recognize as such, but still follow them as if they were correct perceptions

61 In this manner G. G. Iggers (1997: 121) summarizes the perspective of Foucault and Derrida.

of how things are (1978: 61). In conclusion, we may say after Iggers that the “linguistic turn” was an attempt to overcome the determinism proper to the former socio-economic methods and stress the role of cultural factors, among which language occupies the crucial position (Iggers 1997: 133).

Almost at the same time as the linguistic turn in the theory of history, in philosophy, anthropology, and linguistics, there appeared schools of cognitive constructivism, which used the psychological theory of Piaget (Wadsworth 1998).⁶² All these schools emphasize the active role of human cognitive structures as the factors of human development and culture; the schools want to find the reflection of these factors in the history and include this fact in the historical description. Some researchers consider both currents together; for instance, Ankersmit:

“As the result of the so-called linguistic turn and constructivism, we perceive things like the French Revolution differently than trees, mountains, or rivers, which exist independently and precede our experience or reflection about them.”

The expression “the French Revolution” is a creation whose content depends on individual choices and, most often, on a consent within a scientific discipline (Ankersmit 1996: 19). There are no set historical objects; each researcher constructs the object of research; therefore, scientific activity is autopoiesis (Ankersmit 1996: 28), which differs from creating something because, with autopoiesis, the subject and object of the creative activity are the same (30).

2. WHY DO WE UNDERSTAND ANIMALS? In view of the above, and remembering all that we have just learned from the short satirical, purely fictitious, and sometimes absurd text, we must reflect: Do we fall prey to the naïve and anachronistic reading of the old texts “as we like it?” Hermeneutists rightly teach about the otherness of medieval literature,⁶³ but we should not be overeager and deny the enormity of understanding. Ganim concludes his research on the style of English epic in a similar manner⁶⁴ and counts explicit – though differently

62 Also see K. Knorr-Cetina, *The manufacture of knowledge: an essay on the constructivist and contextual nature of science*, Oxford 1981; E. von Glasersfeld, “Facts and the Self from a Constructivist Point of View,” *Poetics* 18/1989, pp. 435–448; M. Jaeger, *Die Philosophie des Konstruktivismus auf dem Hintergrund des Konstruktionsbegriffs*, Hildesheim 1998; A. Kolańczyk, *Czuję, myślę, jestem. Świadomość i procesy psychiczne w ujęciu poznawczym*, Gdańsk 1999, M. Douglas (1984) was the pioneer in cognitive anthropology; also see *Amerykańska antropologia kognitywna: poznanie, język, klasyfikacja i kultura*, ed. by M. Buchowski, Warszawa 1993.

63 H. R. Jauss, *Alterität und Modernität der mittelalterlichen Literatur*, München 1977.

64 Ganim 1983: 148: “I would question whether the experience of medieval literature is all that foreign to us.”

motivated – self-reflexiveness among the similarities of many medieval and postmodern works.⁶⁵

Interpretation is something different; in our example, interpretation decides whether we will read the creation of the Flemish version as a satirical depiction of relations at the court of the count of Flanders, growing tensions between the king of France and Flanders, or, say, an echo of the struggles of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa with the Pope. This choice will ground our conjectures on the author's political position; it will make us identify and evaluate the means which he uses to convince us of his rightness. But even a modern text appears differently in the first reading and/or when we aim for interpretation, which we are not always ready to conduct.

Thus, the question is not why can we interpret the old text, but why do we understand so much of it? C. Behan McCullagh (1991) goes in this direction in a polemic with Derrida's views on meaning: Derrida's theory fails to explain how we use language to communicate as clearly and precisely as we do. It simply ignores the conventions by which we decide and know to choose – among the various possible meanings words can have – which one has been used in the case of a given text or utterance (304).

By reference to the historical reality, which Derrida is so afraid of, McCullagh anticipates the accusation that we cannot explain the conventions, which always generate the correct understanding of texts, without falling into a vicious circle.⁶⁶ If we were to say that these conventions are appropriate because in conforming to them we always arrive at a correct understanding of texts, that would indeed be circular, assuming that there is no independent check of their correctness. But if we say that in our community conformity to these conventions is what we mean by calling an interpretation of a text correct, then circularity has been avoided (304–305).

It is not about a guarantee of infallibility, but about the integrity of interpretation. Although McCullagh refutes the second possible accusation of arbitrariness with an inadequate reference to De Saussure – that many a linguistic convention

65 Ganim 1983: 150: "I would not be the first critic to point out that some medieval and some postmodernist texts resemble each other in achieving their impact by a radical self-reflexiveness and self-consciousness, though both the intent and affect of that self-reflexiveness differ markedly."

66 Kiening (1996: 42) explains why it is inadequate to declare the non-existence of context or make it equal with text according to the principle *il n'y a pas hors-texte* (Derrida 1967: 274).

is arbitrary – he closes the discussion with the right conclusion: Whether they are arbitrary or not, the rules for interpreting texts generally enable quite effective communication of precise ideas, and that is what justifies them (305).

Of course, one should not be afraid of the word “arbitrariness” because of its moral tinge (voluntarism, groundlessness); the arbitrariness of social conventions is as strong as most institutions shaped in historical practice. We will repeat many times that these are phenomena which need individual contribution, even if it is very inadequate. We put aside the matter of the rules of satisfactory interpretation, which are the proper subject of McCullagh’s work.

As we return to our more modest program, we ask: Why do we understand when animals talk? Why do we laugh at those moments that the author planned? Where do we meet with the author?

This meeting place is the space of language in which we participate mentally. Its maps, landscapes, and topography fill the meanings connected with each other thanks to our ability of predication: the ability to state judgments about different subjects. It is at the level of predication that the reader meets the author, but also other readers. Most importantly, only the recognition of the existence of predication level explains the understanding of text in a foreign language. It is the predication system that we reproduce in the process of translation as what is expressed in one language or the other. In dramatic circumstances – on the eve of his execution – Jan Hus touched upon this matter because he was convicted even though none of the participants of the Council of Constance has ever read his works in the Czech original. Motivated by understandable bitterness, Hus had the right to be wrong when he said that even if they were to read his works, they would not understand them, “Because only Italians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, and Germans attended the Council” (quoted in Fumagalli, Brocchieri 1996: 255). Hus was wrong, his troubles began with nothing else but his proper understanding of Wycliff’s English writings, however, for any judge to pass judgment on someone who does not know the language of the investigation and trial is an uneasy moral problem. Every historian is such a judge, who not only cannot ask the witness in any language but also must judge based on residual answers to some other questions, should the historian be so lucky to have any answers at all.

3. UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION. Predicating, or stating judgments – according to Rita Nolan’s hypothesis (1994: 109–110) – is a cognitive function learned during first language acquisition. Mastering this ability determines a child’s transition in mental development to the phase of propositional thinking, when one may claim that a predication is true.

Predication is not a matter of imagination, although it does participate in the building of a certain inner space in our mind, in which the contents appear that reach the area of our conscious reception. When we read in the fragment from *Of Reynaert the Fox* how Tybeert the cat addressed the king – “because you bear Reynaert ill will” (“dordat ghi Reynaerde zijt onthout”) – we do not have to imagine anything to know (that is, if necessary, reproduce in a similar order from memory) the few things that the text predicates about some people and objects:

- there exists a talking cat;
- in this reality, there exists the addressee of the speech (the king) and the fox;
- there is a bond between the king and the fox;
- the speaker knows the relationship between the king and the fox;
- these relations are bad;
- the fact that these relations are bad influences the behavior of the king, the fox, and others.

All these predicates form our knowledge about the represented reality. Usually, we may (partly) translate this knowledge into visual images, but one should not confuse the mental objectivization of predication with imagination; from a certain moment, it is simply impossible, for instance, in mathematics. The manner, in which these objectivizations exist in our mind, is a secret shared by consciousness: memories, dreaming, daydreaming, artistic vision, and mystical experience. Another secret of consciousness is the extent of coexistence with the vivid (sensual) image: how vivid is the picture that we make when reading a verbal portrait?

To understand a statement and determine its content, one only needs to identify the predicates. What suffices is the knowledge of a language, its vocabulary and grammar. What does it mean to know a language? It means to be able to form judgments about as many entities as possible: to formulate a statement, construct a text, hence, build a series of predications. That is why animal characters can speak in literature, everything can speak, even the language, as we read in modern poetry, in which the speaking subject is nowhere to be found. At the same time, this is why we can understand all of them – both animals and modern poets.

Nevertheless, what we can interpret is the identity of the predicating subjects, the causes and effects of systems underlying predication. In this case, we utilize knowledge from other sources, usually texts, that is, other cultural utterances. For example, we may fruitfully use the predication “there exists a talking cat” in the interpretation of the whole utterance in relation to other. The direction of interpretation will depend on the amount of knowledge that we will use for it: will it be knowledge about other animals who speak or about animals who do not speak the human language.

Apart from a certain scope of “perception and direct action,”⁶⁷ creative communication is impossible without uttering or understanding predications.⁶⁸ However, there is no obligation to interpret. Everyone, who interprets, does it for a reason or with a purpose. The most important interpretation in everyday life is the determination of truth. To recognize something as true is to assume that the content of the predication agrees with the previously accumulated resource of (remembered) predications which reflect the past or present (sometimes also the highly probable future) state of the extra-linguistic reality. The other predications are most of our current experiences and established knowledge about the world. Current experiences undergo a constant comparison with the new ones. Just like any predication, we consider all knowledge accumulated in our memory to be true, as long as we do not think about it and nothing forces us to doubt. Both resistance and susceptibility to doubt may end morbidly in mania or depression.

4. THE INTERPRETATIVE FRAMEWORK. Lasting knowledge also consists of beliefs about the falsity or fictionality of some predications (“Earth is flat”). Here appears the problem of negation. A simple negative sentence “This man is not a thief” must be divided into two predications: “This man is a thief” and “I claim that this is not true.” A similar thing happens with the question: “Is this man a thief?” In addition to “This man is a thief,” we mean “I want to know if this is true.”

An unknown part of knowledge gathers along with an interpretation. If the interpretative packaging fades from memory, and sole predication remains, then we will confuse levels of reality or modalities and our perception of the real world will also consist of invented or denied elements. The boundary between information about reality and story disappears. The same happens when the interpretative frame has not been properly transmitted or received. The famous example in the field of media is the alleged panic caused by confusing Orson Welles’ radio

67 In this manner, the newer cognitive psychology (Neisser 1999: 186) describes the knowledge about the environment, which a child gains in the first few months of its life, that allows it to “gain immediate access to the real ecological situation;” that is, to orient itself, where it is, what it is doing, what it has done, and what it can do, for instance, grasp an object. Neisser (1985) considers all this to be the knowledge of the “ecological ‘I’” which he already considers to be “an active subject.” “Direct perception is a phenomenological background, a foundation for other, less certain human convictions. It gives unfaltering sense of localization and activity and, as the ecological ‘I,’ gives the feeling of being in the world” (186).

68 It may be difficult when the situation makes us formulate an opinion. Gombrowicz phrased it well in his *Trans-Atlantyk*: “I’m not so foolish as to have an opinion These Days, or not to have an opinion.”

play about Martian invasion with actual events. The history of literature abounds with similarly expressive cases of reception of works rich in predications, whose recipients misrecognized their interpretative frame. Non-linguistic communication may stimulate such cases: Belin the ram, one of the two royal envoys who returned alone from the mission to Reynaert the fox, learned about this when he passed the bag with “important letters” to the king. Because this correspondence conveyed the mutilated head of the second emissary, the king wrongly assumed that Belin the ram is a crime partner of Reynaert the fox.

Furthermore, there are categories of works that deliberately obliterate the nature of the interpretative framework for propaganda, polemics, mockery, or criminal purposes: counterfeits, rumors, imitations, parodies, pasquinades, polemics (obliteration?). Counterfeits cause the most difficulties because they especially transmit signals that enable truthful interpretation, which is usually difficult to prove. The mechanism of calculated libel operates with a deference of the interpretative framework in time: before the negation of the slandered cancels the libel, the false content will remain in the memory of many; since the recipients of public media outlets never form the same circle, there will always be a certain number that has not learned about the rectification and lives in error, which is what the slanderer intends to achieve.

Thanks to these distinctions, we may manage our cognitive efforts better. On the one hand, the relationships between doses of knowledge from various cultural utterances are a matter of interpretation, which we must delimit according to the current need; otherwise, the interpretation will never end.⁶⁹ On the other hand, the knowledge from communication data (vocabulary, language, and speech) – the lexical meanings, predications, and pragmatic acts of speech – is shaped only by its structure, which means that one can strive for its exhaustion. The incomplete reading of this knowledge usually stems from a deficient communicative (linguistic) competence, and it causes defects in both understanding and interpretation. Therefore, the hermeneutic schools rightly make the interpretative effort to begin with the reproduction of the knowledge implied in the linguistic layer.

5. THE KNOWLEDGE OF TEXTS AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE. The theory of science recognizes the role of language as a library or encyclopedia. According to Thomas S. Kuhn, knowledge about nature and words grows simultaneously

69 This is where we may expect to find one of the sources of the inflation of truth in the world of *the profane* (see chapter 19).

with the process of speech learning, and these are not two kinds of knowledge but two sides of the same coin that produces language (1987: 21).

In linguistics, there was another turn: there appeared cognitive semantics.⁷⁰ Cognitive semantics introduces an anti-structuralist thesis that meaning is not only contained in oppositions, in difference, but inherently. Therefore, the “linguistic turn” should now receive its succession, or even substitution, with the cognitive turn, because our understanding of language is no longer the same today as it was when Foucault or Derrida formed their views.

We have observed such elements in a text, in which they most probably appeared by coincidence, and we found interesting and consistent messages about the “human acts of will” and “intentions,” about reality and its actors.

We now know that languages are not just communication tools, black boxes with a hidden mechanism; they are also tools for gathering knowledge and creating libraries. They provide a repertoire of mechanisms to reveal different attitudes toward knowledge. Some languages have developed obligatory grammatical categories to express situations when someone formulates a judgment derived from one’s own knowledge, language, or impersonal knowledge. In many languages, there are evidential constructs which allow distinguishing the indisputable truth, the probability of truth, the result of evidence, the indication of evidence, the inconsistency with the prototype meaning of a given category (“something like”), and the result contradictory to anticipation (Chafe 1986: IX).

Traditional structural semantics cannot adequately describe the meaning of many words. It is necessary to refer to certain domains of human cognition (time, space, sensory qualities, etc.) to explain such terms as the names of the days of the week or the determination of kinship. In the traditional description, the difference between the words “mother” and “father” is only one: gender. The cognitive description detects that they are comparable only to some extent (in the genetic, genealogical, and marital domain) and differ in something else entirely: the mother characterizes the birth and feeding domain, the father – responsibility and authority (Taylor 1995: 87).⁷¹

70 As part of cognitive linguistics, cf. *Językoznawstwo kognitywne: wybór tekstów*, eds. W. Kubiński et al., Gdańsk 1998; M. Indyk, “Badacz literatury wobec językoznawstwa kognitywnego,” in: *Wiedza o literaturze i edukacja. Księga referatów Zjazdu Polonistów, Warszawa 1995*, eds. T. Michałowska et al., Warszawa 1996, pp. 546–558; J. R. Taylor, *Linguistic Categorization. Prototypes in Linguistic Theory*, Oxford 1995; *Podstawy gramatyki kognitywnej*, eds. H. Kardela et al., Warszawa 1994.

71 M. Indyk, *Badacz literatury wobec językoznawstwa kognitywnego* (548) discusses this example, while Levy Jr., “Some Hypotheses about the Family,” ed. Dreitzel, p. 41

The wolf from our story is only to some extent an animal, or it is an animal and something more: he is a husband, father, vassal, prosecutor. In Taylor's enumeration of cognitive domains (cognitive areas), implied by the word father and necessary for its full understanding, we find the following content that constitutes the basic aspects of paternity (1995: 86):

- a) the child's genetic material ("my blood"),
- b) the responsibility for the well-being of the mother and the child,
- c) the domain of authority: the father is the source of authority and disciplines the child,
- d) the genealogical domain: the father is the closest male ancestor,
- e) the marital domain: the mother's husband.

This paternal frame allows us to construct a prototype father. We see how much knowledge stored in this frame reflects cultural specificity and conventions. But this is the knowledge shared by the community. This sharing guarantees the stability of the prototype and the knowledge it contains. Our wolf is just a prototype father: his accusation is precisely about the losses he suffered – an astonishing thing – in all five points relevant to his identity:

- a) My children may be genetically fox babies.
- b) I failed as someone responsible for protecting my family.
- c) I may not be the source of authority for my children who have been blinded because of my carelessness or weakness, while the villain remains unpunished and mocks me.
- d) My children may not be my heirs.
- e) I may not be a proper husband (cuckold!).

What is also amazing is the fact that all cognitive domains appear here. This happens very rarely. Usually, the story updates only this domain, which is important at a given point. We already notice a certain paternalism, early, too early in relation to the time of appearance of this family model. The prototype of the father may be something obsolete today, as Taylor himself admits, but it is 700 years old. In principle, however, the prototype categories combine "structural stability and flexible adaptability" and can integrate new data (Geeraerts quoted by Taylor

formulated a similar thought within the area of sociology of families: "in no moderately modern society has the difference between genders, in the context of family, been diminished to the minimum implied by physiological differences."

1995: 54). New experiences and content can easily attach to the prototype category as peripheral aspects.

6. RESOURCES OF LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE. At this point, a place appears for the expelled author who may focus attention on a domain of prototypes in an unashamedly intentional way, because they usually do not activate simultaneously. If we really are “spoken by language,” as a French thinker argued, it is in the same way that we are “walked” by our legs or “looked” by our eyes: we are “incarnated” into our bodies. There are people dissatisfied with their bodies but, after all, if they hope to change something, they will not get rid of them but convert them to their better shapes. Similarly with speech: the hardships and pleasure of literary work consist in describing your experience in your own way; stylistic virtuosity in expressing the same content with various means, achieving the effects intended by the author; these are the examples of mastering the language and, therefore, the real authorship.

The same applies to the self-creation of entities: it is possible thanks to the freedom to focus messages about oneself on selected aspects. Only a talking parrot is not an author. The freedom of authors encounters a limitation in the continuity of prototypes and its rooting of individual actions in interaction (non-text communication, see 2.7). This restriction indicates a fundamental and probably irremovable weakness of individualist theories of emancipated human which suggest that our dependence on language is a curse. We should not be afraid of language or paranoidly exaggerate the limitations that it brings. Fear unnecessarily obscures the language’s creative potential. We would be nothing without language, but we do not become parrots when we use it.

We should assume that the flexibility of prototypes allows changes that, according to Thomas Kuhn (1987: 21), constitute the “central characteristic of scientific revolutions [which] alter the knowledge of nature that is intrinsic to the language itself, and that is thus prior to anything quite describable as description or generalization, scientific or everyday.”

Cognitive linguistics reduces the motivation of linguistic structures to the wealth of different experiences, some of which are common to “all normal healthy human beings, while others are strongly conditioned by culture and the environment;” this is why we notice between languages “both significant similarities and intercultural linguistic diversity” (J. R. Taylor 1995: 191). The reservation about “healthy people” makes it possible to distinguish situations when the language prevails completely, from those when we stand above it; that is, when we are able to reflect, assess the course and meaning of a statement. In fact, “spoken by language” are those people who are unable to reflect or discuss – that is, “haunted,” mad, or utter fools. We do not belong among them as long as we

can talk about it and, above all, speak about it with others. It is a matter of the metalevel of communication and recursiveness of the message check.

We should distinguish knowledge acquired and possessed by language from the perceptual coding of sensory impressions, on the one hand, and the conceptual coding of cognitive structures, on the other hand (Nolan 1994: 124). The emergence of the theory of prototypes in semantics, which opposes the theory of words modeled on Aristotle's logical notion of concepts defined by sets of constitutive features, scholars sometimes interpret as a renaissance of Platonic ideas (Kastovsky 1988: 192). They also recall the medieval representation of universals in terms of ontological realism (in opposition to nominalism): if universals somehow exist, they do so exactly as prototype copies. We should recall here the concept of "fetishism" as a form of the functioning of the incarnate, non-arbitrary meaning of words. The Dutch writer Carry van Bruggen proposed the idea in her innovative essay "Hedendaags fetischisme" (1925).

Why do we, then, understand talking animals? Not because they just behave like people. We will still understand them when they will struggle with their problems that we have never encountered. Nevertheless, we will be able to understand and create their possible conversations. Therefore, the question must be asked: why are we able to embody other beings whom we have never seen? This seems possible thanks to the cognitive power of language. The knowledge we owe to the language allows us to make predications about fantastic beings and provides others with an understanding of these statements.

7. *PROCESSUALITY*. After the cognitive turn, it is impossible to impose or attribute objects under analysis (captured as structures) with strict internal determinants that exclude the influence of human will. The historical panorama breaks into pieces. Deterministic structuralism should give way to the methodology of structurism (Lloyd, Elias' figurations, see Chapter 14), which recognizes the initiative of agents that operate within structures but participate in their formation. This is a new aspect of cognitive constructivism. The theory of culture built on communication advocates "not top-down determinism, but bottom-up co-generating."⁷² The ontology of works of art (Currie 1989) includes micro-history in the determining of the identity of the work of art. If we see two identical paintings made with the same paints and we cannot distinguish them physically in any way – the counterfeiter could have used materials from the period – then we consider the original the one that was created in a certain

72 B. Lathané, "Dynamic Social Impact: The Creation of Culture by Communication," *Journal of Communication* 46.4/1996.

way and, therefore, in the course of a particular process. This processuality in general can actually describe all objects, not only works of art (Fischer, Ravizza 1998: 173–174): What makes an individual object what it is (and not something else) is partly a function of its actual history. Linguistic reference is a *historical* phenomenon; the historical view requires that the individual's use of the term be related in some appropriate way to past uses of the term both individual and, above all, all other.

Many facts are historical, that is, processual. Fischer and Ravizza (p. 205) point to various sources of historical facts: some of them are historical based on their constitutive properties, while others based on the participants. “We do not perceive things, features, and relations separately and for themselves, but always in connection with the facts of the case [*Sachverhalt*]” (Tegtmeier 1992: 144).

Moral phenomena are historical, that is, processual. The existence of certain virtues is proof that in a given reality there operated procedures responsible for nurturing specific virtues (Fischer, Ravizza 1998: 182). We should thus define the transfer of matters of learning and development to the mainstream of cognitive psychology as the recognition of the historical or processual nature of behavior (Neisser 1999: 179–180), which causes that we must include the social conditioning of all knowledge⁷³ in the philosophical theory of cognition. It will not be possible to develop certain concepts and have the ability to order them and formulate predications without participating in a long process controlled by the community. In this process, the source of knowledge about previous uses of terms is not only the standard language and texts published after thorough editing and correction. There are other, mostly interactive levels of communication. They constitute a complex apparatus, active day and night, thanks to which people may experiment with new meanings and pragmatic procedures but, above all, check standards and make sure that, for instance, “Good morning” still means “Hello” and did not begin to mean “Goodbye.”

To reverse Arthur Danto's reflection that our knowledge of the past is limited by our ignorance of the future,⁷⁴ we may say that the relative stability of the

73 U. Neisser, “Systemy polimorficzne. Nowe podejście do teorii poznania,” in: *Modele umysłu. Zbiór tekstów*, ed. Z. Chlewiński, Warszawa 1999, p. 180, considers the works of Wygotski a breakthrough in this field, as they arrived in the West in 1978 in an English translation entitled *Mind and Society*.

74 A. Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History*, London 1965, p. 15; qtd. after J. Topolski, *Jak się pisze i rozumie historię. Tajemnice narracji historycznej*, Warszawa 1996, p. 61.

semantic language apparatus, strongly validated by the cognitive theory, gives a new and powerful clue that continuity and coherence are possible in history; and not just changes, thresholds, breakthroughs, and transformations. All of them form aspects of our cognition of the contemporary reality. By its closeness, the contemporary reality seems to us incomparably more coherent, understandable, and problem-free. That this belief is wrong stems not only from the common lack of universal consent in the assessment of all current events but also the uncertainty which lurks behind every explanation that we give to ourselves or someone else.

The tasks to search for continuity and variability in history and today are not so different. We will finish neither, so we have to limit ourselves to inventory facts or even changes, without trying to place them as moves in a process; that is, such course of events that follows a certain law, rule, plan, or intention. The easiest way to do this is to examine the fragmentary areas, hence the flourishing of microhistory. We should believe that the element of processuality in the ontology of a literary work will be conducive to empiricism. But microprocesses do not exclude macroprocesses, and may even better justify them.

8. TRIVIAL CERTAINTY. It seems that the theory of prototypes allows a different look at the earlier stages of literature, when people relied less on fresh, revealing observation, and more on inherited patterns (topos, allegory, folklore, literature for children). As we have considered before, the flexible adaptability of prototypes, which provides a better understanding of old records, requires a constant confirmation of lexical meanings, syntactic rules, associations, pragmatic procedures, and even emotional reactions and the knowledge of standards. It does not suffice what in structural semantics was called the phatic function of expression, which confirms the existence of a communication community. It is necessary to include whole areas of trivial art, the significance of which we do not derive this time from the premises of social history.

Notably, for our purposes, a narrative can become an opportunity for us to deepen our grasp of the moral knowledge and emotions we already command. / This conception of the relation of art, especially narrative art, to morality might be called the transactional view (because of its emphasis on the transaction between the narrative artwork and the moral understanding), or it might be called, as I prefer to call it, the clarificationist view, in honor of the most prized transaction that can transpire between the narrative artwork and the moral understanding. Clarificationism does not claim that, in the standard case, we acquire interesting, new propositional knowledge from artworks, but rather that the artworks in question can deepen our moral understanding by, among other things, encouraging us to apply our moral knowledge and emotions to specific cases. For in being prompted to apply and engage our antecedent moral powers, we may come to augment them (Carroll 1998: 160).

It is difficult to say whether this position absolves the authors that use traditional means of expression – they were often considered liars or opportunists – or we should consider this approach as undermining the modernist theory of autonomy of the work of art with its obsessive obligation to economy and originality. We have more certainty about the functioning of the principle of clarity in the creative activities of the authors and audiences of the medieval theater.

There is one more benefit to the flexible adaptability of prototypes. If one were to assume after Ankersmit (1996: 31) that there are no a priori objects of historical studies and all historians construct the subject of their research, then we should consider interdisciplinarity as subjective, while intersubjective objects of interdisciplinary research – the same for different disciplines – as not even in existence. But we do have cognitive structures present in language and literature,⁷⁵ iconography and interactive forms of communication. They link between various disciplines and schools; they enable the comparability of objects while avoiding the objectivization⁷⁶ pursued by the exact sciences, but which is devastating for the humanities.

Although not quite intersubjective, objects of historical studies do exist. They call to us: Do not be afraid! The news about our disappearance was greatly exaggerated. We still exist. Discover us. Process us, transform us, but do not act as if we never existed. We just could not write. We were not taught Latin. Our writings were destroyed. We were afraid to write the whole truth or write anything. You can blame us for it, but do not forget us!

75 Pietraszko (1995: 32) thinks in the same vein about the “structural qualities of the creative consciousness of the researcher” as the seat of interdisciplinarity; a nevertheless outdated idea.

76 Ankersmit (1996: 32) writes about the socialization and collectivization of activity.

3. Pious Spectacle

1. KNOWLEDGE OF SPECTACLES. The abandonment of the ordeal as a legal trial proved to be an important step on the path to the Sacramental Church – independent on both the secular authority and an unpredictable God’s intervention. Both were possible by imposing certain limitations on the place of the sacred in the mundane world – a more precise spatial and conceptual distinction of the place, which fell under the Church’s control as well as ordinary legal jurisdiction. To be sure, this did not come with a diminishment of the role, or “scope,” of the sacred, but rather with a change of both its ontological status and the way it manifested itself in human reality. This process had various manifestations in all spheres of life. Beginning with some remarks concerning law, politics, fine arts, sciences, and literature, we shall now shift our focus onto theater.

What distinguishes the sphere of performing arts, making it a grateful object of observation? Grateful, that is, promising despite all its ingratitude? The sphere of spectacles seems to combine and expose the highest number of factors which constitute the cultural meanings of events remembered by history. In a narrower perspective, it is a sphere where we can most clearly see all components and aspects of the creative process, which determine the ontological identity of the work of art that has endured to our times. Let us then assume that the convergence of the notion of *pium spectaculum* with the sphere of theater is not accidental, even though the notion itself was crucial for the cultural development of the West from the Gothic until as late as the Baroque (Heer 1949: 438).

If we are able – following the order known from the history of literature – to first define the inventory of materials and themes used by the writer, then, in order to read their “true” message, we still have to recognize the idea which unifies the work. For individual themes and, albeit to a lesser extent, even ready-made materials may alter their meanings depending on the work’s composition, which usually tells us something about the purpose behind their use. If we read a text that portrays priests or women in an unfavorable light, it is insufficient to describe it as anticlerical or misogynistic. After all, we no longer take suggestive images contained in the old sources at their face value. Of course, some may have believed that these images could provide a mirror reflection of reality, but for a long time now various research schools have tended to treat sources as symptoms of something which yet demands disclosure. Therefore, we may ask about the intention and purpose of the text, and thus about its functioning.

In order to reveal the idea that informs a cultural statement without risking deception by appearances, it is not enough to conduct a detailed structural analysis of this statement, even though an analysis of this kind is still indispensable – it just goes by different names (recently, “deconstruction”). We have to recognize as many as possible of the elements of this statement which remain rooted in the currents and values of the then reality. Furthermore, it is essential to map the needs, or social situations, which (hypothetically) could be negotiated through this statement (through such a text), and to reconstruct the particular motivations that might have influenced the creation of certain types of works in certain milieus. In this last respect, we should not only distinguish the possible initiators (those who commissioned the work) but also assess the author’s (producer’s, performer’s) background and competencies. It would not harm to imagine the process of production (much harder than it is today, even in the case of manuscripts), performance or staging. In the end, we should also dwell on the circumstances of the work’s reception.

Even if these factors do not manifest themselves at every step of the way and rarely find their place in contemporary sources, we know that they must have had an explicit impact at that time, for without their co-existence the work would never come into being. “Explicit” does not mean “unequivocal.” For instance, motivations for sponsoring the production of performances were revealed faintly, if at all. What is more, the revealed information in this regard usually does not satisfy our critical curiosity. The first, simplest conclusion which we can already draw is that not many people could afford to organize a performance; after all, this is still the case. Moreover, this is not only a matter of costs but also the level of interest, which reflects our convictions of what is consequential and what is secondary. The organizational difficulties involved in the staging of a play – even if the stage was a temporary platform made with planks on barrels – were always so immense that we may gain comprehensive knowledge about a given society merely by explaining the circumstances of its theatrical productions. It is this knowledge that provides the key to the understanding of theatrical work.

Listing art among the activities constitutive of human history, Kenneth Burke, in his *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941), proposes a theory of what he calls “dramatic criticism,”⁷⁷ which posits the structure of theater (stage, drama,

77 Or “dialectical,” as it follows the distinction of positive, independent, and dialectical concepts in language. The latter, to be fully understood, require an antonym (for instance, “freedom”). One should understand the term “criticism” in a broad sense that encompasses the whole of culture, not only literature or fine arts. Today, the term “hermeneutics” approximates this sense.

backdrop, role) as a model for describing reality in both natural sciences and humanities. Burke believes we may present human actions as a kind of drama; from this follows his vision of history as an “unending conversation” (K. Burke 1941: 111). At one point, he writes suggestively that, “in the discussion of human affairs,” it is “more to be learned from a study of tropes than from a study of tropisms” (114).⁷⁸ There is a whole school of thought which Clifford Geertz, in his essay “Blurred Genres,” locates against the backdrop of the methodological breakthrough in social sciences.⁷⁹

2. THEATER AND DRAMA. We are talking about one while thinking about the other, but we will write about both. However, we must remember that theatrical life is more than performances of dramas in which actors play characters. Karl Young (1933: 80–81) described this as impersonation, seeing it as more important than dialogue – since (contrary to what Chambers thought) there are also entirely dramatic monologues – and even more important than speech (pantomime is a kind of drama); its essence is “physical imitation:” the fact that the “actor” deliberately creates an impression of being someone else – a figure from a particular story.⁸⁰ Hardison (1965: 30–32) sees the emphasis on impersonation as an excessive enhancement of the theatricality of drama, which leads to a distortion of vision insofar as one places theater in the field of play, that is to say, among the activities devoid of a practical purpose. Hence the element of artificiality or simulation, which Young attributes to acting, and which allows him to exclude church service from consideration, as in this case, the participants

78 Tropes are rhetorical figures. Contrary to appearances, these two fields intermingle in cognitive psychology and biological theory of cognition (see below references to Maturana 1998, Nolan 1994, Wadsworth 1998, and Schmidt 1987).

79 The fact that the title itself highlights the feature of mixed genres can be misleading, as it suggests that this was a unique phenomenon in the history of writing. Instead, the blurring of genres is often the case both at the beginning and the end of a genre's existence, when it generates different genres or transforms itself. A. Knight had to devote a whole chapter (that is, around a quarter of his work) on late medieval genres in French drama to the problem of untypical forms. Cf. J. Trzynadlowski, “O zjawiskach międzygatunkowych w utworach literackich,” in: *Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich*, 1966, 8, pp. 147–150.

80 “The actors pretend to be the personages concerned in the story” (Young 1933: 80). Similarly, for instance, A. Pompen, “Het kerkelijk drama,” *Tijdschrift voor Taal en Letteren* 26/1938; O. Jodogne, “Recherches sur les débuts du théâtre religieux en France,” *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 8/1965; W. M. H. Hüsken (1987: 36–38) discusses both these articles, highlighting the role of impersonation as a criterion of the dramatic.

become whom they represent; Hardison himself opposes to it the concept of identification.

One should not confuse an incarnation of a figure with a living person who is playing a role – and it is precisely for this reason that Edwards (1982: 105) criticizes Young's definition, pointing out that it mistakes a part for the whole: an attorney, for instance, also plays a specific role, but this does not turn the court into a theater. Of course, the defense, prosecutor, judge – all act and look differently inside and outside the courtroom. However, none of them seeks to give the impression that they are some characters from a story. As Richard Axton demonstrated, impersonation can be of many different degrees: it occurs even when the choir sings hymns to the Messiah in the name of icons carried in procession.⁸¹ Thus, in the end, Young's approach – based on a precise distinction of what may or may not constitute a fictional theatrical narrative – starts losing its object in a variety of transitional forms.

Apart from what we tend to regard as the most vital part of theater, scholars are right to point out the whole sphere of performance understood as activities conducted according to a plan, scenario or protocol, meant for public view (often rehearsed before), but not stemming from a routine course of everyday life in public places or within some communities. Tadeusz Kowzan (1969) presented the most general classification of performances, developing the earlier conceptions by Roger Caillois and Richard Schechner. What we lost by repudiating narrow (premodern?) Young's definition, we regain by taking into consideration the forms which do not correspond to a particular history or stem from a continuous narrative but which remain artistic constructions: they operate with the symbolic valor of the theme and the intrinsic expression of forms.

The criterion of embodying is critical, for it makes it possible to exclude from (or distinguish within) the realm of theater those situations in which people who perform a spectacle, ceremony or ritual remain themselves – or rather, “play” themselves, since they become impersonal figures that have to perform their acts according to a plan, scenario, protocol or rule; these acts are subject to a different scheme of action as its specific phase. As a consequence, they are personally and legally responsible for the course, validity, and results of the pursued scenario. However, who is a burgher dressed up as a peasant, a man in women's dress, or the black man of the carnival night? The carnivalesque dressing-up creates

81 R. Axton, *European Drama of the Early Middle Ages*, London 1974, p. 72; qtd. after E. C. Dunn, “The Farced Epistle as Dramatic Form in the Twelfth Century Renaissance,” *CD* 29/1995, p. 373 (the article also discusses other such cases).

characteristic identities whose oddity is “an expression of scorn toward the rules of city life” (Lenk 1966: 23). The anonymity of the participants assures safety and provides an alibi against any allegation of infringing the real order. Masquerades rarely produce a fictional or allusive consistent configuration (this would be a kind of theater); it seems that they fulfill their function precisely through “incoherence and contingency,” by creating a field for “initiative and invention of every burgher” (Lenk 1966: 24). Impersonation has its “weak” linguistic form as well, namely prosopopeia, and even a weaker one – citation in direct speech; it can manifest itself even as an allusion to someone through a change of tone of voice, a facial grimace or a characteristic saying. In this case, the scope of mimic actions – which we tend to employ when we wish to mock somebody – depends on circumstances and participants of communication. Such moments tell us something about the ubiquity of the theatrical element in everyday communication – something that cannot be reduced to ludicity. We mimic the others’ behavior not only for fun but also when we are angry and in other situations when we wish to pass information about someone in a pragmatic way, that is, by expressing our attitude toward the transmitted content. Perhaps, this is the “natural” origin of the interactive-pragmatic model of drama, to which we shall return in the last part (chapter 21); its naturalness rests on its cognitive functions: “[human beings] produce their first acts of understanding by means of imitation; also human beings take delight in imitations ... understanding is most pleasant not only for philosophers but in a similar way for everyone else, though they share in it to a short extent” (Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. J. Sachs, 1448b, 5–15).

The last sentence is somewhat unfair in its imprecision: it ignores the non-textual “communication of alphabets” (see chapter 17.2). What is more, the discussed sentence stands in contradiction to the former: one cannot say that the foundation of a house influences its shape and durability “in a short extent.” At any rate, the fact that the imitative behavior (“the instinct of imitation;” Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1448b, 20) can be an impulse for – and a seed of – impersonation, which is both the root and trunk of theatricality (mimetic action, *praxis*)⁸² does not undermine Aristotle’s position.

That is why we can distinguish the cases of substitution of figures by an image or a person known from funeral (mainly royal) ceremonies or other – sometimes

82 Aristotle does not use the imitative instinct as an explanation of *scenic* theatricality, but limits himself to the poetic, *textual* “imitation.” The spectacular aspect is reduced to the plastic representation or optical dimension: *opseos cosmos*, an ordered world of the appearance.

very spectacular – public rituals. Ewa Śnieżyńska-Stolot (1975: 98) calls this type of spectacles “representations of the dead.” Since the sixteenth century, the rider who represented the dead king during the funeral had not only to exhibit his armor but he was also to “fall from his horse, which, of course, was meant to symbolize the king’s death” (1975: 93). However, this kind of impersonation was a marginal phenomenon. For the “representative’s” main function – that of the sacrificer who gives offerings to the Church (1975: 95) – was not so much to remind the viewers of the past deeds and virtues of the deceased as it was to continue the execution of the king’s real tasks and duties, which, as we can see, were not completed with his death. In a sense, the representative was yet another figure of the “king’s second body” described by Kantorowicz.

Another phenomenon and research problem is the formation of the sense of the ontological separateness of staged events.⁸³ Anecdotes about viewers who experience the events on stage as real people’s adventures would fill a volume. Perhaps, they are as old as theater itself, since they appeared at the very birth of medieval theater. Henry of Latvia recounts one such story in the third book of the *Livonian Chronicle*, which describes a Catholic mission:

De ludo magno, qui fuit in Riga.

That same winter a very elaborate play of the prophets was performed in the middle of Riga in order that the pagans might learn the rudiments of the Christian faith by an ocular demonstration. The subject of this play was most diligently explained to both converts and pagans through an interpreter. When, however, the army of Gideon fought the Philistines, the pagans began to take flight, fearing lest they be killed, but they were quietly called back.⁸⁴

This is not the first time when a fact of crucial importance to us – a Biblical mystery staged for catechetical purposes – finds its way into chronicles thanks to a secondary anecdotic event.

It is worth quoting the question which Ernest Soens (1893: 144) posed with respect to play: those who can distinguish play from serious action should tell us what was what when, during the three months before the planned spectacle, the “devils” plundered the city and surrounding villages with the consent of the authorities in order to obtain the materials needed to organize the festival. We understand the perpetrators’ impunity; after all, they are already acting in their impersonations. On the subject of seriousness and fun, we have to agree

83 I shall discuss its function in chapter 23.

84 “Records of Western civilization,” in: *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae. The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, transl. J.A. Brundage, Columbia University Press, 2003, p. 53.

that people of that time did not consider matters of recreation – let alone such mystery plays – as trivial. Similarly, the concepts of ludicity are territorially relative: for instance, dance seems fun to us, while for others it may be a very dramatic ritual; the South African trade unionists demonstrate by dancing across the streets – and they are not having fun during these protests!

Besides, if the essence of this phenomenon is indisputable, Soen's apt remark still pertains: if there was nothing serious about plays, they would not be banned so often.

The question is important to us since the field of non-theatrical spectacles includes all festivities and plays whose scenarios are a social property. However, their particular course always depends on the participants' behavior.

The research issues here include: (1) the typology of the spectacles and their orderers: the church, the ruler, the city. These parties were not utterly independent, and their intentions were not always the same (Nijsten 1988: 39); (2) the description of all institutions (media) involved in performances: jugglers, confraternities, theatres. Reflection on the audience can never be set aside.

Nonetheless, we shall devote most of our attention to dramatic literature, searching mainly for characteristic traits of the selected texts in which certain civilizational processes manifest themselves. By analyzing and interpreting certain motifs in certain traditions or particular texts related to spectacles, we will aim to provide a more general overview of the various ways in which theatrical writing has been organized so far through the description of the content of genres.

3. *PIUM SPECTACULUM*. This is the shortest way to describe theater in the medieval reality. Regardless of whether the tradition of theater performances persisted since the Antiquity, preserving to a limited extent the idea of theater, or whether the Middle Ages had to restore this tradition, while all its textual traces were mere metaphors⁸⁵ – it is beyond the pale of doubt that theatre has functional

85 E. R. Curtius discusses them in his *European Literature and the Middle Ages* (pp. 138–145). Cf. also M. H. Marshall, "Theater in the Middle Ages: Evidence from Dictionaries and Glosses," *Symposium* 1954, 25, pp. 471–482; for a brief outline, see J. Lewański, *Średniowieczne gatunki dramatyczno-teatralne*, Vol. 2: *Komedia elegijna*, Warszawa 1968, pp. 102–105. However, there is still more evidence of the tradition of smaller-scale entertainment, performed by small groups of jugglers; see T. Gunnell, *The Origins of Drama in Scandinavia*, Cambridge 1995; "The Rights of the Player: Evidence of Mimi and Histriones in Early Medieval Scandinavia", *CD* 30/1996, pp. 1–31; C. Davidson, *The medieval stage and the antitheatrical prejudice*, 1997 (an overview of critical voices against actors); J. Wasson, *Professional Actors in the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance*, in: *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in English*, New York 1984 I, pp. 1–11;

links with other areas of social and mental life. It is well known that in social life everything is connected with everything else in an uninterrupted sequence of effects, which immediately become causes. A certain minimum of concretization should be to explain whether a certain phenomenon is only a fact that occurs as a result of some efficient cause, or we should describe it as intentional and purposeful (for it is a systemic certainty that everything has a certain impact on the surroundings). Hence, we should not easily believe claims that some facts or phenomena occurred or existed regardless of the conditions. If we simply take into account the effort to organize anything on a social scale, we have to perceive the appearance or persistence of social facts as a function a certain need and count them among the texts of culture.

Among the conditions of the theatrical expression, which I present here in a nutshell, there is one factor that I shall examine in more detail. Why religion? It may seem that, at least insofar as medieval research goes, there is no need to explain one's interest in the religious factor. But the history of medieval studies clearly shows that this is not utterly obvious. The twentieth century, and especially its last decades, witnessed plenty of attempts to demonstrate that the Middle Ages were not so much Christian as pagan (Delumeau even goes on to write about "the myth of the Christian Middle Ages"!), that pagan ("Indo-European") traditions were widespread at the time, and manifested themselves in the popularity of "the most absurd practices and spells" (Koller 1991: 155).⁸⁶ The work of John Van Engen (1986) can be considered as an important voice which calls historians to order. In turn, Clifford Geertz's anthropological oeuvre contributed to changing the views on the role of religion. Hardison (1965: 14–18) accused Chambers' fundamental work on the history of medieval drama (Chambers 1903) of ignoring the specificity of religion and being tendentious in searching

P. Meredith, "The Professional Travelling Players of the Fifteenth Century: Myth or Reality?," in: Higgins 1997: 25–40; A. Dąbrowka, "The Playhouses of the Middle Ages," in: *Oggetti materiali e pratiche della rappresentazione nel teatro medievale*, ed. T. Pacchiarotti, L. Kovacs «RICERCHE INTERMEDIEVALI» 8, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2014, pp. 171–191.

⁸⁶ It is symptomatic that the majority of medieval studies translated into Polish represents this option. If we were to believe, for example, the message of L. Milis' book (1996), we should quickly verify not only our knowledge but even get rid of the proverb "ora et labora" or the term "Benedictine patience;" the author claims that the Black Monks did not work so hard. Cf. also M. Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform*, Cambridge 1999.

for traces of paganism and anticlericalism. Later, Hardison (20–34) denounced “Darwinism” in the views and works of Chambers’ great continuator, Karl Young (1933). Today, religion seems to win its way back into favor, also in the area of literary studies which interests us most.⁸⁷

However, even if we were to limit the concept of religion to pre-Reformation Christianity, it would be still impossible to describe the role this factor played in medieval theater and drama. Therefore, I do not seek to reconstruct the detailed history of theater – which, after all, is not free of gaps – in connection with the whole of the religious life of the Church and its literature, even though I will often refer to these themes. Still, my primary aim is to take a more systematic look at the central motif of the religious imagination, namely – the co-existence of drama and the sacred.

The sacred is both less and more than religion. Thus, by examining this idea, one may outline a theory of the relationship between religion and literature. In the course of the study, drama and theater lose much of their uniqueness, as they appear merely as one of the tools, mechanisms, and manifestations of the cultural organization of social life. I shall use a certain model that tends toward abstraction and does not focus on details. It is difficult to find another method in the conditions of negative necessity. After all, many facts are missing: if there are any, they remain largely undated, and if we have a chance to determine their date, it is often relative, which makes it impossible to explain their chronology... However, modeling does not exclude, but rather allows us to employ both a functional and a hermeneutical approach. Instead, it does not allow us to get lost in details while using either of these approaches. In what follows, then, we will explore the social reality to trace the factors that reveal the experience and functioning of the sacred imagination as well as its intellectual basis (chapter 4). I shall present these factors as forms of piety (chapter 5).

87 For more collections and conferences, see *Religion in the poetry and drama of the late middle ages in England*, ed. P. Boitani, Perugia 1988; E. Th. Lawson, *Rethinking religion: Connecting cognition and culture*, Cambridge 1990; Haug, Wachinger 1993c; *Die Vermittlung geistlicher Inhalte im deutschen Mittelalter. Internationales Symposium, Roscrea 1994*, ed. T. R. Jackson, Tübingen 1996; Ch. Kiening, “Antropologische Zugänge zur mittelalterlichen Literatur. Konzepte, Ansätze, Perspektiven,” *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* 5/1996, Vol. 1, ed. H. J. Schiever, *Forschungsberichte zur Mediävistik*, pp. 11–129; *Cultures of Piety, Medieval English Devotional Literature in Translation*, eds. A. C. Bartlett, T. H. Bestul, Ithaca 1999.

4. The Sacred

1. RELIGION AS A CULTURAL SYSTEM. It is worth considering the sacred in connection with the profane, even if we do not prejudge the completeness of the world as divided into two parts. Hence, we more clearly perceive the dynamics of these two spheres, whose delimitation is fluid.

We cannot think about the sphere of the sacred as a fixed and separate being, but only as a variable set of tools – usually behaviors or rhetorical grips – which serve a purpose. Thus, we should always observe the hand that moves this tool; or at least try to identify it somehow.

Durkheim's coupling of the sacred and the profane, which indirectly included God – as the foundation of a generalized description of religion – into sociological research, was known for a long time.⁸⁸ We do not need to follow the approaches that attempt to cover the widest range of religious phenomena known to anthropology, which includes taboo in the generalization; that is, some form of prohibition, a crossing of boundaries of areas which then requires one to perform purification rituals.⁸⁹ Rudolf Otto's theory from *Das Heilige* (1917) also uses the theological method while introducing several new, even more mysterious terms that at most name certain aspects of the phenomenon of the sacred (the revelation of mystery, ethical imperative, aesthetic expression, dogmatic system), but they do not explain the characteristics of the sacred; that the operation of these aspects proceeds in accordance with the balance of power between rationality and irrationality is only an apparent explanation, worth as much as the statement that it is variable.

The pragmatic approach seems to be more practical because it emphasizes the culture-forming power of religion. Clifford Geertz's position assures that religion is (1) a system of symbols that serves (2) to create strong, spreading, and lasting attitudes and motivations in people through (3) the formation of

88 Fourth Council of the Lateran, 1215, operates with the categories the sacred–the profane on a practical level, in the form of order to clean altar utensils: “for it is absurd to neglect the filthiness in the sacred things which is unbecoming even in the profane” (Nimis enim videtur absurdum, in sacris sordes negligere, quae dedecerent etiam in profanis). Decree 19, Mansi, Vol. 22, col. 1007D.

89 “[A] religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and surrounded by prohibitions—beliefs and practices that unite its adherents in a single moral community called a church” (E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, transl. Carol Cosman, Oxford 2001, p. 46).

conceptions about the existence of a general order of being and (4) conferring to these concepts the aura of such factuality that (5) attitudes and motivations seem completely real (1966). In addition to his disagreement with Durkheim (and his exceptionality of the ritual), Geertz clearly emphasizes a continuation (integrationism).

The definition proves that the ideas of faith, values, and norms conveyed in works (cultural utterances) not only come from something and cause something but also serve something; that this transmission requires considerable effort and happens through intentional and coordinated actions of people; and, that transmitting finds confirmation in environments that themselves authenticate the factuality and truthfulness of faith. This view of religion as a co-creating, non-secondary, and therefore civilizing cultural system agrees with the cognitive turn and, in particular, with Bibb Latané's dynamic social impact theory.

In this book, I am interested in this mysterious heart of religion, the sacred. The recognition of its peculiarity will protect us from the far-reaching sociologization of religion that dissolves it in the field of culture in the currently accepted broad sense of social anthropology. Even when considering the co-creative character of the religious ritual in the expression and construction of social stratification,⁹⁰ Schmitt (pp. 34–35) uses Burke's definition of culture (*Popular Culture in Early Modern France*) by which the former identifies the sphere of religion with the sphere of culture as a “[s]ystem of shared meanings, attitudes, norms, and symbolic forms (performances, artifacts), in which they find their expression and embodiment.”

Only an element or metaphysical dimension remains the distinguishing feature of religion because culture does not have to contain it. This probably does not happen in practice. Van der Leeuw (1997: 516–517) claims that religion is a universal phenomenon; even atheism is for him a type of a “religion of escape,” only that it has not received a historical shape; atheists, as soon as they escape the power of religion, immediately fall into the mouth of another. They can go from God to the Devil but, after all – phenomenologically speaking – the Devil is also a kind of “god.”

90 Among others, see R. C. Trexler, “Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 19/1972, pp. 7–41. The ritual forms a relation between people and between humankind and God, which stretches far beyond the borders typically applied to the sphere of religion, because the ritual not only reveals the social differences between the patricians and craftsmen, men and women, youth (*fanciulli*) and adults – but also co-creates them.

2. THE SPECTRUM OF SACRALITY (BECKER'S LADDER). Aware of the danger of sociologization, we use the classification of sacred phenomena developed by the sociologist Howard Becker (1967). In fact, it is an outline of a spectrum of real phenomena – that is, observable social behaviors, beyond any metaphysics – that fit between the poles of sacredness and secularity. The notions of the sacred and profane constitute only a part of this area and will receive more precise definition; but, due to their peculiarity, I will sometimes use them *pars pro toto*. Becker's diagram does not provide a more accurate picture of the sacred, which we consider here, but its broad range seems revealing and useful because it shows the processual contexts of the sacred, which then enables us to understand and consider its dynamics. Thanks to Becker's diagram, what was the reason of ambiguity now appears unified because, in all possible definitions, the bond between the carriers of the sacred and its essence will always be ambiguous (relativism, contextualism; Kehrer 1997: 38). If, however, after Becker, we assign this pair with other content – more sociological than metaphysical – then we will give them a certain degree of precision, independent of the metaphysical and conditioned only by the social context.

The spectrum of the sacred and profane is divided according to the types of attitudes and behaviors in relation to social changes. For a sociologist, sacrifice appears as a sanctification of the known, immunity or resistance to newness, defined by members of the community; sacral societies cultivate systems of value hostile to changes (Becker 1967: 315).

This theoretical assumption receives reinforcement from religious practice: the recognition of the perennality and immutability of God the Creator as the obvious source and the ideal temple of the sacred. This happens without any doctrinal justification, at the mythological level, almost instinctively. One may formulate it clearly in relation to God – as we read in the writings of the great Augustine of Hippo⁹¹ – and the daily affairs of the Church – as we may find in the writings of the less notable Nicholas Magni (1355–1435). According to the latter, it is unacceptable to add or change anything in the service of God without the

91 “God is the only immutable substance or being” (*De Trinitate*); “but what are those higher things, if not this, in which resides the highest, immutable, and eternal equality?” (*De Musica*). Qtd. after A. F. Johnston, “‘At the Still Point of the turning world’: Augustinian roots of medieval dramaturgy,” in: Higgins 1997: 6. Cf. E. Przywara, *An Augustine Synthesis*, New York 1958, p. 98, and L. Schopp, *The Fathers of the Church*, New York 1948, p. 355.

permission of the authorities, not to mention distorting, shortening, or cutting parts of the approved form of worship.⁹²

We may count this postulate of permanence among universal anthropological data: the proper function of the ritual is to keep the continuity of experience alive (Lévi-Strauss 1993: 314).⁹³ Thus, the ritual is a form of “social science” – quite adequate in comparison with the modern methods – thanks to the collectivity of its attributes. The ritual was a “group dance” in which everyone partook, a spell that sustained a much stronger sense of group affiliation (consubstantiality) than simulated today by typical acts of private enterprise (K. Burke, 1941: 109).

This analogy sheds light on the institutional similarity of science to religion, which surprised Thomas S. Kuhn so much. An important formal aspect of the ritual’s durability is repetition; that is, the real firmness of the ritual rules of the game and sequences that guarantee the predictability of the next configuration (Tambiah 1979: 118), which actually belongs to the definition of the ritual.

According to Becker, one may attribute sacrality to various behaviors. He argues that any social behavior with an emotional reluctance to change holds the attribute of sacrality (Becker 1967: 319). We conclude from the character of his examples that Becker does not conduct a complete reduction of the sacred to behaviors, but also includes certain values and symbols, the existence of which necessarily involves certain behaviors and attitudes. We should probably not understand the emotionality of these attitudes in terms of feelings, as personal idiosyncrasy, but rather in terms of positive cognition, as an expression of deep beliefs about the validity and significance of what is “hallowed” and should be protected from change. If we were to look for feelings somewhere, we could find them in the satisfaction resulting from the repeated experience of certain situations, which ensures their better understanding (see Carroll 1998: 160: “clarification”). It may be the source of theological justification: you

92 “[N]on licet in divino cultu addere propria auctoritate ymnos, sequencias, historias novas aut quecunque alia absque superiorum approbacione, et minus licet divinum cultum approbatum et debitum corripere, sincopare aut minuere.” Qtd. after Bylina 1978: 140 who takes it from a copy of *De superstitionibus*, manuscript at Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, I F 313, k. 268^r, and a partial edition in A. Franz, *Der Magister Nikolaus Magni de Jawor. Ein Beitrag zur Literatur- und Gelehrten-geschichte des 14. und 15. Jhs.*, Fryburg 1898, p. 179. Also see K. Bracha, *Teolog, diabeł i zabobony. Świadectwo traktatu Mikołaja Magni z Jawora “De superstitionibus” (1405 rok)*, Warszawa 1999.

93 We may even add “black rituals” here (fights, murder, cannibalism), so lasting that probably used to a certain end.

are a just person when you participate in something good and contribute to its strengthening. Again, we must attribute this whole set of attitudes to the consequences of recognizing the role of God as the creator of this world. As Maria Corti noted (1979: 341) about the Trinitarian model of social structure, the divinity of the model imbues it with sacrality; that is, this divinity obliges society to remain unchanged because any change would be a trespassing against God's plan. Hence, we suddenly are very close to diabolizing "all people who seek to change their position."⁹⁴ "The emotional reluctance to change" rather resembles the fear of losing something indispensable.

In his argumentation, Becker includes both positive and negative elements, because it is easier to assume that such attitudes are nevertheless rational.⁹⁵ Moreover, his theory stems from the concept of innovation and new research in this area brought remarkable results.⁹⁶

Becker's scale distinguishes eight degrees of sacrality:

- 1) holiness (the sanctified sacred) includes behaviors which express an orientation to the supernatural element (God,⁹⁷ gods, spirituality) which one should honor;
- 2) the ceremonial sacred includes secular rituals (for instance, ceremonial ship launching, military drill, lawsuit, bureaucratic procedures); they are characterized by the use of some non-functional equipment, such as banners, academic gowns, and judges' wigs; these rituals are sometimes as irrational as in religion; it corresponds with "the general law of the ritual expression of

94 Potkowski (1978: 126) refers in this manner the view of the chronicler Adso of Montier-en-Der about the "many Antichrists," among which the latter counts such that "ordinis sui regulam impugnat." According to E. Bernheim, *Mittelalterliche Zeitanschauungen in ihrem Einfluss auf Politik und Geschichtsschreibung*, Tübingen 1918, pp. 74–76, *Ludus de Antichristo* is mostly based on a version of the end of the world, which Adso described in the middle of the tenth century. See Langosch 1943: 77; Z. Thudny, *Millennium: Apocalypse and Antichrist and Old English Monsters c.1000 A.D.*, Notre Dame 1998.

95 On many rationalities see below, chapter 12.

96 Cf., e.g., important collections edited by Haug and Wachinger 1991, 1993.

97 The case of the immutable element in God's nature initiated "the most famous question" (*quaestio famosissima*) of the late medieval theology: "was God sheer necessity or was He free and contingent in his resolutions.... The deep reason that was at the foundation of this controversy was the deep yearning to agree the contingency of God's Providence with its immutability and infallibility;" Swieżawski 1998: 49; Bradwardine: 22.

- social values;⁹⁸ Erving Goffman (1967) describes some units of verbal interaction as interpersonal rituals (for instance, apologizing, thanking) that can be placed on each of the next steps;
- 3) the sacred of loyalty includes the feelings that unite the collectivity: patriotism, solidarity, *der Mannschaftsgeist*; it manifests in sacrifice for the good of the group;⁹⁹
 - 4) the sacred of intimacy includes personal feelings: love, familial bonds, friendship, sense of belonging, integration;
 - 5) the sacred of commemoration is usually associated with mourning and its after-effects (“of blessed memory”); here belong memorials and the celebration of anniversaries which connect with the higher sacred;
 - 6) the ethical (moralistic) sacred: duties, obligations, often legally sanctioned; customs, often religiously sanctioned; here are possible conflicts in distinction: the morality of specific acts and people and the ethics of general directives; the ruthlessness of orders provokes the issue of “justice” and its exceptions; honor thy father... and if he is wicked?; someone is drowning... to jump or not to jump? (it depends who is drowning);
 - 7) the sacred of decency (*schicklich*); politeness; “No one will sacrifice life here, but we assume various discomforts and even risks;” the impropriety of behavior appears as a demonstrative lack of respect or aggression;
 - 8) the sacred of appropriateness (*angemessen*); other social control mechanisms than in point number 7; that what is accepted; in this case, a violation does not manifest bad will, disrespect, or aggression, but the lack of knowledge, self-development, and upbringing.

The order of the steps will probably not always be the same everywhere. It is a reflection of the contemporary local value scale. Literature is full of tragedies, dramas, and comedies, developed on the background of conflict of different levels of sacrality (religious commandment vs. tyrannical law, formal law vs. custom, loyalty to divine and human laws vs. emotional ties, etc.); many well-known literary heroes may be characterized as virtuosos or victims of various levels of the sacred. The same applies to social reality. If a revolution takes place in a

98 Brown 1991: 129; cf. p. 28: “The social values current in a primitive society are maintained by being expressed in ceremonial or ritual customs.”

99 Probably this is the limit of the definition of religion proposed, after Trexler, by Schmitt 1990: 34: “Religion ist ein von einer auf Vertrag begründeten Gemeinschaft geteiltes System von Verhaltensweisen der Ehrfurcht und des Respekts und die Autorität der Gruppe wurzelt in der normativen Wiederholung dieses Dekorums.”

country, it will prove useful to identify the slogans and moves of its supporters and opponents to the levels of Becker's ladder. If in this country, after the revolution, there appears a problem with the pantheon – created earlier for the glory of the recently-overthrown tyranny, there will rise defendants of the state of affairs who, in the name of the sacred of memory (5th level, “do not disturb the peace of the dead”) will oppose the demands made in the name of the sacred of loyalty which in this case would be patriotism (3rd level: “do not worship the traitors of the homeland”). Violations of the sacred exist everywhere in various but similar forms. A brilliant author or a whim of the ingenious fortune brings many surprises. Although globally, the importance of the matter diminishes, there is no guarantee that a violation of the lower level of the sacred will always be less important in the eyes of society. At times, one may harm their position by maladjustment to the 8th level of the sacred (for instance, vulgar language) than by lack of character; even a fat and uncouth revolutionary who risked his life for a good cause may lose trust in competition with an eloquent man of the old regime, whose only sacrifice for the motherland was, say, a timely slimming treatment.

3. SECULARIZATION. In a similar vein, Becker redefines the sphere of secularity – as the field of operations of the attitude for the acceptance of change or the readiness to conduct change. However, Becker cannot expand the spectrum of profanity, also called secularization and secularity, and presents only four ranges:¹⁰⁰

- 1) accompanying secularization (*folgende*) allows for limited freedom of social change; the constraint imposes the core of a value system that should not be changed; for instance, in a constitutional monarchy, the king may not violate the law;
- 2) consistent secularization; there are no limits for changes; nothing is sacred (*Nichts Heiliges*); for instance, modern war only apparently (and not everywhere) follows international conventions;
- 3) comfortable secularization (*komfortable Sekularität*); I do what I like (p. 324); Znaniecki calls it “sensual values;” for a long time during Saturnalia and carnivals; however, there remains a possibility of the elimination of restrictions, disorganization, and acceleration of social change (by ignoring traditional limitations and provoking new solutions);
- 4) adventurous secularization; experiments with stimulants and erotic excess; truancy; “everything for fun;” “do whatever you want;” the wider scope of this

100 These are not levels as in the case of the sacred. The first two points define the socially-regulated fields of operations while the last two – individual motives.

secularization results in a complete openness to change and disappearance of norms which equals anomy; the system of values ceases to be a system and becomes a loose collection of isolated elements without connection; another possibility is a pluralism of systems of values in societies (also in people?), their conflict or coexistence.

As you can see, secularization is not a denial but the opposite of preserving attitudes. Each of the eight levels of sacrality appears with contradictions – some of them even named by Becker – while the four-ranged spectrum of secularization organizes deeper motives of behaviors that negate or ignore the sacred and expresses their range or intensity. It is possible that the ambiguous assessment of the denials of the sacred somehow reflects the different structuring of the broadly-understood world of the profane. Moreover, in point four, there is a possibility of more detailed distinctions; the separation of the state of anomie seems the most necessary. Furthermore, one could say that the sphere of the profane also has its institutions that defend the durability of the secularization mechanism, drive the changes, and make it impossible to stop the constant pursuit of novelty and differentiation. There are whole classes of behaviors with an indisputable presence in the culture which serve this purpose (fashion reviews, charts, etc.); and, since they are irremovable, they are a kind of the sacred.

Despite its imperfections, this diagram will prove useful for us more than once. For now, we will only consider the first point, because it concerns what is closest to the traditional understanding of the sacred: the metaphysical sphere. The nature of the sacred implies that we can only describe it in a special way: by how its existence (or belief in its existence) affects people's behavior. One should, therefore, choose from those behaviors such ones, which connect with faith in the existence and operation of the sacred. Behaviors are already a proper object of research in the social sciences, they have their own history, genetic varieties, and are – as is well-known – hereditary.¹⁰¹ We will refer to the abovementioned definition of religion to more accurately determine the theoretical place of the sacred.

4. THE SYSTEM OF OPERATIONS. If we are talking about a system of symbols used to create attitudes by forming imaginations, then we must ask what makes this system work. Because it is a system, what is important are not only its elements but also the links between them that explain, justify, or legitimize on the basis of some rationality; we should perceive here a system of knowledge, a theory. If the system forms images or allows to form them, if it provides components for the

101 Sarles 1975: 21: "behavior, like bodies, has continuity and species specificity."

images or authorizations to proclaim them, it must use symbols as arguments which must explain something paradoxically, seemingly, intuitively, figuratively, associatively, or rationally. Even the symbols that signify the existence of gods or are considered to be their property, gift, or seat – such as “holy” trees, groves, mountains – must be recognized as such: someone must declare their special character, they must have an “attached instructions for use;” namely, an even fragmentary theory of functioning. In computer terms: in addition to data, the control center must be equipped with the operations that it may apply to the data. The cybernetic system does not reproduce itself, but the cultural system actually exists thanks to the human ability to devise new operations (Hays 1974: 212). Culture comes from people who not only spread symbols but also preach certain theories; that is, they add operations to the disseminated data. Like language signs, symbols cannot work if the user does not know their meaning, value, action, and effectiveness; it is the internalization of operations that is the source of persuasion and explanation. It is obvious that the knowledge of the operational side of the symbolic system is the responsibility of the researcher. It is due to the difficulty of operationalization that I do not use here the definition of religion by Helmuth von Glasenapp and Peter Dinzelbacher – although it legibly develops on the concept of the sacred, which Geertz’s does not – “Religion is faith in the existence of supernatural personal or impersonal powers with which a person establishes a relationship; a faith engaged (*betätigt*) in thinking, feeling, willing, and acting” (Dinzelbacher 1990: 12). “Engaged” suggests action but without any direction, purpose, or expected result. There also is no social dimension here.

Wittgenstein called for nothing else but operability and considered the description of language forms that does not consider operability to be an error of science (*Vorlesungen über Aesthetik*, part I, 5). It was before the emergence of linguistic pragmatics, which addressed the laws of the actual use of language that previously escaped systematic description, fit not within grammars, and only partially found a place in stylistics.

The status of the system offers indirect proof that the explanatory power is important for its users. If it were not for explaining, the “revelation” would not contain the “word of God” and the Bible would not be holy. Hence, the system of symbols means our knowledge about a set of symbols. The word “our” is of course theoretically unnecessary, but it reminds us that there is no other knowledge than ours, namely the one that some people have gathered. Even if we understand “us” in a particular way, then the word warns against a variety of systems of symbols that may appear on the same factual basis. Similarly, Goodenough (1964: 36) reduces the entire culture to the knowledge of operations, which he defines as

this is all one needs to know, or what one should believe, to operate in a way accepted by others.... Culture is, therefore, a knowledge that needs to be mastered. Not things, not people, behavior, or emotions. Instead, it is the organization of all this.

Clearly, Goodenough emphasizes what we would call – in terms of generative grammar – the competence that conditions the correct performance. This is in line with the principles of cognitivism. The second part foregrounds the systemic aspect.

Rightly so, because what is important for the explanatory function are not only the actual contents carried by the symbols but also their set (repertoire) and systemicity. Especially a larger cultural system must operate with a numerous set of symbols, which must have a significant internal consistency; although, it does not have to be as complete as in an ideal mathematical theory. Without the set of symbols, the consistency will not receive enough trust and support, or it will not be permanent. We know from anthropology that peoples are quite willing and unscrupulous in their search and acceptance of new, “more effective” gods. In the history of religion, one should also expect the influence of this kind of attitude. For example, we know that the Christianization of the Saxons,¹⁰² and probably the Slavs, happened relatively easily; inconsistent systems did not have internal safeguards against the change of the pantheon, so the emergence of new elements enriched an already syncretic set of beliefs. Christianization, as Van Engen noticed (1986: 549), did not have to be a “brutal acculturation” everywhere.¹⁰³

The consistency of a story usually emerges from the genealogy of the main heroes of mythology or, more generally, kinship relations. Both oral tradition

102 About the conversions of the Anglo-Saxon kings, see N. Higham, *The Convert Kings: Power and Religious Affiliation in Early Anglo-Saxon England*, New York 1997.

103 The use of the theory of acculturation to describe the influence of the clergy on the rural population (R. Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (XV^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, Paris 1978) was rightly criticized because these groups did not represent different cultures at the time (Burke 1992: 156–157; also Kiening 1996: 40; with reference to H. J. Golomen, “Volkskultur und die Exempla-Forschung,” in: *Literarische Interessenbildung im Mittelalter*, ed. J. Heinzle, Stuttgart 1993, pp. 165–208). On the basis of acculturation, Pleij (1988: 349) based his theory of the civilizational offensive of the bourgeois: as a result of inoculating a part of the lower class with the “higher” culture, an elite is to form from it, which then separates itself from the rest of the lower class. This goes against the theory of Norbet Elias, who argues that the emerging new class ideologically separates itself from the upper class. In chapter 2.7, we consider the contemporary theory of bottom-up co-generation of culture, in which the very assumption of top-down “inoculation” appears useless.

and historiography employ this method. The history of Rome functioned as the story of Aeneas (Ong 1967: 204),¹⁰⁴ and a frequent form of such a story will be that of a great, troublesome journey. Only after bureaucracy with its collection of written records replaces Gesta, “the heroic figure of the king is no longer needed” (Ong 1967: 205). In the iconography, the image, portrait of an outstanding character “played the role of one of the most communicative signs which consolidated collective memory” (Mrozowski 1997: 207).

At the same time, however, consistency appears on the level of content in allegorical interpretation which, moreover, often links people – allegedly, mythically – related. The repeatability of the cycles of events serves not only consistency but also psychological functions in (especially oral) literature and shapes the process of personality development (Haug 1990b). Furthermore, this applies to themes of family and travels; we know from fairy tales that the characters of three brothers, who consecutively do the same thing until the last one succeeds, are a compositional attempt to capture the process of the improvement of one personality in time, which was incomprehensible for folk psychology. Similarly, travels are a narrative device to show the hero’s personality development as movement in space.

5. SYSTEM STABILITY AND VARIABILITY. There must be elements in the symbolic resource that should not be removed without changing the essence of the system; for instance, although one can imagine it, it is difficult to predict such evolution of Christianity in which the symbol of the cross would no longer be used. The popularity of this symbol may give outside observers the wrong impression that the Cross is the deity of Christians. Meanwhile, neither the crucifix nor crossing oneself nor the Cross is God. To imagine this religion with another symbolism, it suffices to recall the first three centuries of our era. We should position the beginnings of the “career” of the cross as the main symbol of Christianity after the appearance of the relic of the Cross of Golgotha (*inventio crucis*; not earlier than 320 AD) and its official and solemn erection in Constantinople on September 14, 335 (*exaltatio crucis*).¹⁰⁵ “Neither in catacomb paintings nor the 3rd- and 4th-century sepulchral arts has the image of the crucifixion been

104 Cf. G. M. Spiegel, “Social change and literary language: the textualization of the past in the thirteenth-century Old French historiography,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 17/1987, pp. 129–148.

105 S. Borgehammar, *How The Holy Cross was Found: From Event to Medieval Legend*, Stockholm 1991; J. W. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross*, Leiden 1992.

preserved.... The first two images of the crucifixion with certain dating come from the period around 430” (LCI 2, col. 608).

But the image of Christ suffering and dying on the cross begins to complement, then to balance the image of the living and winning Christ only from the 9th century, displacing him (not entirely) in the 13th century.¹⁰⁶ Against this background, the question arises: to which point does the innovation not change the system. Positions vary here, depending on how many sets of symbols or statements (rules) we consider to be basic and decisive for the identity of the system. We see this, for example, in the qualification of heresy: some consider Albigenism to be a different religion¹⁰⁷ because it rejected many principles, including Christ’s incarnation and resurrection (Mercier 1986: 154). They did not recognize the worship of Christmas, Crucifixion, or Mary; around 1200, the “threat of breaking Christianity” was very real (Kłoczowski 1973: 174). But is anachoresis not another religion?¹⁰⁸

It would seem that the inclusion of new symbols in the system should not cause such doctrinal problems, but until the relative demarcation of the divine and human world in sacramentalism (see next chapter 5.6.), the world was treated as a deposit, a gift from God, so that people should keep it in an unaltered state, also keep in it the same reserve of information that was given; acquisition of knowledge for the sake of knowledge alone was considered vanity (*vana curiositas*; Corti 1979: 341).

Not all elements from the repertoire of a given cultural reality – especially the new and marginal ones – co-create structures automatically. The average users decide about everything like they do in language: whether they broadly assume changes or not. Innovations exist in the set extra-systemically, as in all the areas, in which the law of large numbers operates: an average center emerges from some processes while others remain a reserve fund, also for innovation. The former becomes the subject of historical-cultural processes (transmission and tradition), the latter persevere without the participation of social institutions of universal reach, by imitating the only available pattern. Scholars probably underestimate the reach of transmissions, traditions, and subcultural creations. How people perceive them and how they exist in society depends on the degree of internalization of the self-model in a community. If the model of

106 Köpf 1993: 24; “Kreuz IV,” *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Vol. 19, 1990: 732–761.

107 See, for instance, F. Niel, *Albigensi i katarzy*, Warszawa 1995, p. 51.

108 Namely, religion for impatient writers with exuberant ego. What kind of a shepherd is the one who flees into the high mountains assumedly out of contempt for the wolf?

its self-description receives wide acceptance, which appears in legal, moral, and religious normativity, then (in the context of Corti 1979: 341) what does not fit the model does not exist at the level of signs and has no cultural or religious significance. What does not fit exists existentially as a mistake, dissonance, negative element, (pluralizing, centrifugal) entropy; people either ignore it or – if it manifests itself clearly or painfully – use as a negative model; finally, we subject it to more determined practices of exclusion (chapter 26).¹⁰⁹

What comes to mind in this context is an analogy with natural language: grammar decides about the language's identity, not the number of lexical borrowings.

6. "SACREDNESS IS, ABOVE ALL, *REAL*" (Eliade 1958: 460). If the symbols are the seat of the sacred, then where is it situated, how wide is the set of these carriers: objects, places, activities, and events? The type, set, and binder of these symbols changes in the existing religious system. This does not undermine Becker's theory. On the contrary, it is the continuous process of spontaneous and inevitable changes in society that happens under the control of the mechanism of sacrality. This mechanism guarantees the homeostasis of the system. Geertz also assumes that the attitudes and motivations produced by the religious system are to be strong, expansive, and permanent – and not unchanging. Therefore, we should seek Beckerian sacrality in relation to each of these areas: elements, repertoire, consistency of the system of symbols. I will consider this dynamically in chapter 6.

In the meantime, we may draw another advantage from combining both theories. Geertz (1997) posed the problem of the synthesis of two research positions, which use drama apparatus in the description of society. Burke's position organizes into drama the whole of the symbolic acts that fill history and appear to people as objective social institutions to which they must adapt. The position derived from the theory of ritual drama perceives the powers that shape

109 Recently, D. Iogna-Prat, *Ordonner et Exclure: Cluny et la société chrétienne face à l'hérésie, au judaïsme et à l'islam, 1000–1150*, Paris 1998, presents this in a detailed monograph of the eleventh to twelfth century Benedictines. From the analysis of relations and views prevailing in the Cluny community – in which the key tendencies of the era flourished – Iogna-Prat concludes that the attempts to organize the Christian society inevitably led to the exclusion of non-Christians. On the perception of Islam in medieval Europe, see the collection of articles *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays*, ed. J. V. Tolan, New York 1996. N. Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens. An Interpretation of the Chanson de Geste*, Edinburgh 1984, analyzes the literary functions of the image of the Saracens in heroic epic.

society in the continuous staging of theatrical ceremonies (the school of Victor Turner¹¹⁰). What do the Theater and Agora have in common? What do Temple and Tribune? According to Geertz (1997: 225), the “basis of analogy” between them is “difficult to grasp.”

And yet, what would suffice to explain the basis of this analogy and the unity of the two positions is Geertz’s own theory of religion (1966) but, for unknown reasons, the author does not notice the possibility.¹¹¹ It is worth noting that in Plotinus’ theodicy, the structure of drama serves as an argument: evil is needed in the world, which would otherwise be incomplete, just as a drama loses its beauty if it presents only positive heroes.¹¹² The analogy between the Theater and Agora is, of course, deeper than the fact that in both we deal with “a certain kind of acting.” A cultural subsystem implements its procedures of “formulating conceptions of a general order of existence” in both. Both of these spheres (here Becker helps us) celebrate their sacred. Let us not forget and add the third element that I mentioned: next to the Stage and the Parliament, there is also the Marketplace. Apart from the Pulpit and Lectern, there is also the Counter (with the always open Cash Register, of course).

110 Geertz himself developed a theory of a “theatre state,” *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (1980).

111 K. Burke bases his lecture on the dramatic method, similarly, on the concept of ritual drama (so his difference from Turner is artificial from the onset); in order to stay with the Greek tradition, when satire followed tragedy, Burke finishes his lecture with a burlesque story “Electioneering in Psychoanalysis” (132–137); the tragedy repeats there as a farce, with the President acting as the Sacrificial King.

112 *Enneades* III 2, 5, 8, 22; II 3, 18, 2; quoted after Hübener 1991: 21.

5. Forms of Devotion

Since we are dealing with the influence of forms of devotion on literature, it is important to recapitulate the main manifestations of piety. For our purposes, it would be more useful to provide a survey of organizational or institutional forms (2). For the record, let us first (1) enumerate forms of personal religious practice; otherwise, they might seem neglected. In chapter six, I shall address yet another aspect, namely – the temporal framework of religious practices, which may serve to put them in order. We should not consider all these enumerations as a brief elaboration of the phenomenology of religion;¹¹³ they simply facilitate my further investigations. I start with cataloging and later proceed to discuss the chronology, as the scope of particular forms of devotion changed in every respect and constituted a separate research problem.¹¹⁴

1. RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. In what follows I provide a brief historical overview of forms of devotion qua ways of practicing religion and related acts, gestures, and procedures (Greschat 1983: 671 ff.); each of these practices, to a different extent, constitutes the content of organizational forms of religious life.

If we would like to initially structure them according to their increasing complexity, we should probably start with silence, which, in its purest form, occurs in certain monastic rules and accompanies other religious practices.¹¹⁵ If silence is a kind of sacrifice, then asceticism and fast – and, to a lesser extent, even obedience (Eph 6,5) that children should display toward their parents, servants toward

113 See G. van der Leeuw (1997); M. Eliade (1958); G. Kehrer (1997); G. Bataille (1996); B. Welte, *Filozofia religii*, Kraków 1997; E. Gilson, *Bóg i ateizm*, Kraków 1996; M. Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, Boston 1993.

114 For more recent studies, see G. J. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist, a Process of Mutual Interaction*, Leiden 1995; J. C. Hirsh, *The Boundaries of Faith: The Development and Transmission of Medieval Spirituality*, Leiden 1996 (especially the English material of the 11th–16th centuries); since 1991, a yearbook *Studies in Spirituality* is being published in the Netherlands.

115 On silent prayers see Nadolski 1989: Vol. 1: 115–120, with bibliography. In literature, silence is related to non-verbal communication; V. Roloff, *Reden und Schweigen. Zur Tradition und Gestaltung eines mittelalterlichen Themas in der französischen Literatur*, München 1973; U. Ruberg, *Beredtes Schweigen in lehrhafter und erzählender deutscher Literatur des Mittelalters. Mit kommentierter Erstedition spätmittelalterlicher Lehrtexte über das Schweigen*, München 1978; C. L. Hart Nibbrig, *Rhetorik des Schweigens, Versuch über die Schatten literarischer Rede*, Frankfurt a. M. 1981.

masters, wives toward husbands, and subordinates toward superiors – are similar practices; it would be a manifestation of piety not as an expression of reverence, but rather as resignation from one's will understood as a sacrifice made to God, an evidence of perseverance and an effective resistance to the instigations of the evil spirit – one may count this among the arguments of theological justification. This devotional perspective finds another confirmation in the diabolization of disobedience, expressed in the views of Johannes von Paltz (1445?–1511),¹¹⁶ who underscores the importance of temptation in disobedience (Burger 1990: 323); this is neither the first nor the last attempt to confer a religious sanction on a purely social norm.¹¹⁷

Other practices require no less self-determination, but more activity: studying the Scripture;¹¹⁸ *meditatio* – the reflection on a word or image; imagining or mental reproduction of the themes of the Passion (like the wounds of Christ) is presented as the way to obtain God's grace (Segl 1990: 164).¹¹⁹ This leads us to the *Devotio Moderna* and its so-called exercises. At this point, we should also mention the mystical experiences, which are neither common nor recommended. In turn, prayer (*oratio*)¹²⁰ certainly constitutes a common and recommended practice; although it is just a general name for various phenomena, they are inter-related to the extent that there is no need to get into details in this case. Prayer comes close to the verbal dimension of sacramental practices (*sacramenta*), usually exercised in the temple, during the service, according to the strict rules of the liturgy. In the next section, I shall discuss them in more detail as the foundation of the form of devotion called sacramentalism.

The practice of clemency (*caritas*), formerly realized mainly as alms, requires another kind of activity and sacrifice; in the economic realm, also tithe was often

116 A German priest, Luther's contemporary belonging (like Luther) to the Order of St. Augustine. B. Hamm, *Frömmigkeitstheologie am Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts. Studien zu Johannes von Paltz und seinem Umkreis*, Tübingen 1982.

117 For more about obedience and predictability see chapter 13.

118 The origin of Biblical devotion. See further (3).

119 Carruthers (1998) describes the monastic meditation theories and practices, associating them with the role of memory in rhetoric understood as a school of creative thinking. Hugh of Champagne, *Tractatus de memoria complectens tres libros in laudem memoriae*, PL 192, p. 1299–1324; Hugh of St. Victor, *De modo dicendi et meditandi*, PL 176, p. 878.

120 M. Nédoncelle, *Prośba i modlitwa*, Kraków 1995; B. Jaye, "Artes orandi" in: *Artes praedicandi, artes orandi*, M. G. Briscoe, B. Jaye (ed.), *Typologie des Sources du Moyen Age Occidental* 61, Turnhout 1992; Carruthers (1998: 311, fn. 154) refers to John Cassian's *Conlationes patrum* and Hugh's *De modo orandi*, PL 176, p. 977–988.

considered as an act of clemency. There is also votive offering which has a similar form but a completely different function. Sczaniecki (1978: 45) described it as a gesture of sacrifice. However, the act itself is too complex – it exceeds man’s actual behavior or attitude – to be counted among prayerful gestures “on different cultural levels”: “A rich canon, who decorated the altar that he funded with his family coat of arms, prayed in Latin, while a common woman expressed her feelings with a gesture” (Sczaniecki 1978: 49). Insofar as we do not wish to broaden the scope of ‘gesture’ beyond bodily expression, or to include complex acts and interactions extended in space and time, the most we can do is to consider the carrying of the offering as gesture and set aside the whole procedure of preparing an image according to a particular intention; in this case, we see a particular method of nurturing one’s bond with God through a voluntary sacrifice, which makes it a separate form of devotion showing not so much a level of culture as a stage of civilization. I shall further address this issue in chapter 8, where I draw more attention to the gestures and attitudes, which are inextricably linked to the discussed practices but should not be identified with them.¹²¹

Therefore, the sacrifice is a kind of solemn prayer of supplication, strengthened by a gift or some (promised) expression of thanks, which has a specific material or symbolic value (a votive plaque, pilgrimage, or other devout activities). This material value makes it similar to a donation made to the Church. The difference is that an ordinary offering, such as a simple contribution for building a church or chapel, was part of one’s concern for salvation, while the votive offering accompanied a call for help in a difficult life situation.

Despite its extraordinariness, oblation¹²² – the parents’ offering of a child (usually not younger than seven years of age)¹²³ to a monastery – also belongs to the

121 Even lying prostrate must have a prayer intention that is constantly actualized (unless it is the sacrifice of uncomfortable lying). This subtle difference, even more difficult to grasp in the case of meditation, was accurately captured by Andrzej Mleczek’s comic drawing, which presents one monk asking another: “Are you meditating or just sitting like this?”

122 Early medieval oblation was explored by M. De Jong, *In Samuel’s Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West*, Leiden 1996; in the context of children abandoning: J. E. Boswell, “Expositio and Oblatio: The Abandonment of Children in the Ancient and Medieval Family”, *The American Historical Review* 1984, 89, pp. 10–33. As a pedagogical issue, it appears already in Peter Damian’s treatise *De perfectione monachorum*, especially in the following chapters: XX. *Admonitio puerorum* and XXI. *Exhortatio juvenum vel adolescentium* (PL 145, pp. 318–319). See also chapter 17.4.

123 Coulton 1935, Vol. 4: 97–103.

category of “ordinary” sacrifice. Modeled on the sacrifice of the Eucharist, oblation served specific social functions: getting the child onto the path of monastic life was part of dynastic politics of feudal families. On the one hand, its aim was to reduce the number of heirs, while on the other – it settled a family’s contribution to the strengthening of the Church. The popularity of this phenomenon is evidenced by the fact that already in the twelfth century oblates were perceived as a separate social group (Lahaye-Geusen 1991). The work of building the Church (Opus Dei) was one of the aspects of political power from the Carolingian times to the Gregorian Revolution, which is why religious practice belonged to “the obligations which stemmed from the social order” (Vauchez 1996: 11).¹²⁴ Later, religious foundations became a means of building secular prestige (cf. Muir Wright 1993, among others).

Most of these practices are more or less strictly regulated in the official liturgical books, in the Catechism and in the *Code of Canon Law*.

2. FORMS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE. When we talk about forms of devotion as ways of organizing religious life, we do not limit ourselves to formally constituted institutions, because we are not interested in the functioning of the structures of the Church as an official religious union, but rather in the types of religious practices and behaviors of pious people who make up this union.

At the very basis lays the meeting in the primitive community from the times of the catacombs and the unofficial church. We should not forget it when exploring various particular forms whose activity sometimes obscures or dominates over this elementary group. At the same time, it defines a single boundary within the area of possible forms: a group based entirely on a horizontal bond, which consists in the mutual consolidation of the faith. According to Van Engen (p. 541ff), occasional meetings at the foot of the cross were the main form of religious practice during the first millennium, followed by the phase of the parish churches.

The other extreme appears together with eremitism,¹²⁵ whose piety exhausts itself in the individual’s vertical bond with God. It is as vertical as Simeon Stylites’ pillar, which, alongside the cross itself, we may consider to be the most significant question mark posed to Christians.

124 Cf. M. Alberi, *The Evolution of Alcuin’s Concept of the Imperium christianum*, in: Hill, Swan 1998: 3–17; P. Cramer, *Baptism and Change in the Early Middle Ages, c.200–c.1150*, Cambridge 1993.

125 R. Przybylski (*Pustelnicy i demony*, Kraków 1994) published four essays and four “sermons” concerning eremitism.

The society of the late Antiquity was organized in a very rigorous manner.¹²⁶ Such a feature of the system tends to trigger conflicts. Essentially, there are four possible ways out of conflict situations: protest, adaptation, escape with a return to negotiations, and compromise. The exit to the periphery is a well-known civilizational factor: borders are the mainstay of freedom.¹²⁷ Hermits opened the exit path. They were pioneers who did a reconnaissance and provided certainty for the community: “We can settle, our scout is not hurt.” They exemplified the anthropological transformation of a former slave into a hero during a journey with no return. Thus, they created a fairy tale in which the hero does not return to his community, but it is the community that follows him in an effort to change itself.

Therefore, the hermits were an avant-garde, but at the same time also a rear-guard. Of course, they argued: “You can get there!” But the radicalism of their attitude also made others think: “Don’t stay where he did!”

For we may argue that hermits gave the conclusive experimental demonstration of the existence of the self. Or, at least, they embodied the projection of a particular ideal. They provided a clear personal example, such as a corporal leading a squad to a battle; they proved that, in this system of values, one can at least live alone. Their lives (and the lives of the saints, of course) can be considered as “epitomes of a fruitful practice,” because they influenced their adepts in the same way as exemplary results, which – according to Thomas S. Kuhn (1985: 439) – supplement the system of rules in science. Hermits – precisely as the “epitomes” – confirm the historical role of great individuals who, by drawing strength from their faith, can stand alone in the face of the authority and show their independence even from demons and natural ties (Brown 1992: 130); one may even assume that it was the “eccentrics” (or rather, holy fools) who made Christianity a mass religion (Brown 1992: 134).

However, a malicious person would say that the hermit behaved like a raven who caught a piece of cheese and flew away to a secluded place to eat it.¹²⁸ After all, the rejection of social life is an easy thing to do. The fact that someone discovers

126 This is vividly described by Brown 1991; cf. his *Society and the Holy in late Antiquity*, London 1982.

127 For instance, it was runaway slaves who created the egalitarian Cossack community between three powerful states (A. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Cambridge Mass. 1970; qtd. after: P. Burke 1992: 83).

128 Cf. further on the privatization of the liturgy in Biblical devotion.

some edible rootstock and mushrooms¹²⁹ seems to be of little benefit to people who do not want to eat rootstock at all. The doctor cannot treat you by giving a personal example. Indeed, we should describe it as the highest possible heresy in any religious system – equally suicidal as phallic worship which enshrines the phallus to the point of excluding it from procreation. It was only the Gregorian Reform that put an end to the idea of perfection as an escape from the world and started to seek “to situate ... Christian perfection, especially for the clergy, in a return to the world for the purpose of conquering it in order to Christianize it. The Gregorian movement very explicitly sought to call all Christians to the life of sanctity, while holding their proper places [in the community].”¹³⁰

Nietzsche, when he was not singing but contemplating, was rarely wrong. But if he was wrong, one has to read further and sometimes only after a hundred or two hundred pages one may find the right solution. Nietzsche believed that Christianity concealed this world and diverted our attention from it, turning to the wrong notion of “the world beyond” – “as if outside the actual world, that of becoming, there were another world of being” (Nietzsche 1993: 30). He did not notice that Christianity has created this world in the first place, making its most important point by developing the theory of “the world beyond” and indicating the way of reaching it. Without a theory – that is to say, without setting a goal for oneself – one cannot take even one step. Nietzsche, a cognitive constructivist, himself admits 300 pages further (Nietzsche 1993: 315–316):

“Truth” is therefore not something there, that might be found or discovered-but something that must be created and that gives a name to a process, or rather to a will to overcome that has in itself no end – introducing truth, as a processus in infinitum, an active determining – not a becoming-conscious of something that is in itself firm and determined. It is a word for the “will to power.” Life is founded upon the premise of a belief in enduring and regularly recurring things; the more powerful life is, the wider must be the knowable world to which we, as it were, attribute being (Nietzsche 1968: 298).

One may here recall Geertz’s “aura of facticity” and “concepts of general order of being”. At the beginning of this book, I wrote that a generation must die out in order to change one scientific theory. What can we say about a theory of the

129 Such a training can teach one some things, but there is no exercise for certain types of malice. If, for example, Jacques Derrida stood at a fair with a basket of mushrooms he had picked, we would never buy these mushrooms.

130 M. H. Vicaire, *The Apostolic Life*, Chicago 1966, pp. 82–83; qtd. after Aumann 1993: 140.

whole world, then? Nietzsche acts here as if he was a foreigner who started to learn the language of a new country and every now and then discovers new rules, exceptions, categories, meanings, idioms, layers, and similarities which make things easier and more difficult at the same time; finally, he advises the nation: why do you tire yourselves so hard, just change your language! By the way, several impatient writers, including the Immoralist's contemporaries, managed to create such better languages.

Sometimes it is hard to distinguish eremitism from monasticism since hermits were not always keen to drive away groups of their admirers. If they were utterly consistent, we would have little knowledge about them; perhaps, we would only see them as a certain literary genre, something more than Ray Bradbury's "human books." Unfortunately, even Simeon's pillar had a ladder leading to its top; and people used it quite frequently. When brought together, these two phenomena can be regarded both as the first new form of Christian piety and as the first alternative organization of society (Brown 1992: 127). In turn, self-control of the body and thought (Brown 1992: 130) means an initiation into civilization understood as the taming of instincts (Elias, see chapter 13.1). The renunciation of individual will – compulsory, though different depending on a particular religious order – limits the horizontal bond between "brethren" and distinguishes the piety of the monks from that of the original community, which gathered people who did not have to renounce their personality, and who, moreover, could be fully themselves only at these meetings, when they did not have to hide their faith as in the hostile world. However, their attitude comes close to eremitism due to their commitment to the same common ideals: following St. Augustine, who described monks as having "one soul and one heart" (*Erratio in Ps.* 132:6), one may figuratively say that the order is a hermit multiplied by *n*.

Over time, there has been a stronger emphasis in the West (Aumann 1993: 83) on common living as a separate quality, different from the above multiplication. Here one may define a certain area between choral piety, which is still close to multiplication, through "polyphonic," to essentially collective or social piety, in which certain specific interactive virtues are practiced (like helpfulness or patience). A complete disharmony of voices does not fit into a single system and is tantamount to dissidence. The most important role in the harmonization of monastic devotion played the rule of Benedict of Nursia (480–547),¹³¹ especially

131 See *Benedicti Regula*, Wien 1977 (2nd, corrected edition). Claude Peifer, "The Rule in History," in: *The Rule of St. Benedict*, T. Fry (ed.), 1981: 126; qtd. after Aumann 1993: 104.

in its two adaptations: Benedict's of Anagni and Cluny's, which appeared, respectively, over 200 and over 300 years after its implementation in Monte Cassino. The Cluny reform consisted not only in strengthening the order and promoting new asceticism¹³² but also in establishing systematic studies and transmission of the Scripture and the Church Fathers. The aim was to deepen their influence on the lay public (mainly the nobility that defined both the shape and the vocation of the knighthood); the new institution of the converse included lay people into the monastery life, creating an intermediate formation between the clergy and the laity¹³³ (later chivalric orders were added, followed by lay confraternities, to which I shall dedicate a separate chapter 14). Indeed, the centralization under the Pope's authority assured the orders' cohesion and independence from both bishopric and secular authorities.¹³⁴ The reform went so far as to create a real "religious empire," playing an important civilizational role throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries. It is not hard to imagine the importance people attached to such a center with a strong rule in the times of the fall of the empire and papacy in the post-Carolingian region: all Cluny monasteries formed a congregation reaching of as many as 1500 units. The Cistercian Order, which also created a powerful network of monasteries, was less important but it had already implemented a more democratic mode of organization (the chapter). At the time of the renewal of the empire and papacy, it was no longer the only center of stability, but it still served this function during more intensive periods of the investiture contest. Noteworthy, a similar understanding of the freedom of the Church

132 G. Duby describes it in quite critical terms as an aristocratic and therefore languid life-style.

133 On the importance of the conversi (lay brothers) for writing also in the subsequent period see, among others, Löser 1999; *Ordensstudien I: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Konversen im Mittelalter*, K. Elm (red.), Berlin 1980; K. Schreiner, *Gebildete Analphabeten? Spätmittelalterliche Laienbrüder als Leser und Schreiber wissensvermittelnder und frömmigkeitsbildender Literatur*, in: H. Brunner, N. R. Wolf, *Wissensliteratur im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit. Bedingungen, Typen, Publikum, Sprache*, Wiesbaden 1993, pp. 296–327; Ch. Bauer, *Geistliche Prosa im Kloster Tegernsee, Untersuchungen zu Gebrauch und Überlieferung deutschsprachiger Literatur im 15. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen 1996.

134 For a summary of the Cluny reforms see Milis 1996. The Cistercian spirituality: *Zisterziensische Spiritualität: theologische Grundlagen, funktionale Voraussetzungen und bildhafte Ausprägungen im Mittelalter*, C. Kasper, K. Schreiner (ed.), St. Ottilien 1994. For more on medieval monasticism see C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, London 1989.

as independent from secular authorities, including the emperor, was at the heart of the Gregorian Revolution; before that, *libertas ecclesiae* meant protection from kings and princes provided by the emperor (Szabó-Bechstein 1991: 150). This is also the source of the meaning of the term “free (imperial) city.”

The virtuosity of piety is orchestrated in collective monasticism. In the ascetic, enclosed rule, a new devotion developed which multiplied eremitism in terms of meditation (in the Camaldolese¹³⁵ and Carthusian orders), while in most Benedictine monasteries it was rather ritual devotion – with an emphasis on liturgical formalism – which flourished until the Cistercian reform. More diversity and freedom prevailed in the apostolic activity. In the Carolingian period, Church liturgical practice also takes on the character of a virtuosic show of the priest which the faithful listen passively. Only later the pastoral character of the priesthood office was strengthened, and the participation of the faithful in the rite returned in a new, regulated form (5).

3. BIBLICAL DEVOTION. The Scripture appears here as the source of a norm in the shaping of life (Segl 1990: 164), not as the only source of religious gestures or acts. However, the growing canonical and liturgical tradition could long provide texts that functioned in the same way as the Scripture, which was not widely known as text until the late Middle Ages. As long as this was the case, Christianity was perceived as a religion of books¹³⁶ and there was no reason, other than doctrinal-theological, to distinguish these books. Perhaps, the term “codex religion” would be better in this context including the legal meaning of the word “code” and the meaning of “codex book;” in the codex both these meanings – legal and bibliographical – apply equally.

135 The founder, St. Romuald (d. 1027), and his meditation school were remembered by his pupil, Bruno of Querfurt, in the Polish *Life of the Five Martyrs Brothers (Vita quinque-Fratrurn Eremitarum martyrum in Polonia*, ed. R. Kade in MGH SS XV 2, pp. 716–738; ed. by J. Karwasińska, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, Nowa Seria 4/3, Warszawa 1973, pp. 27–84); they were members of the Camaldolese monastic community murdered on November 11, 1003 at the order of someone from the surroundings of king Bolesław Chrobry. Romuald’s meditation is discussed by M. Carruthers (1998: 112–115); on p. 311, footnote 151, inexact information about Bruno, “who went as a missionary to Russia, where he was martyred in 1009.” In fact, he was murdered during the Prussian mission in the Lithuanian borderlines (Sudovia) by the Yotvingians (“im Grenzland Sudauen ... durch heidnische Jatvjagen” – D. Berg, Bruno von Querfurt, VL Vol. 1, p. 1054). On H. Łowmiański’s map of Prussian lands, Sudovia is located at the present Polish-Lithuanian border (Ł. Okulicz-Kozaryn, *Dzieje Prusów*, Wrocław 1997, p. 9; on Bruno’ mission see pp. 232–233.

136 In German, there is a word *Buchreligion*.

The legal meaning would belong to this term with all necessity. Celtic Christianity supplemented the Church's practice with many solutions from the Mosaic books; through the Celtic Church, these solutions entered the continental Church of the Carolingian era and were present until the thirteenth century (Vauchez 1996: 10). This factor could have played a role in the delayed implementation of the New Law – the gospel of love which I discuss in chapters 3.6. and 18.3. According to Vauchez (1996: 10), without the Celtic and then Carolingian juridizations, Christianity would probably have fallen “into a set of superstitious practices.” What began as a “restoration of the Old Testament observances,” evolved into the juridism of the Roman Curia, which is the favorite theme of the reformists' provocations; for instance, Marsilius of Padua in *Defensor Pacis* and Matthew of Cracow in *De squaloribus Curiae Romanae* invoke juridism as the main cause of distortions (J. Keller 1988). In fact, it is precisely legalism that Dante deplores when complaining about the growing role of money, for which he coins the oxymoronic term “cursed flower” (*maledetto fiore*):

That hath made wander both the sheep and lambs,
Turning the shepherd to a wolf. For this,
The gospel and great teachers laid aside,
The decretals, as their stuff margins show,
Are the sole study. Pope and Cardinals,
Intent on these, ne'er journey but in thought
To Nazareth, where Gabriel op'd his wings (*Paradiso*, IX, 130).

Apparently, Dante's devotion¹³⁷ is already based on the New Testament, and we are ready to forget with him that many Old Testament books are nothing more than legal codes treated as revealed religious books. But we are already fully aware of the difference between the divine and human words (“the decretals”). It is not clear why Dante begins his reflection with money, but he continues to write about lawyers. Although Dante was not the only one who complained about money, it proved to be a common measure of various human needs (Kaye 1988), and even a factor integrating the community on the international scale (Samsonowicz 1975: 56). It got to the point where it is hard to find anyone who would sincerely regret the fact that money exists. In the Western Liturgy of the Offertory

137 The intensity of Dante's reception is testified by the nearly simultaneous appearance of two ambitious editions of his *Inferno: The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Inferno*, ed. R. M. Durling, New York 1997 and a collection of commentaries to this book: A. Mandelbaum, “Inferno: A Canto-by-Canto Commentary,” eds. A. Oldcorn, Ch. Ross, *Lectura Dantis*, Vol. 1, Berkeley 1998; W. Ginsberg, *Dante's Aesthetics of Being*, Ann Arbor 1999.

or Preparation of Gifts (Offertorium), money begins to prevail over natural gifts since the eleventh century, and in Spain even from the seventh century (Nadolski 1992: 168). This requires continuous vigilance. For since Simon Magus tried to purchase the apostles' power (and thus also their authority) for gold (Acts 8:18), such an act (simony) has been treated as heresy.¹³⁸ As for the bibliological meaning of the word code (as in codex, manuscript book), which could enter into the term "codex religion," there is a consensus that early Christianity used the form of a codex instead of the form of a scroll, and thereby contributed to its popularization. However, it was the Romans who invented the codex (before the invention of the parchment, there were even papyrus codices). Still, it was widely adopted thanks to its application by Christians for the storage of writings (John 1992: 56; Brown 1992: 120), so it is worth to consider the reverse, namely – the influence of the manuscript on the popularization of Christianity. At any rate, John believes that the invention of the codex is as important to the history of civilization as the invention of print (John 1992: 56). John Van Engen (1986: 549) would probably agree with this, as he claimed that "Christianization was not a brutal 'acculturation,' but it was rather an impulse built into the religious community established on the foundation of books."¹³⁹

We are interested in "Biblical devotion" as the shaping of life by and through the Church. To be sure, there are different stages: the Scripture functions differently in the period of the Church's formation and differently in the periods of its profound reform.

One may describe the first stage as the Carolingian "civilization of the liturgy."¹⁴⁰ Instead of the spiritual communication between the faithful and God, what prevails at this stage is the ritual and cult attitude, which reduces religion to the performing of rites in order to win the divine favor. If people ignorant of Latin and deficient in singing participated in such forms, they were nothing more than completely passive participants of cult activities. This kind of ritualism – which manifests itself, for instance, in Charlemagne's concern for the uniformity and literal correctness of liturgical texts and the purity of ritual vessels (Vauchez

138 See above chapter 1.8. The heretical interpretation of simony is discussed by J. Gilchrist, "Simonia Haeresis," in: *Proceedings of the 2nd International Congress of Medieval Canon Law*, Vatican City 1965.

139 The role of books in medieval devotion is explored in M. Manion, B. Muir, *The Art of the Book: Its Place in Medieval Worship*, Trowbridge 1998.

140 A term coined by Delaruelle (qtd. after Vauchez 1995: 12). Hen (1995) treats the liturgical books of the Merovingian period (fifth to eighth century) as a source of knowledge on the society of the time.

1996: 12) – has certain magical features. However, it comes closer to Judaism than to magic. After all, we should not forget about the Biblical and prayerful framework: “The ideal of the religious man is, of course, that everything should be done ritually, should in other words, be a sacrifice” (Eliade 1958: 460). The Old Testament is a story of God’s covenant with the chosen nation; in that sense, it is a series of exchanges of prayers and graces, which occurs through offering sacrifices; they are accepted if the offerers meet certain conditions and observe the ritual rules. From the very beginning, this kind of sacrifice could have been either collective or individual, which corresponds to the medieval phenomenon of the privatization of the mass, that is, the celebration of the mass not for the community but for private individuals who had personal votive intentions, or even the practice of founding or reserving separate churches, which already gained a political importance (see chapter 1.8).

It seems that in the following periods the element of sacrifice in the relationship between human beings and God has been underestimated and too easily described as magic. Possibly, in the new era, with its mystical emphasis on the suffering of Christ, not enough has been said about the element of sacrifice? Or, perhaps, it was the sacrifice of Christ that concealed other sacrificial gestures in people’s consciousness?

Biblical devotion will change depending on the predominant approach to the text; for a long time, the dominant form of *lectio divina* is literal reading (even longer in the case of liturgical texts); the method of allegorical reading appeared already in the third century (Origen¹⁴¹), but the gradual development of allegorical interpretation of certain elements of the liturgy began only in the fifth century; in turn, the Carolingian Church introduced a comprehensive allegorical interpretation of various elements of the mass – Amalarius (780?–850; Alcuin’s disciple)¹⁴² proposed it in *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, which was condemned by the Council of Quierzy in 838 (Nadolski 1992: 53–54). Still, this did not diminish its impact or the development of the allegorical method. 250 years later, it was perpetuated by an influential author, Honorius of Autun, who described the mass as an ancient tragedy: “In the same way our tragic author (that is, the celebrant) represents by his gestures in the theater of the Church before the Christian people the struggle of Christ and teaches to them the victory of His redemption” (*De*

141 *Commentarium in Canticum canticorum* and *Homiliae in Canticum canticorum*.

142 For a new critical edition of his works see J. M. Hanssens, *Amalarii episcopi opera liturgica omnia*, Vols. 1–3, Vatican 1948–1950.

Gemma animae, Liturgica, cap. 83: *De tragoediis*)¹⁴³. Hardison posits a close relationship between the allegorical interpretation of the liturgy and the history of the drama (1965: 39). In *De sacro altaris mysterio*, Innocent III unified the multitude of soteriological, eschatological, moral, and commemorative (including typological) elements that have developed throughout the centuries. He focused on the Christological values and structured the semiotics of the sacrament of the Eucharist (see chapter 22.2). In turn, Guillaume Durand's *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (ca. 1290) provided a summary and consolidation of the medieval allegoresis of the mass. The entire allegorical current distanced the faithful from purely "scripturist" devotion and moved, quite logically, toward sacramentalism which, by radically limiting the physical presence of the sacred, had to open up a different spiritual space for its experience.

In the event of crisis or reform, and in ecumenical efforts, one returns as closely as possible to the Biblical text in order to find a prevailing argument (preferably on the literal level) or a new balance. The Biblical texts, however, are so diverse and multithreaded that it is quite impossible to use them as a foundation of some fundamentalism; the verbal nature of this sacred excludes the danger of fetishization. Elements of Biblical devotion function effectively in various forms of Christianity.

The fact that one may derive different religious subsystems from the Bible is not only due to the heterogeneity of this Collection of Stories. The tradition of exegesis played a more important role here. Depending on the adopted method, it was possible to either explain the comprehensiveness of the message of faith or differently construct new theologies by interpreting its selected elements. "The diversity of the Gospel was not understood as a multitude of theologies, but as an expression of God's immense power, which manifests itself in many different ways" (Gilbert 1997: 38).

Already from the eleventh century, the Church recommended that the faithful should get acquainted with the text of the Scripture by reading and listening to it.¹⁴⁴ As part of the Gregorian reform,¹⁴⁵ Christocentrism became the

143 Qtd. after L. M. Clopper, *Drama, Play, and Game: English Festive Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Period*, Chicago 2001, p. 51.

144 Not accidentally, finishing of the *Glossa ordinaria* – full commented edition of the entire Bible belonged among the next century's biggest intellectual achievements. On the apparatus of the propagating of the Bible's text but primarily its content see A. Dąbrówka, "Sposoby wykorzystania przeszłości w kulturze religijnej i edukacji," in: *Przeszłość w kulturze średniowiecznej Polski*, eds. J. Banaszekiewicz, A. Dąbrówka, P. Węcowski, Vol. 1, Instytut Historii PAN, Wydawnictwo Neriton Warszawa 2018, pp. 479–511.

145 J. Leclercq, "Die Bibel in der gregorianischen Reform," *Concilium* 2/1966, pp. 507–514.

most important theological theme, which emphasized the humanity – and especially martyr's death – of Christ. Of course, in this case, the primary source was the New Testament. Revivers and rebellious novelists, especially Cathars and Waldensians, drew on the Bible; there are documented cases of people, even illiterate, who knew entire books by heart.¹⁴⁶

The *Devotio Moderna* brought about a specific attitude toward the Scripture.¹⁴⁷ It was probably one of the first social movements to put innovation on their banners.¹⁴⁸ The essence of the *Devotio Moderna* lies in recognizing the inner life of every human being as the spiritual life proper and, consequently, placing on the individual the whole responsibility for his or her salvation: “The most difficult battles must be waged within the confines of one's own soul” (Aumann 1993: 196). This innovation trumps all that the flagship devotional book *Imitation of Christ* classifies as anti-intellectualism, escapism or penitential obsession. The

146 “Vidi et audivi rusticum ydiotam, qui Iob recitavit de verbo ad verbum” (A. Patschovsky, *Der Passauer Anonymus: ein Sammelwerk über Ketzer, Juden, Antichrist aus der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, No. 8, 71, Stuttgart 1968; MGH, t. 22; qtd. after Segl 1990: 163).

147 J. M. E. Dois, *Bibliografie der Moderne Devotie*, 1936; A. Hyma, *The Brethren of the Common Life*, 1950; M. A. Lückner, *Meister Eckhart und die devotio moderna*, 1950; M. van Woerkum, “Florentius Radewijns. Leven, geschriften, persoonlijkheid en ideeën,” in: *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 24/1950, pp. 337–364; C. van der Wansem, *Het ontstaan en de geschiedenis der Broederschap van het Gemene Leven tot 1400*, Leuven 1958; Th. P. van Zijl, *Gerard Groote, ascetic and reformer*, Washington 1963; R. R. Post, *The Modern Devotion*, Leiden 21968; G. Epiney-Burgard, *Gerard Groote et les débuts de la dévotion moderne*, Wiesbaden 1970; H. N. Janowski, *Gerard Groote, Thomas von Kempen und die Devotio Moderna*, Ötten 1978; *Moderne devotie. Figuren en facetten. Tentoonstelling ter herdenking van het sterfjaar van Geert Groote (1384–1984)*, exhibition catalogue, Nijmegen 1984; *Geert Groote & Moderne Devotie. Voordrachten gehouden tijdens het Geert Groote congres*, eds. J. Andriessen et al., Nijmegen 1985; G. Rehm, *Die Schwestern vom gemeinsamen Leben im nordwestlichen Deutschland. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Devotio moderna und des weiblichen Religiosentums*, Berlin 1985; G. H. Gerrits, *Inter timorem et spem. A Study of the Theological Thought of Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen (1367–1398)*, Leiden 1986; *De doorwerking van de Moderne Devotie. Windesheim 1387–1987*, eds. P. Bange et al., Hilversum 1988; J. Stoś, “Jakuba z Paradyża teoria człowieka. Przykład ujęć antropologicznych kierunku devotio moderna,” *Studia Paradyskie* 3/1993, pp. 129–150; P. J. J. van Geest 1995. For an English collection, see *Devotio Moderna. Basic Writings*, Mahwah, various editions.

148 According to W. Reinhard (1993), it is only Romanticism that defines modernity as a distinctive feature. In the mid-fourteenth century, *ars nova* appeared in music and *via moderna* in philosophy.

ideas are old, but their application is new (see chapter 18.6 below). In the *Devotio Moderna* we find the conviction that a historical interpretation of the life of Jesus is both necessary and sufficient for salvation, as the Bible encompasses all human affairs. This is especially true of the New Testament, which provides human beings with sufficient wisdom to shape and strengthen their inner lives and become able to secure their salvation by resisting the temptations of the world.

It was precisely Luther's own interpretation of the Bible, supported by his own translation (1534), that provided a foundation for his reform. Maciuszko (1997: 48) described Mikołaj Rej's preaching work as bibliocentric on an unprecedented scale; by virtue of the omission of dogmatic nuances (so characteristic of the *Devotio Moderna*) and setting the focus on the Scripture, Rej's *Postylla* [Postil], first published in Cracow in 1557, gained considerable popularity among sixteenth-century readers, as evidenced by its four renewals, Lithuanian translation (1600), and significant reception in Ruthenia.¹⁴⁹ Like all other Christian systems, every Protestantism had to make a broader or narrower selection, and probably none – despite their common reference to the Scripture – called for the application of all laws and norms which it contains.¹⁵⁰ The Protestant accusations against the Church of concealing the Scripture from the people reveal (apart from all doctrinal differences) a different approach to the text, which is meant to “inform the intellect about the rational structures of the revealed mysteries;” as distinct from the medieval understanding, it is no longer an edifying text which animates spirituality (Gilbert 1997: 35). Luther treats Scripture simply as a book which allows one to learn or prove something. However, we should not forget about the rationalization of theology (*sola ratiōe*, see chapter 18.4) initiated by Anselm.¹⁵¹

The Reform of Trento restored the use of the Biblical text in the liturgy, radically removing almost the whole “human” text from it – only a few tropes remained of the vibrant medieval tradition.¹⁵² Liturgical improvisation and textual variations, gradually reduced since the patristic times, were utterly eliminated (Nadolski

149 A broader context is explored in J. T. Maciuszko's work *Ewangelicka postyllografia polska XVI–XVIII wieku. Charakterystyka – analiza porównawcza – recepcja*, Warszawa 1987.

150 For a general history of the Protestant dogmatics, see O. Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, Leipzig 1908–1927.

151 On Protestant Scholasticism, see B. G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France*, Madison 1969; cf. also J. Plall, *Reformed Thought and Scholasticism*, Leiden 1982.

152 Pius V eliminated the tropes in his *Roman Missal* (Nadolski 1992: 128).

1992: 40). We can describe this process as a stabilization of the sacred in the canonical text.

4. POPULAR RELIGION¹⁵³ involves various manifestations of devotion associated with the broad masses as distinct from educated circles; in medieval studies, it has emerged as a separate field of research quite recently,¹⁵⁴ together with the distinction between the problems of elite culture and those of mass (popular, folk) culture. Each of these pairs of terms makes it very difficult to provide a precise definition of the areas of the reality which they concern and to draw a boundary between them. Should we ascribe a Gothic cathedral to elite or mass culture? Is it important who ordered the cathedral (usually, though not always a feudal master), or who built it, or perhaps who used it? And what about the parish confraternity that was founded in order to build it? Following this path, one can question the usefulness of these oppositions. Cohen is explicit in claiming the uselessness of these two concepts to describe legal phenomena in medieval Europe, even though she also refers to them at some point (1986: 9). Manselli¹⁵⁵ considers the assumption of a significant difference between popular and learned religion to be a methodological mistake, and Tellenbach strongly supports this view (1988: 82–83). Yitzhak Hen (1995), in turn, writes about the unity of the Merovingian society combined with a common “popular culture,” whose core was the liturgy in its broadest sense. Karen Louise Jolly also emphasizes the mutual assimilation of Christianity and magical beliefs against

153 German *Volksreligion*, French *religion populaire*.

154 For an extensive bibliography of works dealing with popular religion, see D. Yoder, “Introductory Bibliography on Folk Religion,” in: *Western Folklore* 30/1974, pp. 16–34; for more recent studies, see P. Dinzelbacher 1990a. There is an abundance of general monographs on popular religion, for instance: R. and Ch. Brooke, *Popular Religion in the Middle Ages. Western Europe 1000–1300*, London 1984; E. Delaruelle, *La piété populaire au moyen âge*, Turin 1975; G. Maillet, *Religion et traditions populaires aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, Chalons-sur-Marne 1978; R. Manselli, *La religion populaire au moyen âge*, Montreal 1975; K. Schreiner, *Laienfrömmigkeit im späten Mittelalter. Formen, Funktionen, politisch-soziale Zusammenhänge*, ed. E. Müller-Luckner, München 1992; from a literary studies perspective: P. Trouilleux, “Volksgehoof in de middeleeuwen. Een beeld vanuit de Canterbury Tales,” in: *Tijdschrift voor Geestelijk Leven* 40/1984, pp. 403–423; iconographic sources: G. Jaritz 1990; the scope of religious practices in the High Middle Ages and during the Protestant Crisis: E. Duphy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580*, New Haven 1992. A selection of texts ed. by J. Shinnors, *Medieval Popular Religion, 1000–1500: A Reader*, Peterborough 1997.

155 R. Manselli, *La religion populaire au moyen âge*, Montreal 1975, p. 14.

the division of phenomena into elite and popular ones.¹⁵⁶ Referring to the reception of devotional art, Jaritz (Jaritz 1990: 2018) contends that the “people” is everyone (which does not exclude the diversity of the audience).

Now, against the backdrop of the beautiful choirs (2), in which monks sang two-part songs together with angels, we shall hear a “bim tidle bong” of a home-grown musical band. Among devotional behaviors, which I list below, one may also find such that are not reserved for this form of devotion but become its characteristic manifestations in combination with other behaviors or due to their specific execution: amateur, naively intense, within an excited community.¹⁵⁷ This most visible, if not spectacular, mass aspect of Christianity is called Multitudinism (Kuksewicz 1986: 441). We can trace its origins back to the post-Carolingian movement of internal Christianization initiated by the Benedictine (Cluny) development of the liturgy toward the collective rite: choirs, processions with relics, pilgrimages.

Given the fact that all estates took part in church services, it is hard to classify all behaviors listed below as belonging to the realm of simple people’s religiousness. “Louis XIV ... was unable to follow the liturgy. In his religious experience ... he belonged to the same group as 15th-century peasants: to the people” (Chaunu 1989: 190). Quite similar is the case of the opposition between orality and literacy, which is only seemingly less charged with valuations, as the anthropologist Jack Goody assumes when he claims this pair of concepts to be better than the primitive-civilized opposition (Goody 1968).¹⁵⁸ Discussing the state of research on this issue, Mayke De Jong (1993:13) signals a similar relativization of the distinction between oral and written cultures; instead of the orality–literacy dualism, one should speak about different combinations of the spoken and written word; in fact, differences in function, status, and permanence of expression within each of these realms may be more important than differences between these “cultures.” Jesse M. Gellrich criticizes the tendency to overestimate the influence of writing on the realm of oral communication and

156 *Popular Religion in Late Saxon England: Elf Charms in Context*, Chapel Hill 1996.

157 In this sense, we can compare this phenomenon with the stylistic layers in vocabulary; in German, there is also a term that describes forms of devotion as styles – *Frömmigkeitsstil*, for example, in Heer.

158 R. Finnegan opposed this view in the collection she edited with R. Horton, *Modes of Thought. Essays on Thinking in Western and Non-Western Societies*, 1973; qtd. after De Jong 1993: 12.

claims that the “oral mentality” has dominated even the highest levels of written culture.¹⁵⁹

Pilgrimages to holy places underwent a significant evolution. Initially, people counted pilgrimage among ascetic forms of devotion (see chapter 1); after 1300, first documents about pilgrimage as a punishment for both religious and ordinary or political offenses appeared in the Netherlands (Zaremska 1993: 90–95; Herwaarden 1978). With the Pope’s consent, King Philip sent 3000 inhabitants of Flemish Bruges on a pilgrimage after the peace made in 1305 (Axters II: 417); alternative penalties were fines (Axters II: 410). A special phenomenon was the spontaneous pilgrimage to places not approved by the Church. The Crusades, in turn, were originally understood as “armed pilgrimages” (Swanson 1997: 167).

Processions can be described as an embryonic form of pilgrimages. Initially, monks made processions within monasteries to the shrines with relics. The most famous processions are the marches of the flagellants, while the most long-standing ones are those made for the Feast of Corpus Christi. A special form of procession is the Stations of the Cross, also known as the Via Crucis. It involves painting, sculpture, text, singing, music, and movement, which makes it more “interdisciplinary” than other forms of devotion; it has also the most elaborate narrative composition. At the same time, its combination of the stability of the structure with the variability of certain elements (freely expandable scenes), including the location (not only in the church, but also in the landscape¹⁶⁰), organized a great deal of theological knowledge, provided the participants with new and broad experiences, while leaving some room for the authors’ creativity; since 1312, the Franciscans have long held a monopoly on the construction of the Stations of the Cross (Fehleemann 1990).

The growing importance of singing in the church service had a spiritual justification. In the pre-Lateran (Carolingian and Cluny) liturgy, most songs were

159 J. M. Gellrich, *Discourse and Dominion in the Fourteenth Century: Oral Contexts of Writing in Philosophy, Politics, and Poetry*, Princeton 1995; qtd. after R. S. Sturges in rev. *TMR* 97.11.01. Gellrich criticizes, among others, M. Irvine’s, *The Making of Textual Culture: “Grammatica” and Literary Theory 350–1100*, and S. Justice’s, *Writing and Rebellion*. Also see *Kultura piśmienna średniowiecza i czasów nowożytnych. Problemy i konteksty badawcze*, eds. P. Dymmel, B. Trelińska, Lublin 1998 (*Res Historica*, Vol. 3).

160 In Poland, the special term *kalwaria* developed for *via crucis* outside of churches, where stationary chapels were built, situated around existing towns; such urban arrangements could determine the image of the town that the word *kalwaria* replaced its official name (e.g. Góra Kalwaria).

reserved for “professionals” and adequately difficult;¹⁶¹ it was only in the second phase that the choir of the common faithful was allowed to participate in singing; roughly speaking, an increase in the participation of the people in ecclesiastical singing occurred only after the Fourth Lateran Council.

The undeniable realm of popular religion is the celebration of local cults, which preceded (or not) the canonization of the worshipped person. Initially, even the service to the saints had a popular character (Aumann 1993: 136). The saints were the target (as was the addressee or the “participant”) of various devotional activities, either directly or, more often, through relics and paintings. The cult of relics is often considered an emblem of popular religion, especially when it goes beyond the normalizing procedures of the hierarchy (which was virtually always the case). This is even more true with respect to the cult of images; since the time of the Eastern schism, it has been a relative form of cult concerning representations of the “saints,” not the physical objects that served as their vehicles. The Eastern schism was about images, while the cult of saints was one of the reasons behind the Western (Protestant) schism. The latter, however, was provoked by many other Catholic practices: above all, the application of indulgences and the widespread use of various sacramentals (or sacred objects),¹⁶² like the consecration of candles, wax, oil, ash, fire, palms, Easter lambs, salt, water, people (such as midwives or pilgrims).¹⁶³

Some of the benedictions have entered into widespread private use in customary, non-religious contexts (for instance, the parental blessing of the newlyweds); in general, consecration practices often exhibit regional traditions: they may characterize, for instance, only Polish devotion (the blessing of traditional Easter baskets with food or the Christmas wafer) or constitute local parish traditions (like the blessing of cars and bicycles in certain parishes). Among the characteristic material sacramentals are devotional items, which can be distinguished into two types: some belong to the necessary personal equipment for participation in worship (rosaries, books, crucifixes), others are mementos of participation in sacraments (medals, crosses, pictures) or other devotional acts, such as pilgrimages to holy places and relics. Although they were known since the second century, their significant proliferation dates from the Middle Ages.¹⁶⁴ The

161 On the reduction of the singing of the faithful see Janota, *Studien zur Funktion und Typus des deutschen geistlichen Liedes im Mittelalter*, München 1968.

162 See the definition below, p. 5: Formulas of the benediction, e.g. in the *Pontifical of the Archbishops of Halyč in the 15th century* (f. 189–192); apart from those listed further in this text, there were also benedictions of cheese, eggs, and honey.

163 See Segl 1990: 166.

164 M. Pisarzak, “Dewocjonalia,” in: EK 3, p. 1226.

most visible sign of popular religion is probably the cultivation of gestures and actions (like frequently crossing oneself or repeating the same prayers over and over again). However, one should not forget that the increase in the number of signs of the cross and all repetitions of gestures (kissing the altar or the objects given to the celebrant) was an innovation brought by the “Gothic” liturgy in accordance with the allegorical interpretation of the mass which crystallized in the thirteenth century and manifested itself through a number of visible rites (Nadolski 1992: 52).

In addition, the discussed form of devotion involves various beliefs related to the spirits and the Devil or expressing faith in miracles; they are registered in folklore as folk tales and stories (Luther, an educated and witty man, called the Christian legends “*liegends*,” *Lügenden – lügen* means “to lie”).¹⁶⁵ This leads us to the last group of motifs considered specific to this form. These are “remnants of paganism” which have no place in the Church: magic, faith in demons, all so-called superstitions, relics of pagan beliefs, or natural cults.¹⁶⁶

As an example, we may refer to the practice of kissing the earth,¹⁶⁷ which the heretic Bishop of Herword (probably a Waldensian) recommended as an atonement: “kiss the earth and thou shalt be clean;” thus, he employed the psychological folk idea of the sanctity of the earth to oppose the Church’s sacrament of penance. The Church, in turn, also assimilated such customs as fallback solutions *in articulo mortis*: in the absence of the Eucharist, it was allowed to

165 J. Matuszak, *Das “Speculum exemplorum” als Quelle volkstümlicher Glaubensvorstellungen des Spätmittelalters*, Siegburg 1967; M. Keen, *The Outlaws of Medieval Legend*, London 1977 (phantasy).

166 See Gurevich 1988; Hen 1995; Meens 1998; see also D. Harmening, *Superstitio. Überlieferungs- und theoriegeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur kirchlich-theologischen Aberglaubensliteratur des Mittelalters*, Berlin 1979; V. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, Oxford 1991; R. Kieckhefer, “The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic,” *American Historical Review* 99/1994, pp. 813–836; *De betovering van het middeleeuwse Christendom. Studies over ritueel en magie in de Middeleeuwen*, eds. M. Mostert, A. Demyttenaere, Hilversum 1995; K. Bracha, “Kritik an den Glaubens- und Verhaltensformen und an der Aberglaubenpraxis im kirchlichen reformatorischen Schrifttum des Spätmittelalters,” in: *Christianity in East Central Europe. Late Middle Ages. Proceedings of the Commission Internationale d’Histoire Ecclésiastique Comparée*, eds. J. Kłoczowski et al., Lublin 1966, Vol. 2, Lublin 1999, pp. 271–282.

167 In Bavarian: “Chuss auf di erden;” H. Moser, “Bayerische Volksfrömmigkeit,” in: *Bayerische Frömmigkeit. 1400 Jahre christliches Bayern. Ausstellung anlässlich des eucharistischen Weltkongresses in München*, Monachium 1960, p. 38; qtd. after Segl 1990: 174.

give communion *per corpus Domini* in the form of three blades of grass (Axters 1950: 389). Until the fourteenth century, faith in the divinity of the womb of the earth was so widespread in Europe that people treated it as a substitute sacrament for the dying without a priest.¹⁶⁸

If one should mention spells here, it is because to some extent sacramentals – sacred objects connected to the liturgy – were used to cast them. There was no room for these heavy torts to be assimilated in doctrine. Similarly, there was no tolerance for divination – practiced out of the need to know the future and hence to anticipate God’s judgment. Less “dangerous” was dowsing applied in the search for lost objects (St. Anthony competed with this practice); the use of “superstitious practices” to search for treasure gained even less approval.

More radical was the condemnation of astrology; according to the theologian Johannes von Paltz (whose pastoral experiences I discuss here), faith in the influence of the constellation on the fate of man precludes his responsibility for his own actions; it is impossible to reward or punish him for right or wrong deeds (*Supplementum*: 439; Burger: 1990: 325). At most, it was admissible to speak of the constellation’s influence on the physical part of human nature, with the exclusion of the will “which is the principle that governs human activity” – as Jacob von Jüterbogk claimed in the astrological part of his treatise *De potestate daemonum* that “condemned faith in the determinism of the stars, that is to say, in destiny, and ultimately forbade the use of the very concept of fate” (Bracha 1999: 268).¹⁶⁹

A similar fate awaits alchemy. According to von Paltz, no one should produce gold and silver, because it hampers the fulfillment of the history of salvation; for it is the Antichrist who makes use of gold and silver to turn Christians from their faith; the abundance of gold would make them unable to recognize it or prove they fight the temptations it provokes.¹⁷⁰ Around 1500, however, these last two

168 W. Wackernagel, “Erde als Leib Christi,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 6/1848, p. 288 ff; Segl 1990: 175.

169 “Vnde ordinacio humanorum actuum, quorum principium est voluntas, soli deo attribui debet quia omnia diuine prouidencie subduntur non constellationibus celestibus et ideo prohibere ne hoc fati communiter vtantur.” Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cod. 18378, k. 266vb; qtd. after Bracha 1999: fn. 35.

170 Burger 1990: 325; this view appears in von Paltz, *Supplementum Soelifodinae*, p. 440; it can be found also in *Der Antichrist und Die Fünfzehn Zeichen vor dem Jüngsten Gericht*, a reprint of an anonymous Strasburg print of 1480, Hamburg 1979, pp. 6 and 15. Perhaps this is why one of the Popes commanded that alchemists should give back to the Church as much real gold as they produce with their art.

“superstitions” did not much concern von Paltz as a priest. After all, for quite some time now, we have addressed literate, that is to say, “elite” practices transmitted through writing; the use of the terms “popular religion” and “popular culture” becomes very arbitrary.

5. SACRAMENTALISM. Sprandel uses this term to describe the form of devotion based on a formalized system of rules, which one ought to follow, under the strict guidance of the Church, to obtain salvation (1982: 90–93).¹⁷¹ As we read in a summary of Johannes von Paltz’s beliefs, written by his confessor around 1500 in Germany: the faithful should fully agree with the Church’s doctrine and lead their lives according to its guidance, for it is the Church that conveys God’s glory. One should obey its indications not only by professing the truths of faith and adopting Christian values but also in everyday action (Burger 1990: 308). This is an evidence that this form of devotion achieved its full development.

At the heart of this system is the doctrine of seven sacraments, which included the most important moments of life within the framework of the sacred ritual (Sprandel 1982: 263); J. Keller (1988: 657) speaks of the “official church” and legal religiousness, and is right to emphasize this organizational aspect, which became the Church’s unwitting civilizational contribution.¹⁷² The universality and obligatory character of the system favors its effectiveness: the whole Christian world is divided into parishes and every person has to belong to his or her parish; at the same time, the system guarantees the professional care of an anointed priest, a pastor, who looks after his parishioners exclusively (celibacy) and, like the whole Church, remains in principle independent of the changing secular authority (canon law). According to Brundage (1982), 20.3 % of the paragraphs of the canon law dealt with sacraments, while civil law dealt with only 6.4%.

Already the Church of the Carolingian Age outlined basic elements of this system, the Cluny practice contributed to their popularization, but they attained their mature shape only with the Gregorian reform. The condition of achieving the universality, perhaps also obligatoriness – and thus effectiveness – of the system was to concentrate the distribution of the sacraments in the Church itself

171 For general accounts see J. W. C. Wand, *The Development of Sacramentalism*, 1928; W. Knoch, *Die Einsetzung der Sakramente durch Christus. Untersuchungen zur Sakramentaltheologie der Frühscholastik*, Marburg 1983; G. Tellenbach 1966 describes the political context this phenomenon (see especially chapters 2.3: *The Sacramental Conception*, pp. 47–50, and. 3.3: *Success of the Papacy*, pp. 112–125).

172 For an account of the role of law in the Gregorian revolution see K. G. Cushing, *Papacy and Law in the Gregorian Revolution. The Canonistic Work of Anselm of Lucca*, Oxford 1998; see also *Lex et Sacramentum im Mittelalter*, ed. P. Wilpert, Berlin 1969.

since only the control over the sacraments would give sense to its mission. The defense of the ecclesiastical “power of binding and loosing” (Matthew 18:18) has become the very core of the spiritual current of the investiture contest (Sprandel 1962: 38–39). “In the Carolingian times, the king was commonly regarded as the equal of the pope, sometimes even as his superior” (Tellenbach 1966: 60). Accordingly, Amalarius dedicates his liturgical compendium *De ecclesiasticis officiis* “ad Ludovicum Pium Imperatorem,” describing him as: “the most honorable, powerful, and invincible Emperor, crowned by God.”¹⁷³ Schild (1980: 30, No. 40) points to the image of Emperor Henry II with a stole expressing his membership in the clerical ranks and describes it as the culmination of the idea of the ruler’s sanctity and the reflection of the imperial world order.¹⁷⁴ Among the main architects of sacramentalism was St. Peter Damian, whose ideas

penetrated and affected almost the whole culture and literature of the High Middle Ages. [Damian] was the most orthodox defender of the validity and necessity of the sacraments as the means of divine grace and the authority of the priesthood alone to administer them to the laity (Cantor 1993: 250).

Damian’s “mystical inclinations,” which, according to Cantor, stood in opposition to both these principles, were simply a reflection of the essence of sacramentalism, namely – the metaphysical turn toward the spiritual realm. In turn, we should consider the doctrine’s “uncontrollable emotionalism” and “irrational fanaticism” (Cantor 1993: 250) as a sign of the growing religious engagement and personal expression of devotion by all faithful Christians. I shall later describe it as the duress to demonstrate standards.

For the doctrine of sacramentalism, it was crucial to make a distinction between sacraments and sacramentals.¹⁷⁵ The first one to introduce this

173 “Gloriosissime Imperator, et magnificentissime ac centies invictissime, a Deo coronate” (PL 105, p. 985–1242). In the (later) Middle Ages, the Emperor’s title of gloriosissimus was transferred onto “bishops and popes” (J. Sondel, *Słownik łacińsko-polski dla prawników i historyków*, Kraków 1997, p. 413).

174 It is also included in the Book of Gospels of 1014–1022, Cod. Ottobon. year 74, Bibl. Apostolica Vaticana.

175 A. H. Bredero (1986) underscores the importance of this distinction for the development of Christianity. See also F. Probst, *Sakramente und Sakramentalien in den drei ersten christlichen Jahrhunderten*, Tübingen 1872; A. J. M. Shamon, *Sacramentals and blessed objects*, Oak Lawn 2000; A. Kirchgässner, *Heilige Zeichen der Kirche*, Aschaffenburg 1959. R. Scribner discusses the sacramentals in popular religion, “Magie und Aberglaube. Zur volkstümlich sakramentaler Denkart in Deutschland am Ausgang des Mittelalters,” in: Dinzelbacher, Bauer 1990: 253–274; for more about the sacramentals, see Nadolski, pp. 217–220 (with further distinctions: consecrations,

distinction was Ivo of Chartres (d. 1115).¹⁷⁶ Later, Hugh of St. Victor proposed its first systematic account in *De sacramentis* and Peter Lombard (d. 1160)¹⁷⁷ gave it a canonical form in the fourth book of his *Liber sententiarum*.¹⁷⁸ Out of the whole chaos of signs, places, behaviors, objects, gestures, and rituals, which made the sacred proliferate to the point of being nearly omnipresent, polymorphic, and ordinary, the most necessary and important signs were selected to protect them from banalization, while all the rest were moved to an open class of phenomena that we may define as the protected zone of the true sacred. In this zone, the influence of the sacred is not communicative, does not constitute a defined exchange, or goes beyond the Church: the strict selection of the sacraments often excluded the investiture rituals, as they involved the participation of the king (Sprandel 1962: 36).¹⁷⁹ Using sociological terms (Spencer's model of social change in the formulation of P. Burke 1992: 132), one may say that the influence of internal factors leads to a structural differentiation and change from an inconsistent homogeneity to consistent diversity; in this case, the external world only provides an impulse for adaptation.

To put it figuratively: from different sparks and pieces of burning coal scattered all over the place, a bonfire of sacraments was lit, which we can approach for a short time and only in order to do something specific (put some food to roast,

benedictions, exorcisms, pp. 221–253); L. Eisenhofer, *Handbuch der katholischen Liturgik*, Vol. 1, Roma 1932, pp. 100–113; *Rituale Romanum*, a new section of *De Benedictionibus* (1984) contains particular formulas. The most comprehensive account is still A. Franz's two-volume work (1909).

176 “Ivo was the driving force behind the development that led to the determination of the number of sacraments.... in many places, he makes a very clear distinction between the sacraments and other symbolic signs of the Church” (Sprandel 1962: 35). Let us add that Ivo saw this difference elsewhere than it is established today (for a detailed discussion see N. M. Häring 1976); cf. also the history of dogmatics, e.g. R. Seeberg, *Dogmengeschichte*, Vol. 3, 4, 1932, pp. 282 ff.).

177 P. Delehay, *Pierre Lombard*, Montreal 1961; M. L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, Vol. 1–2, Leiden 1994.

178 *Distinctio II. 1: Jam ad sacramenta novae legis accedamus: quae sunt Baptismus, Confirmatio, panis benedictio, id est, Eucharistia, Poenitentia, Unctio extrema, Ordo, Conjugium*. PL 192, p. 841D. The critical edition in the series “Spicilegium Bonaventurianum” 4–5, Grottaferrata 1971–1981. For a review of its reception *Repertorium Commentariorum in Sententias Petri Lombardi*, ed. F. Stegmüller, Vols. 1–2, Würzburg 1947.

179 In the second part of his *Liber de lite*, Geoffrey of Vendôme presented a theory which equated the symbols of investiture with sacraments (Sprandel 1962: 37).

take it out, or add some wood); one cannot keep standing by a bonfire and rummage around in it. However, one can remain in a certain distance to warm up and make use of its light, or stand even farther away just to feel the comfort that the fire flashes in the darkness and someone watches over it.

Sacramentals are signs of the inclusion in the Church, which, by giving sacramentals, provides a “continuous prayer” for a person, undertaking or thing; it is as if they were to be kept permanently under God’s care through the intercession of the Church, which, as we know, never stops praying, thereby maintaining a “force field” and bringing “effects, especially spiritual ones,” (*Code of Canon Law*, canon 1166).

These “signs” are various gestures and whole liturgical ceremonies of prayer,¹⁸⁰ which constitute (1) the setting for the administration of the sacraments and (2) the essence of the celebrated and given sacramentals – they include, as listed in canon 1169, consecration (dedication), blessings (benedictions), spells (exorcisms, canon 1172); a few special consecrations give the consecrated persons the so-called character, that is: “a certain spiritual and indestructible sign” forever ingrained into the soul¹⁸¹ as an “internal effect of certain sacraments,”¹⁸² namely – Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders; these are one-time sacraments, they cannot be repeated.¹⁸³ The third, special group of sacramentals includes objects used for worship, which were previously blessed or consecrated, and thus withdrawn from secular use (canon 1171).

180 Sometimes they were quite complex “spectacles,” not devoid of drama, e.g. the Bishop’s rite of reconciliation for penitents in the pontificale of Wilhelm Durand, *Pontificalis ordinis liber* (ca. 1294), ed. By M. Andrieu, 1940; its description is given by B. Nadolski (1992, Vol. 3, 101–102); cf. also J. Longere, 1992: 125–133. Historical texts available in numerous printed sacramentaries, pontificals, etc.; for a monograph of benedictions see e.g. *The Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. by H. A. Wilson, London 1903; *Corpus benedictionum pontificalium*, ed. by E. Moeller, Vols. 1–4 of the “Corpus Christianorum Series Latina” 162, Turnhout 1971–1979. Maledictions (curses) are a separate phenomenon: L. K. Little, “Malédictiones monastiques aux IXe et Xe siècles,” *Revue Mabillon* 58/1975.

181 This is confirmed in full by the decrees of the Council of Trent, session 7 of Can. 9; qtd. after Plater-Zyberk 1937: 14.

182 St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Sacramentis; Summa Theologiae*, III 64, 5; qtd. after Plater-Zyberk 1937: 14.

183 A decree of the Council of Florence, 1438–1445 (Napiórkowski 1995: 39); see also Häring 1976: 492 et seq., and his, “Character, signum, signaculum,” *Scholastik* 31/1956, pp. 41–69, 182–212 (after Häring 1976: fn. 75, 90).

Both the regrouping of the disordered mass of sacraments brought about by tradition and the distinction of the “true” sacraments and sacramentals resemble the scale of sacrality proposed by Becker. These orders are quite independent of each other, but they prove the existence of a certain gradation in the described matter.

There were more sacraments before, sometimes as many as thirty (Schneider 1995: 49); certain approaches (shared especially among lawyers) considered as sacraments only Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, or only those rites that came from the apostolic tradition and were unrepeatable (Häring 1976). Pseudo-Dionysius counted funeral ceremonies and holy orders among the sacraments, while Peter Damian included even the anointing of bishops or kings, the blessing of hermits, the consecration of virgins, or the feet-washing on Maundy Thursday.¹⁸⁴ In *De sacramentis*, one of the first systematic accounts of this subject, Hugh of St. Victor also recalls the Old Testament sacraments: circumcision and Sabbath.¹⁸⁵ What we have earlier described as sacramentals, Hugh calls “minor sacraments,” which precede even less important “consecrations.”¹⁸⁶ The starting point for Nicholas Häring’s (1976: 483) reflections on this issue is the following statement: the canonist and theologian entered the twelfth century with St. Isidor’s (d. 636) claim that there were three sacraments, and at the end of the century both agreed that the accurate number was seven. It is only since the

184 In sum, Damian distinguished twelve sacraments (Napiórkowski 1995: 37); for more on the number of sacraments see B. Geyer, “Die Siebenzahl der Sakramente in ihrer historischen Entwicklung,” *Theologie und Glaube* 10/1918, p. 331 ff.; A. Müller, *Feiern des Glaubens. Die Sakramente der Kirche*, Freiburg 1976.

185 Circumcisio et observantia Sabbati; *Summa Sententiarum*, PL 176, p. 41–174, here p. 120. C. Rudolph described Hugh’s *De Sacramentis* as the first *Summa* (1999: 3). Hugh did not consider marriage as a sacrament (Häring 1976: 484); his contemporary Abelard, in turn, does not refer to penance as a sacrament in his treatise *Ethica* (Häring 1976: 489).

186 De minoribus sacramentis et sacris; *De Sacramentis* Lib. II, pars IX; PL 176, p. 471/472–477/478). Ibid. part 8, chapter 8. Quare in specie panis et vini Christus sacramentum corporis sui et sanguinis instituit (p. 469A). It is therefore incorrect to claim (ODCC, 1435a) that it was only Peter Lombard who linked the sacraments to their establishment by Christ. (*Liber sententiarum* IV, Dist. II: De sacramentis novae legis; PL 192, p. 841). The exact distinction between the sacraments and the sacramentals was made by Alexander of Hales before 1245; in approx. the same time the new word *sacramentals* appears in the last chapter of *De sacramentis* by William of Auvergne (Franz 1909, Vol. 1: 11; definition on pp. 13–14). For more see H. Weisweiler, *Die Wirksamkeit der Sakramente nach Hugo von St. Victor*, Fribourg 1932.

Fourth Lateran Council that the number of sacraments became fixed, but it was only at the London Synod (1237; Franz 1909, Vol. 1: 10) and the Council of Lyon (1274) that seven sacraments were mentioned explicitly; however, already the previous Council announced the orthodoxy of the account by Peter Lombard, who determined this number before 1164; sacraments changed their form in the course of time (for instance, the Eucharist for the faithful was significantly reduced to bread only; the Eucharist in both forms was reserved for the priest and adults after the Confirmation). The final list of sacraments was not determined by any strict criteria: neither the establishment by Christ nor the transmission of grace, nor the so-called character or uniqueness, but the universality of the liturgical custom (Häring 1976: 493). As early as the fourteenth century, sacraments became part of the encyclopedic canon of knowledge, as we can see, for instance, in the bas-reliefs of the Florence Cathedral's bell tower (1340–1350): the upper row has twenty-eight fields divided into four sevens – planets, virtues, liberal arts, and sacraments. In Gothic churches of Eastern England, baptismal bowls are decorated with bas-reliefs representing seven sacraments.¹⁸⁷

Sacraments, like sacramentals, should also be understood as signs.¹⁸⁸ However, they are even more complicated due to their multilayered symbolic nature; in their final form, formulated in Peter Lombard's textbook *Liber Sententiarum* (IV, Dist. I–XXXVII, PL 192, pp. 839–932), they are not only St. Augustine's "sacred signs" but "signs of God's grace and an invisible form of grace;"¹⁸⁹ the theological essence of this distinction rests on the following two concepts: the containing or transmission of a sign of grace and the causing of grace, that is, opening the subject to the promised grace (Napiórkowski 1995: 38). This reinforces the communicative character of sacraments. In people's communication with God, it is only sacraments – perhaps with the exception of revelations – that have a performative quality.¹⁹⁰ St. Augustine captures its essence, when he writes that the

187 G. M. Gibson 1989: 23 with the example on ill. 2.2, p. 21. A. E. Nichols analyses the iconography of 33 preserved objects out of about 40 made between 1463 and 1544 (1991).

For an account of sacramental themes in Dutch early art see G.B. Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Art*, New York 1984.

188 It is already underscored in the titles of handbooks of sacramentology: Napiórkowski 1995 and Schneider 1995.

189 "Sacramentum enim proprie dicitur quod ita signum est gratiae Dei et invisibilis gratiae forma, ut ipsius imaginem gerat et causa existat" (IV, dist. I.2; PL 192, p. 839).

190 For the concept of performative see J. Searle, "A classification of illocutionary acts," in: *Proceedings of the Texas Conference on Performative Presuppositions and Implications*, eds. A. Rogers et al., Arlington 1977, pp. 27–45.

sacrament is a visible word, *verbum visibile*.¹⁹¹ For the application of sacraments entails a change in reality: the position of man in relation to God and other people is completely different before and after the sacramental sign is performed. Moreover, they are not utterly homogeneous, which is the result of their recollection in the order of application: the course of life is defined by Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage,¹⁹² and the Last Anointing (a late medieval name, today it is called the Anointing of the Sick, as in the early Middle Ages; also referred to as the *viaticum*); Penance (confession, the sacrament of reconciliation) and the Eucharist serve to maintain the bond with God on a regular basis; the sacrament of Holy Orders, available only to the chosen, guarantees the correctness of all other sacraments.¹⁹³ The latter and Marriage (only this sacrament is not given by the priest, but by the engaged couple to themselves) are a matter of choice, others are in principle obligatory and indispensable for individual salvation.

Since Christians baptized children (Matthew 28:19), it received functional complementation with the participation of a conscious individual: Confirmation, sometimes called the Second Baptism. The latter sacrament is being administered by the bishop, who has the opportunity to convey the Holy Spirit to all the faithful of his diocese through the old apostolic ritual of laying hands on a person (now optional) and the anointing with the cross (historically later). In the historical perspective, Confirmation is a vocation to convert, to transform the world under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (see chapter 20.1).

The sacrament of Penance probably played the most important civilizational role.¹⁹⁴ The Fourth Lateran Council gave the final identity to the act of confession

191 *In Joannem* 80, 3; PL 35, p. 1840; qtd. T. Schneider, p. 59; cf. also the concept of the “causing of grace.”

192 P. L. Reynolds, *Marriage in the Western Church*, Leiden 1994.

193 The exceptions to the principle that only priests are ministers of the sacraments were a result of various extraordinary circumstances. In the Brabantian miracle *Spel vanden Heiligen Sacramente van der Nyeuwer Vaert* from ca. 1500 (cf. our Chapter 19), the knight Wouter of Roosbeke, in a monologue encouraging his warriors to fight with the Prussian Saracens, gives them the following advice if they get wounded: “Confess to yourself, and God will forgive you for your anger” (“Wilt u biechten tegen u selven spreken, // God sal u vergeven al u mesdaet”). Similar exceptions have been quite numerous. For Luther, they constituted one of the proofs of the superficial nature of priestly mediation: since there are situations in which the sacraments are validly given by ordinary people, why cannot they be always valid?

194 Before proceeding further, let us recall the theory of N. Elias: the modern personality is based on self-control and empathy. B. Nadolski gives an extensive account of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (1992, Vol. 3: 81–132, with literature).

and the priest as a confessor (Boyle 1982: 230); it imposed on parishioners the obligation to confess their mortal sins once a year to their parish priest, who was reminded of the absolute obligation to maintain secrecy. The purpose was to cement the community and protect it from the infiltration of the “alien.”¹⁹⁵ In 1310, the Synod of Trier forbade priests to give absolution to people who were not their parishioners without the consent of their parish priest (Axters 1960: 406). The priest’s role was not only to ask questions from the list of sins in one of the *Libri poenitentiales* and to inflict statutory penance according to the *Canones poenitentiales* but also to become a doctor of souls (*medicus animarum*).

Numerous textbooks on confessions, moral sums, accounts of the Ten Commandments, compendia of virtues and sins, collections of sermons and exemplars, and general pastoral aids helped fulfill the duty of the cura animarum (Boyle 1982: 230). The beginnings of these genres in the circles of Peter the Chanter (*Summa de animae consiliis*) date back to the year 1200, which is still the period of the philosophy of cathedral schools. The proliferation of such works reached its peak in the half-century after 1215, with the most influential *Summa de casibus poenitentiae*¹⁹⁶ written in 1222–1229 (and revised in 1234) by Raymond of Penyafort (1180?–1275), a Dominican friar from Barcelona. The text was anchored in the canon law quite easily thanks to the fact that its author developed a collection of papal decrees from the hundred years since the *Decretum Gratiani*; the collection called the *Decretales* was promulgated by Gregory IX in 1234 (the author was his chaplain and confessor from 1230 to 1236). *Summae confessorum* contains a discussion of the principles of theology and law in relation to human behavior patterns, often shown by a casus. Around 1300, the sums became less legal but more theological and moral in character; the most famous *Summa* by John of Freiburg (Johannes von Freiburg) from 1298 includes the comments of Thomas, Albert, and other Dominicans; in turn, *Summa* by Astesanus of Asti

For a collection of articles which takes into account literary sources: *Handling Sin. Confession in the Middle Ages*, eds. P. Biller, A. J. Minnis, Woodbridge 1999. It is difficult to clearly define the role of marriage; the Church did not invent it, but the redefinition of legal regulations in the sacramental spirit has probably played a certain role (Donahue 1976: 277): the twelfth century “sacramental theory places great trust in human choice, entrusting two people, at least in this sacrament, with the work for their salvation – without any required ceremony, without the participation of the Church, even with the help of the rest of society.”

195 B. Nadolski 1992, Vol. 3: 103–104; a reference to M. Rigghetti, *Storia liturgica*, Milan 1979.

196 The tenth critical edition, X. Ochoa, L. Diez, Rome 1976.

(1317) includes the thought of Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and other Franciscans (Boyle 1982: 236); the dates of publication of these works coincide with the publication of the successive collections of the canon law – the *Decretals* of Boniface VIII and Clement V.¹⁹⁷ Sprandel mentions also handbooks for inquisitors, like *Le manuel des inquisiteurs* (1503; a papal document, based on earlier partial studies), as the latest examples of this current.

In turn, the sacrifice of the Eucharist provided an opportunity for the most significant doctrinal disputes. This was one of the most sensitive points of the Church's teaching, because even the Franciscans, whose devotion was set against the sacerdotal supremacy (Cantor 1993: 445), observed the sacramental principle, according to which the priest was the only minister of the Eucharist. This means that this point in the doctrine was firmly established already in the thirteenth century. The sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist were considered to be *sacramenta maiora*.

The Last Anointing played a less spectacular role. However, it is this sacrament that shows the essence of the process of spiritualization of the sacred with an unprecedented clarity. It originated from the Anointing of the Sick (James 5:14–15), which was meant to give hope for recovery. The Florentine Council (1439) finally transformed it into the sacrament for the dying, recommended only when there is no chance to avoid the death of the sick person. Thus, the hope for healing was replaced with the hope for forgiveness of sins (Burger 1990: 315) and the influence of the sacrament was redirected from concern for the body to the service for the salvation of the soul. In particular, it was a matter of correcting the error of the invalid grief for sins, motivated merely by the fear of punishment (*attritio*); after all, what counts from God's perspective are only voluntary obedience and true grief (*repentance*, *contritio*). It was precisely the Anointing that was to make up for this difference (von Paltz's *Supplementum*, p. 391, qtd. after Burger 1990: 323).

The new and central role of the priest has yet another aspect in the context of sacramentalism. In the legally constituted parish community, the parson has gained a key position not only as the sole minister of the sacraments. Preaching became the crucial aspect of pastoral work, whose effectiveness depended not so much on the function itself as on personal influence of the priest. The main function of preaching was to stimulate the faithful to repent, but because it employed the living word in national languages, it also provided a comprehensible

197 ODCC, 461, 1369; G. Fransen, *Les Décrets et les Collections de Décrets*, Turnhout 1972.

and flexible framework for the formalized sacraments; what is more, it paved the way of conscious participation in worship in the parish and facilitated communication in the native language.¹⁹⁸ For priests, preaching opened up a field of creativity and forced self-education, while for lay people, who did not know Latin,¹⁹⁹ it offered an opportunity to express their religious experiences. Christa Ortmann (1992) explores the theory of the national language as a vehicle of its own cultural function on the example of non-Latin texts by female mystics.²⁰⁰

6. THE CO-EXISTENCE OF FORMS OF DEVOTION. In Part 2, I shall provide a more detailed interpretation of the comparison between popular and sacramental devotion, discussing the transformations in the ontology of the sacred (see especially chapter 8 which concerns the process of spiritualization). The essence of the differences between popular religion and sacramentalism lies in the altered status of the sacred. For now, let us merely note that, already in the discussed period, the awareness of this difference was clear. Typically, and quite obviously, religious treatises condemned superstitions, usually associated with paganism. The following passage from von Paltz's collection shows that the superstitions, which grew around the Anointing of the Sick, did not mean any return to paganism; rather, they were outcomes of religious phantasies related to the sacrament that they never undermined:

a widespread error: oil treatment leads to the death of the anointed person; bees die in the house of the anointed; if the husband recovered after the anointment, he cannot have a sexual intercourse for a year; a pregnant woman (after this kind of treatment) may die in childbirth, especially if she is to give birth to a boy; if she will not die, the child will suffer from jaundice; you must keep a candle lit until the person is fully healed; women lose their natural skin color and girls lose their hair; those who dance, even once, after the anointment commit a mortal sin – for a year, they should not touch the ground with a bare foot (von Paltz; Burger 1990: 313).

198 S. Wenzel examines the issue of temporary bilingualism on the example of English-Latin “macaronic” sermons from 1350–1450: *Bilingualism and Preaching in Late-Medieval England*, Ann Arbor 1994.

199 Latin itself described such people much more concisely, with one word: “idiotia.”

200 Several English texts, which defend the dignity of vernacular speech as a language of theology and as a vehicle of the revealed word, are discussed by N. Watson in the article “Conceptions of the Word: The Mother Tongue and the Incarnation of God,” in: *New Medieval Literatures*, in: eds. W. Scase, R. Copeland, D. Lawton, Vol. 1, Oxford 1997 (qtd. after rev. M. Calabrese, *TMR* 99.03.16); see also *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280–1520*, eds. J. Wogan-Browne et al., University Park 1998. I shall return to the issue of language in the context of subjectivity (see e.g. chapters 21.1 and 22.6).

Johannes von Paltz touched the essence of the differences between these two, already fully Christian, forms of devotion by opposing the duty of the *cura animarum* to the popular multiplication of prayers: in his opinion, listening carefully to one sermon contributes to the salvation of the soul more than repeating the same prayer, which has no or little significance (*non valet vel parum valet*); such a practice is justified only in the absence of a preacher (Burger 1990: 321).

In what follows I do not address the forms of devotion described by Max Weber as virtuosic (monasticism, mysticism), even though they also exhibit signs of changes in the status of the sacred. In this context, it is particularly instructive to trace how mysticism acquired new forms and influences. To some extent, mysticism repeats this characteristic focus on the average individual believer brought about by devotional behaviors shaped in monasteries (for instance, individual meditation inspired by a picture).²⁰¹ Mendicant orders initiated a great breakthrough. Thanks to their open formula, they have restored the model of individual devotion known from the eremitic tradition, bringing it close to everyone's daily life. The most spectacular manifestation of the popularization of the virtuosic model was the flagellant confraternities, while the most productive in terms of custom formation was the "third order" movement.

201 Gibson 1989: 6 with a reference to: S. Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions: Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 73/1969, p. 164.

Part II. Changes in the Ontology of the Sacred

6. The Ontology of the Sacred

The relationship between the ontological status of the sacred and forms of devotion is not simply causal. The change in ideas or theories that embraced the ontology of the sacred influenced the forms of devotion more than the other way around, but they were the environment in which these theories could develop. Sometimes, we should assume an inseparable connection here, as between the meaning of the word and its sound form, which co-exist and develop together.

1. WHAT EXISTS? The issues of ontology are not a typical subject of literary studies. Let us take a moment to remind and orientate ourselves in the complexities of philosophical positions regarding existence.

Instead of dissecting the key word “exist,” which requires no explanation, let us carelessly ask like in a social game: Does darkness exist? A wave on the water? The reflection in the mirror? Colors?²⁰² Heat? A hole in the sleeve? The ozone hole? A ditch? An image in a concave relief?

We will rather say that darkness does not exist as such, but this is how we call the lack of light.²⁰³ The last four questions also speak of something that is not there. But does this lack exist? Is there a shadow? These questions certainly make us enter dangerous grounds. How can you say that something like darkness does not exist, if you still hear the breath of the diligent Creator, who has just separated it from the light (Genesis 1)? And if the shadow does not exist, how can the shadow of the saint that falls on the sick heal him (Acts 5:15)?

The answer to the question about the existence of the image in the concave relief determines such a trifle as whether our carving of God’s image breaks one of God’s commandments. The carved depiction appears only by the lack of substance; it is not a figurine, so it cannot become an idol or object of idolatrous worship.

Among the various ontological positions, the two most popular refer to the basic categories of being: spirit and matter. Materialistic monism assumes the existence of matter only, while reducing everything else to its function. Dualism allows for the existence of a separate sphere of spirit that is independent and irreducible to the function of matter: spirit is to precede matter. Moreover, there were various positions, including the gradualistic one, which assumed a gradual transition from matter through material-corporeal beings to purely spiritual, then introducing complicated

202 A four-year-old philosopher once explained that “actually, this is all but color”.

203 We are unaware that we already agree with the classics: “mathematicians call this way the space devoid of light.” Plutarch 1988: 164–165.

hierarchies and affinities of the latter. Both these poles and intermediate areas come together by imagination that bridges them by allegory. The linking role of allegory that merges the images of the world explains its eternity and the richness of forms.

2. HOLINESS AND REVELATION. Depending on the religious system and cosmological ideas, people will name ontological positions differently and in relation to the manner in which the sacred exists. Some locate the sacred in various particular entities (animism), some with elements or areas of nature (the sea, the wind, the sky, the underground world), others even identify it with nature (pantheism), or straightforwardly deny the existence of the sacred altogether (atheism). The Judeo-Christian religious system that we examine here distributes the sacred in both spheres: the observable world and the spiritual dimension – on earth and in Heaven. The spiritual sacred does not cause much trouble, except for the thorny issue of manifesting its power in the physical world. The latter, in turn, finds it difficult to establish communication with the metaphysical world of the sacred. The two spheres depend on each other.

Biblical theology distinguishes between “the true sanctity possessed only by God,” and consecration “that withdraws certain persons and things from ordinary life and places in an intermediate state, which simultaneously hides and reveals God’s holiness.”²⁰⁴ So as not to get embroiled in what “really” happens between the two realms,²⁰⁵ we can effectively describe their relationships in the convention of communication and the exchange of symbolic acts of such varying readability as the acts of interpersonal communication; that is, not always intentional, often ambiguous, and requiring interpretation. What corresponds with it is the communicative essence of the sacraments based on the word addressed to God along with the forms of piety that act “in the name” of God. Hence, the invocation replaces the expected Word.

In both spheres, the concept of holiness is far from clear-cut. It appears in various roles – of attribute, gift, or purpose – and concerns different addressees: the saints, the people of God,²⁰⁶ also only those whom God will choose (in the New Testament, first those who received the Holy Spirit), the Laws, the holy places like

204 *Słownik Teologii Bibliijnej* 1994: 974.

205 At least since Kant, the division of the world into “the physical” and “the metaphysical” lost its importance in everyday life. Schopenhauer hurled unrefined insults at the philosophers who failed to pass this threshold.

206 This is how the Old Testament calls Israel, the priestly people chosen to lead other peoples; which is why the “Jewishness” of circumcision was often regarded as the necessary introduction to the baptism of pagans. Luther, in his treatise “An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, von des christlichen Standes Besserung” understood this as the vocation of all the baptized to become priests. See our chapter 5.3.

temples or the holy city, and sacred periods of time. Metaphorical and occasional uses blur the image, so the search of a systematics should require verification of those uses in terms of their universality; nevertheless, the Bible is a singular text and the many statements are but narrative elements, not representations of beliefs. In the doctrinal tradition, there were various phases of accumulation and reduction of the understanding of holiness, even for divine persons; suffice to mention the long discussions about the distribution of holiness in the womb of the Trinity. The subordination of certain forms of holiness to others constitutes a loophole for the changes in the recognition of not only the manifestation of the sacred of God but also the existence of beings who bear the subordinate sacred. These changes may appear in a given religious system or be a way to break it down.

The foundation of a religion usually comes with a historical Revelation. In the Judeo-Christian system, it is “always religious,” hence it holds no technological secrets or other gifts as in cargo cults, but the self-affirmation of God, the sign of divine presence, vigilance, and will.²⁰⁷ In the scholastic lecture of Spaniard Ramon Marti, the actual revelation meets four conditions: it carries the truth, happens in circumstances full of good and morality, is aided by miracles, and contains a certain law or command that leads people to worship God.²⁰⁸ However, traces of the cargo cult occur even in Judaism, so vigilant about the immateriality of God: the Old Testament God is surprisingly ubiquitous; not only does he act in dramatic moments whenever the hungry need manna but he also literally follows each step of his chosen people, as if flying in a balloon over them like a prudent commander, one rank higher than Moses, strolling unseen at night through the camp. Perhaps, this prompted Thomas Aquinas to reserve pure religiosity of revelation for the New Testament only:

Because the priesthood of the gentiles and the whole worship of their gods existed merely for the acquisition of temporal goods (which were all ordained to the common good of the multitude, whose care devolved upon the king), the priests of the gentiles were very properly subject to the kings. Similarly, since in the old law earthly goods were promised to the religious people (not indeed by demons but by the true God), the priests of the old law, we read, were also subject to the kings. But in the new law there is a higher priesthood by which men are guided to heavenly goods. Consequently, in the law of Christ, kings must be subject to priests.²⁰⁹

207 “Objawienie,” *Słownik Teologii Biblijnej*.

208 Qtd. after N. Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens. An Interpretation of the Chanson de Geste*, Edinburgh 1984, p. 126.

209 Thomas Aquinas, *De regno ad regem Cypri / On Kingship to the King of Cyprus*, transl. Gerald B. Phelan, Toronto 1949, I.15: 111. Augustine wrote the first five books of the *City of God* “against those who believe that we should worship gods for their worldly support.”

However, the original revelation is not as important to our considerations as the matter of the current presence of God. Biblical theology distinguishes its various forms.²¹⁰ The presence of God may be (1) material; (2) real, but not material, when it manifests itself in signs like storm, thunder, or wind; (3) spiritual, in the Holy Spirit, encountered by visionaries; and finally (4) in the cult, which means in “the truth,” “in true worship,” among believers, as a spiritual bond between people who profess one God. The fourth type of presence is objective among believers, who eat God’s body, drink his blood, and host his Spirit, or subjective in individual faith, its internal presencing, the placement in one’s soul of a constant realm open to the sacred as a certain body of knowledge and attitudes.²¹¹ We may literally understand this as a partial transplant of the sacred to the individual soul – as a private Arc of Covenant – or only as the terminus of a network, a terminal of a larger power through which it can spiritually communicate with the individual.

We cannot unequivocally determine which of these forms of presence really appear and which one we may only deduce from signs. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that the attempts to explain this ambiguity and persuade others made the history of the Western civilization witness its most bloody moments.

3. THE PRESENCE OF THE SACRED. Hearing and visual revelations in verbo-conceptual, visionary, and oneiric form²¹² constitute facts that testify to the workings of the sacred; hence arise always new sources of evidence of their factuality.

Gregory of Tours (c.538–594) argues that the revelation is an ongoing process (de Nie 1985: 92); some miracles not only reflect spiritual meanings but also spontaneous interventions of the all-knowing providence, which no one asked for but were objectively desirable; for instance, a boat with a saint cannot sink, even if no one calls for divine help. Miracles express certain needs (de Nie 1985: 110), therefore it is not so important to personally experience revelations

210 “Obecność Boga,” *Słownik Teologii Biblijnej*.

211 The reversal of the direction of defining God’s presence is easier with the objective bond: as a whole, it gives some definition of God; it is more difficult to define God’s presence on the basis of a summary of subjective bonds. Probably this is why religion with the idea of God implied only by subjective links is impossible. Or is it the ideal religion?

212 About dreams that transfer “the commands of God, saints, or angels,” see Michałowska 1996: 242 ff; A. C. Spearing, *Medieval Dream-Poetry*, Cambridge 1976; S. F. Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, Oxford 1992; K. Speckenbach, *Traumbücher*, in: VL 9, pp. 1014–1028; also there, different texts with the word “Traum” in the titles.

or miracles; we need but to know about them to trigger our desire that is stronger than reasonable certainty.

We draw knowledge from those who bring knowledge. Moreover, this knowledge is sufficient foundation for the specific rationality. Because we cannot distinguish “beliefs from knowledge, given there is no collision between the two forms of conviction;” for example, the Germanic people did not define their attitude to deities as faith, but simply by saying that “the world exists including deities and spirits” (Piekarczyk 1976: 432). This collision only occurs due to the spread of a single pattern of rationality. One may only avoid the collision by its forceful imposition or clear separation like the one proposed by Ockham between theology and philosophy (see subsection 25.6). The same applies to the reception of works of art whose symbolism “leaves too much room for the recipient’s invention,” which sometimes makes it “a fallible medium of communication” (Samsonowicz 1997: 139). These are our problems, because the scope of freedom of interpretation inadvertently facilitated functioning without collisions.

Even relics, symbols, and related rituals – in which the sacred “radiates” on the faithful – are not the only things that function as tangible signs of the presence of the sacred. New evidence of factuality emerges from every level of the religious system: what confirms its operations is every socially observed manifestation of attitudes placed in its interpretative framework. Regardless of the nature of this theological frame that determines the manner of existence of the sacred, there occurs a “collective revelation:” there crystallizes the social structure of meanings that the individual must use to shape himself (K. Burke 1941: 108).

We may speak about the role of emotional cognition in the Middle Ages as crucial to understanding the phenomenon of religion, but it is better to speak about cognition through a different rationality, without negating the social and psychological role of emotions.²¹³ Knowing about the new large charge of emotionality in the New Testament, we may wonder what triggered the realization of the gospel of love for good only after one thousand years from its publication. Considering the historical conditions of the process of changing piety, we attribute this to the organizational weakness and political entanglement of the Church. Only the relative stabilization of a sufficiently large organization created the minimal basis of factuality, on which one could deepen the religious experience. The individual human soul directed its hopes toward the loving and suffering deity, which is how Cantor (1993: 252) describes the essence of Peter Damian’s new

213 See chapter 16 and the results of K.-H. Zur Mühlen about the linking of the realms of feeling and will in the psychology of Augustinianists and in *devotio moderna*.

piety that introduced a new quality to medieval religiosity beginning with the eleventh century. That is, there emerged a fundamental change in the understanding of the relationship between God and humanity: between the Old and New Testaments. The Early Medieval, Old Testament piety foregrounded formal worship and obedience while Byzantine caesaropapism actually maintained a “completely de-Christianized” power (Fumagalli 1996: 125), so in their place came personal experience promoted by northern Italian monasticism and the intensification of religious experience in municipal Italian communes (Cantor 1993, Fumagalli 1996). This striking emotionality of medieval devotion derives from its collective character, as explained by cognitive psychology: “Almost every human exchange involves feelings on both sides.... In an ideal case, they are mutually “attuned” between partners who achieve a sort of coordinated synchrony of feeling” (Neisser 1999: 188–189).

In each case, we can talk about the strengthening of the group’s conviction about the system’s factuality due to the increased frequency of stimuli that confirm its actions. The social factors could play a role: the attractiveness of the position of a parish priest, who enjoyed prestige, came from the upper classes, had a guaranteed living conditions and sometimes a good income.²¹⁴

In the context of the new role of love in religious experience (“loving deity”), we should pay special attention to the ideology of courtly love and the concept of using it to build the entire social order; not only a certain part of court relations. Christelrose Rischer read this idea from the autobiographical poem of the judge from Styria, Ulrich of Lichtenstein (d.1276), entitled *Frauendienst*. The author, a Minnesinger, believes that Minnesang may be “a medium through which one could construct an ideal society” (Rischer 1992: 156). However, we must note serious voices that indicate the genesis of this secular ideology in the clerical environment similar to the first troubadour, William IX, Duke of Aquitaine.²¹⁵ Jean Leclercq also speaks of a “partly unconscious” osmosis between the circles of court and monastic poets, before they closed themselves in separate environments: monasteries and castles (1992: 351).

4. THE COEXISTENCE OF DIFFERENT MEANINGS AND MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS. Depending on the spiritual structure of the pantheon, there may appear different levels of the presence of the sacred in the sphere of matter and the spirit on different levels of the spiritual hierarchy. Similarly peculiar and depending on

214 Van Engen 1986: 548. About the role of prestige, see chapter 9.

215 H. Brinkmann, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Minnesangs*, Halle 1926, 1971, 1971; see Jaeger 1985: ft. 440ff.

the religious system are the forms of piety or rituals, as well as the boundaries that divide them. The higher levels of material existence “perfect” themselves so much that they smoothly pass into the sphere of ideal or spiritual existence. That is, the ontological boundary between the material and spiritual existence vanishes at an ingraspable point, and to utter or experience it becomes unavailable to mortals.

We will recognize the reflection of this situation in the vagueness of the ontological status of the representation of the deceased, “the ambivalent standing-recumbent position” of the gisant, characteristic of medieval tombstones. According to Jarzewicz, the sense of this ambiguity is to show two aspects of death in one depiction:

Tombstone figures seem to assume the recumbent position only in the eyes of the mortal who walk on earth and remain on this side of the border.... On the other hand, the standing position – the representation of a person as alive and “wholesome” – emerges when the observer assumes the perspective from the above, which in many cases is impossible; for instance, in tombstones with canopies (Jarzewicz 1998: 30–31).

In this context, Weckwerth speaks of a look from the perspective of God. Here, too, one could talk about the danger of different colliding perspectives, if we disallowed the many “patterns of rationality” in the sphere of artistic creation. Even the scope of the Revelation partly depends on the fact that its parts do not collide with each other, let alone the collective revelation and its important source – works of art – whose “collisionality” we readily appreciate, although this makes them a “fallible medium of communication.”

The simultaneity of perspectives or the consonance of different possible meanings of the same word or motif will return in the description of the comic and the metaphorical. The allegorical method openly plays with ambiguity by creating “simultaneous realities”²¹⁶ and allowing for “oscillating meanings” in the composition of characters.²¹⁷ The principle of recapitulation²¹⁸ – concentrating content in sections that represent a larger whole – leads to the approximation and close compilation of meanings. The nature of these extracts depends on

216 The notion introduced by C. Erickson, *The Medieval Vision*, Oxford 1976, p. 8; qtd. after N. Crohn Schmitt 1982: 312. Erickson applies simultaneous realities to her interpretation of the allegorical drama *The Castle of Perseverance*.

217 See Linke (1995, Bk. 2: 129–42) below about the Erfurt Morality Play.

218 See Sheingorn, Bevington 1985: ft. 798.

whether their juxtaposition suggests the continuity of history²¹⁹ or whether it is merely a demonstration of a catalog or an encyclopedic resource. All this belongs to typically medieval creative techniques that operate with time and space in their own way, just like the spatialization of time in simultaneous composition of a painting: it gathers episodes remote in distance and space in a single depiction. Strictly speaking, this is not about simultaneity but rather synoptism,²²⁰ which etymologically means simultaneous perception and is the goal of such composition, not the suggestion that these episodes happened simultaneously. What really connects them is the processual bond: episodes rarely are independent events but a consequence of several phases of a single process, perceived as one event. We notice it best in the pictures, “in which all personae utter certain sentences, expressed in the inscriptions on banderoles, from which we can arrange a dialog” (Lewański 1966: 23). Scholars observed a certain method of reflecting the passage of time in a synoptic image with a complicated program in the works of Hans Memling (1430–1494). The successive stages of the Passion of Christ take different places in one picture, but the beginning and the end appear as dawn and dusk. What truly exists at the same time in the so-called simultaneous theatrical play are only the mansions, synoptic by necessity, whereas the action is successive; however, in a way, it is a simultaneous whole. The authentic simultaneity of sensual perception and understanding of different simultaneous stimuli is something different, and the above applications utilize this aesthetically.

Part of these solutions reflects the origin of the building material of the work of art (“the imposed structures”); another proves the presence of experimentation with the means of expression; yet another reveals the participation of direct communication of the recipient’s content, which generally diminishes with time in favor of indirect communication encoded in literary images. As Johan Nowé (1995: 3) shows, the stage direction of *The Alsfeld Passion Play* (1501) is characterized by a balance between the spectacle and the symbolic presentation of the performance; that is, between the moves of the drama characters that develop the action, and the lecturing signals directed to the audience. Contrary to this tendency, the persistence of the procedure of addressing the audience in

219 Happé (1997: 76–78) analyzes the apt examples from Giotto di Bondone’s Paduan frescoes (1318). Internal references transferred over the linear narration inform their cohesion: retrospections, anticipations, echoes, similes, and contrasts.

220 Hess (1997a: 671) remarks about that issue by pointing to the caption to the illustration for the miracle play about King Clovis, but he only sees the parallelism of the two compositions, which I explain as significant difference; see “Miracle de Clovis,” in: *Miracles de Notre Dame par personnages* 1876–1893.

violation of theatrical illusion may be a feature of a certain genre or aesthetics (see chapter 25).

The final result consists of the elements of contingency, helplessness, carelessness, but also respect and fear. We must especially remember the latter one when considering religious materials. If the audience comprised people and God, then the type and scope of messages addressed in both directions allows one to draw conclusions about the character of these recipients, as understood by the contemporary artists. Despite such high-level approach, this summary of the ambiguity of motifs and the multiplicity of points of view is useful. The range of direct symbolic messages, which almost entirely convey worship rituals destined for the divine recipient, decreases in the works of religious art.²²¹ However, its indirect pictorial messages are not immediately directed to the human audience, but some of them still is supposed to reach the sacred. As long as this occurs, we deal not with the secularization of art but with a change of its language. This change means an adjustment in the means of expression according to the change in the way of existence of the sacred; partly by contributing to this change and, perhaps, even by being the change itself.

221 Nowé (1995: 3–23) discusses the reduction of the cult element in theatre on the basis of the liturgical drama.

7. The Sources of the Spiritualization Process

We have found that the concept of the sacred belongs to the imponderables²²² that people see in places that others indicate to them. Let us not go further into doctrinal considerations, but instead limit ourselves to the global distinction of the possible carriers of the sacred into symbols that have a material motivation and completely arbitrary language signs (chapter 8).

1. THE SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE OF HOLY SACRED. How to briefly present the history of the holy sacred (first degree on the Becker scale)? First, in the holy history, it is “everywhere.” According to Amalric of Bène, posthumously condemned together with his followers at the council in Paris in 1210, “God is in everything, everything identifies with him and God, being in everything, works in everything” (Kuksewicz 1986: 196). This theological view was picked up and developed by the Parisian group of students who claimed, among other things, that the Holy Spirit incarnated in every human being, “so that every man may be considered a part of the deity” (Kuksewicz 1986: 179). They understood the sacred substantially: since it has been given to man, it lives with him and changes his nature; spiritual communication that requires constant communication is a different matter.

After Lateran IV, the sacred was limited to seven sacraments – what the Protestant churches reduce even more – which in some respects return to the Old Testament formula.²²³ The most radical is the ideology of Wycliff and the

222 Even etymologically; and we dare to say so even against father Gregory, who believed that the transfer of holiness finds a physical realization: a thing once touched by a saint is, thus, hallowed and noticeably heavier (*De virtutibus sancti Martini* 1, 11; MGH, *Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* I 2, eds. W. Arndt, B. Krusch, Hannover 1885, pp. 451–820; qtd. after de Nie 1985: 108). Whenever necessary, a saint can nevertheless become lighter; for instance, when the body of Adalbert of Prague was to be compared in weight to gold, and such exchange requested the Prussians, his body became “unexpectedly light, as not having any weight at all” (“Cuda św. Wojciecha,” Plezia 1987: 90).

223 In spite of the development of Rabbinic Judaism in contemporary Europe, which introduces innovations showing some similarities with Catholicism. Cohen, Horowitz (1990: 227) illustrate this on the example of the Jewish ceremony of marriage: association with a holy day (Friday before the Sabbath), its transfer to the synagogue, obligatory presence of a rabbi (sacral officiant) during the wedding from the fourteenth century. We should also mention here mystical movements. More

Lollards,²²⁴ who proposed a religion completely devoid of the social dimension, reduced only to the relationship between God and the faithful (S. Knight 1986b). After one hundred years, the postulate returned in the German “spiritual church” (*Geistkirche*), mainly associated with the figure of Thomas Müntzer and, periodically, Sebastian Franck (Franck 1966: 21): “God is and works in everything except sin. He is everything in everything, and if sin were something, not nothing, He would be sin as well.”

According to Franck, after the death of the apostles, the Church exists only spiritually, so it is superfluous to recreate the external figure; Christians and pagans form the Church, they have one God, and whole history is their Bible (Franck 1966: 124, also Wolgast’s introduction, pp. XV–XVI).

The very idea of separation develops in the spirit of reduction not only of the place of the sacred in the world but also its connectivity with this world. It finds culmination in deism that recognizes God as the creator but excludes his further influence on his work. Another process is spiritism, in which demons substitute God (see Neoplatonic Spiritism, subsection 11.4), and seventeenth-century materialistic secularization that replaces all spiritual factors with the game of nature forces (here, for example, see the Arabic doctrine of intelligences moving the celestial bodies; Crombie 1960, Vol. 2: 236). The eternity of natural forces was proved by Siger from Brabant in *Questiones super Librum de causis*.²²⁵

However, in religion, the connection between the sacred and the world remains the key issue. Even from the Catholic perspective, the process was in

on Jewish acculturation in medieval Europe, see I. G. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood*, Yale 1999.

224 That is how his supporters were called in the first official document with this name dated 1387: “The Lollards commonly attacked clerical celibacy, transubstantiation, obligatory oral confession, indulgences, and pilgrimages; and they held that the validity of priestly acts was determined by the priests’ moral character and that endowments, the Pope, the hierarchy, and ‘private religions (of monks, friars, and canons) were all unscriptural” (ODCC 1998: 999). M. E. Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, London 1984; A. Hudson, *Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*, Oxford 1988; in a broader context: M. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, Oxford 1992.

225 Published by A. Marlasca in 1972 (Krop 1992: 51). Other works by Siger: *De aeternitate mundi*, ed. by R. Barsotti, Münster 1933; *Questions sur la Physique d’Aristote*, ed. by P. Delehay, Louvain 1941; *Ein Kommentar zur Physik des Aristoteles aus der Pariser Artistenfakultät um 1273*, ed. by A. Zimmermann, Berlin 1968; *Questions sur la métaphysique*, ed. by C. A. Graiff, Louvain 1948; *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*, ed. by W. Dunphy, Louvain-la-Neuve 1981.

development, suffice to consider Saint Ignatius Loyola²²⁶ who worked hard in the name of spiritualization, so that the object or field of theological virtues – faith, hope, and love – was not human, but only God. The deprivation of the virtues of faith, hope, and love of reference to God is one of the contemporary objections to the liberation theology.²²⁷

2. THE REDUCTION OF THE SACRED. Recognizing the general historical development of religious phenomena, Eliade (1958: 462) finds a double process:

- (1) on the one hand, the continual brief appearance of hierophanies with the result that the manifestation of the sacred in the Universe becomes ever more fragmentary;
- (2) on the other, the unification of those hierophanies because of their innate tendency to embody their archetypes as perfectly as they can and thus wholly fulfil their own nature.

Thus formulated, the general theory of the reduction of the sacred explains the emergence and constant maintenance of the doctrine of sacramentalism in the church, which does not reject apostolic and universal Christian ambitions, but essentially holds two worries: (a) for placing the effects of the actions of the sacred in the spiritual sphere; and (b) for regulating and restricting access to the sacred.

We must remember that the church did a lot in the pioneer period to achieve the status described in point (1). The conviction about the supernatural sanctions that protect the church and explain its rapid growth was intensively disseminated and influenced the social reality of late antiquity (Brown 1992: 4). We speak about the dusk of the Roman Empire, when the episcopal churches in cities manifested as an ecumenical force that levelled differences, favored the poor, and replaced the “cultural monopoly” of the old elite (Brown 1992: 76). Brown counts regular custody of the poor to the particularly effective measures of the bishops; this action provided them with great authority and moral advantage over the notables and governors, although the latter spent more money on sporadic “games” combined with the distribution of “bread” (Brown 1992: 98).

At that time, there emerged the double-track in the eschatological views: the literal approach assumed a (soon) catastrophic end of the world,²²⁸ while the

226 I. Loyola, *Exercitia spiritualia*, in: *Pisma wybrane*, Kraków 1968; an aspect of the influence of Loyola’s work was studied by K. Mrowcewicz, “Polska poezja medytacyjna XVI stulecia – od Dantyszka do Grabowieckiego,” in: S. Nieznanowski, J. Pelc 1994: 333–363.

227 S. Fel, “Instrukcja o chrześcijańskiej wolności i wyzwoleniu,” EK 7, col. 279.

228 Ovitt (1983: 5) ascribes the greatest influence here to the views of Lactantius from “*Institutiones divinae*,” PL 6, col. 111ff.

metaphorical approach, instead of millenarism, proposed “rather a psychological or spiritual judgment than the literal final judgment after the end of times” (Ovitt 1983: 7).²²⁹

The achievement of an unquestionable position of Christianity in the political arena, while retaining the orientation toward the “other world” was the way to save the foundation of rationality and avoid collision (Piekarczyk 1976: 428–434) between the old practical everyday knowledge and the new belief in the higher order; which is the essence of religion according to Geertz. If we define rational action as following the rule (Fuller 1992), then following the rule that promises a spiritual effect does not easily lead to a dissonance between intent and effect. If we use the Weber-Kmita-Nowak definition, the action is rational, if it is based on knowledge about the predicted consequences²³⁰ – the determination of spiritual consequences will not cause an easy disappointment, because their effects will only come in another life. Eliade (1958: 461) writes about the second method:

It can happen that this resistance to a total absorption of life by the sacred arises even within the bosom of the Churches; it is not unusual for the latter to have to defend man against the excesses of religious, and especially of mystical, experience, and against the risk of secular life's being totally abolished.

The presentation of the process of Christianization as a “brutal acculturation” omits the other side – the constant struggle of the Church's authorities with new religious movements. Lateran IV (Canon 13; Geary 1985: 467) even formally forbade “the inventing” of new Christian orders. Apart from purely organizational

229 Here is a line that originates from Origen's *De Principiis*, in which the idea of purgatory also appears (“the notion that the punishment of the wicked will not be eternal” was a view rejected by Augustine of Hippo).

230 J. Kmita develops M. Weber's principle – that a rational individual selects the means it considers appropriate for a given purpose – on the basis of decision theory: “a rational individual picks from a set of possible actions the one that maximizes its preferences.” L. Nowak limits Kmita's principle to the “conditions of subjective certainty;” that is, the choice is based on the prediction that the measure will work in the expected way. Next, Nowak introduces limitations that operate before the decision; the set of considered variants is not absolute for it depends on the social position of the individual: on the scope of its freedom. On this basis, Nowak creates detailed distinctions of operations: sub-rational does not exhaust all options, counter-rational realizes other people's preferences, and irrational realizes the opposite of others' preferences. M. Weber, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, Glencoe 1949, p. 34; J. Kmita, *Z metodologicznych problemów interpretacji humanistycznej*, Warszawa, 1971, p. 28; both qtd. after Nowak 1993: 208–212.

matters, we may attribute this to the cultural nature of this religion: it must care for balance and social harmony by regulating excessively stormy spontaneous processes and taming the ambitions of priests and charismatic sectarians. Should one compare Eliade's theory to Becker's definition of sacrality, it again confirms the sufficiency of determining the sacred in terms of immutability; the second process described by Eliade speaks precisely about the stabilization of the sacred. In turn, the first process in Eliade's theory seems excessively dynamic, so that it may adequately describe such phenomenon of sacrality; however, the embarrassing wealth of religious movements certainly confirms this, as does the heterogeneity of pre-Gregorian Christianity (the episcopal churches). Besides, we do not have full knowledge in this case, because most religious processes have spread in the sphere of oral tradition, which always aspires to eternity and sanctifies immutability, but its only tool is human memory which, despite all spells, does not go back farther than three to four generations. The same applies to the scenarios of rituals described in anthropology: despite the strictly regulated, stereotypical repeatability of a ritual sequence, its subsequent performances are never identical; there appear contextual elements that depend on the expectations and interests of the participants (Tambiah 1979: 115). In the oral tradition, the equivalent of ritual are certain "literary" genres that help to remember and repeat the content. It is highly probable that at the beginning of expanded genres lay "simple forms,"²³¹ so poorly regulated that they basically do not know evolution, but only extended variation.

231 The hypothesis and notion formulated by A. Jolles, *Einfache Formen – Legende, Sage, Mythe, Rätsel, Spruch, Kasus, Memorabile, Märchen, Witz*, Halle 1930.

8. The Material Symbol and the Linguistic Sign

If a given religious system restricts the sacred – and it must do so for its coherence and durability – it will have to limit its incarnate presence in real and pictorial symbols. This results from the susceptibility of materially motivated symbols to the appropriation by another cultural (sub)system like politics or magic. Particularist religious cults, like idolatry or iconolatry, easily emerge from the religious system, because they quickly multiply and soon sprout in different places. Newly developed, they must necessarily have a local character, because while “every natural object is liable to become a hierophany” (Eliade 1958: 460), there are few items, “birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (Romans 1:23) suitable for the role of an idol in every culture, climate, and economy. Finally, these cults do not last; after all, even the golden calf was not eternal, as its followers soon discovered, while *acheiropoietia* exist due to the constant inflow of energy from the outside.²³²

By transferring the presence of the sacred to the spiritual world and limiting it, the religious system must of course sustain communication with this metaphysical entity. Various signs can cope with this demand for tools of transcendence in varying degrees, among them the abstract or perfect language signs already distinguished in the same apparition. Between them, we may place gestures, which are already a separate field of research,²³³ and which are included in larger units of interaction in the spectrum of behaviors.

Although linguistic signs also easily pass into other systems – after all, they are indispensable almost everywhere, like in literature – but they do not have the

232 The bibliography of non-linguistic communication is given by M. Mostert (1995: 105–107) in three sections: gestures, fine arts and material culture, and music.

233 People knew about gestures earlier; the most influential medieval definition of gesture was written by Hugh of Saint Victor. See J. C. Schmitt, *La raison des gestes dans l'occident médiéval*, Paris 1990, p. 358. R. Suntrup, *Die Bedeutung der liturgischen Gebärden und Bewegungen in lateinischen und deutschen Auslegungen des 9. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, München 1978; W. Habicht, *Die Gebärde in englischen Dichtungen des Mittelalters*, München 1959; H. Dellling, *Studien über die Gebärdensprache in der Dichtkunst und Bildkunst des frühen und hohen Mittelalters*, dissertation MS, Lipsk 1925; A. Roeder, *Die Gebärde im Drama des Mittelalters*, München 1974; gesture in the context of acting is considered by M. Herrmann (1914: 137–270); C. Davidson, “Stage Gesture in Medieval Drama,” in: *Atti del IV Colloquio della Società Internazionale pour l'Etude du Théâtre Médiéval*, eds. M. Chiabo, F. Doglio, Viterbo 1984, pp. 465–478.

value of material factuality and immediate visibility. Linguistic signs are more difficult to receive, but do not pose a threat to the initial system, as they can even serve as its carrier, even if we do not always recognize them as such. However, the meanings of words do not age,²³⁴ easily transfer retaining their identity, even in the guise of a different language and culture; they have an unrivaled value of universality. An equally important feature of words is the discursiveness of their meaning. On the one hand, we can extract words and divide them into factors but, on the other hand, we may link them with other words by a network of obvious connections. These connections form a whole system that enables linguistic signs to motivate each other – even though they may be arbitrary – with which they readily supplement a deficit in motivation that they have in comparison with material symbols.

The meaning hidden in a word may store the knowledge of the old times and, above all, it may serve as basis for a system; a fact that positively distinguishes words even from the material symbols, which are indestructible thanks to their abstract nature and not because we can freely reproduce them; instead, because their pattern exists in memory: the destruction of all crosses in the world would do nothing to the symbol. Moreover, symbols cannot defend themselves against definitions contrary to their original message and easily lose their identity.

We may also redefine language signs, which happens always and everywhere, also in religions, but they can at least defend themselves with the rules of language and logic; they are sometimes tied to hundreds proper names, idioms, phrases, proverbs, motifs, texts, which limits the pace and scope of innovation and forces them to change openly; not by concealing but declaring their dissimilarity from the old. Along with the many uses, what exercises additional control is the inertia of the linguistic system, which has to somehow respond to the proposed change, without which we cannot build understandable statements with new terms. This control is not automatic; the controllers must be people who understand semantics alongside the logical definitions and relationships between the terms. The system that lacks such competent critical listeners grows chaotic and eventually loses all coherence and stability. Vice versa, when the group of critical participants expands, they scrutinize more definitions and make

234 That is, onomasiologically understood meanings: that, which is signified by words; a vast amount of fragments of reality (the sky, water, field, forest, hand, or head), which we somehow name, remains the same, even though the words that we use to call these things change in time and space.

the system more coherent, strengthen it (reform), or break (schism). The same mechanism operates in the sphere of the practice of power (see chapter 5).

The limitation of the place of the sacred was also well-known in the history of Judaism. In the name of the purity of worship and elimination of worship “on the high mountains, on the hills and under every spreading tree” (Deuteronomy 12,2) there appeared a prohibition “not to sacrifice your burnt offerings anywhere you please” (Deuteronomy 12,13), “not in any town the Lord your God gives you,” but “in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name,” which finally meant Jerusalem, to be visited three times a year (Deuteronomy 16,16; STB, 568). By the way, it proves that even without idols, the threat of idolatry remains. Because the sacred may occupy a real place (territory), or be transmitted by touch,²³⁵ radiate to the temple, and make it a sacred space. The sacred may even radiate to further areas.²³⁶ An extreme example may be Gregory of Tours’ exemplum about throwing a nail from the Cross into the Adriatic. The action not only subdued the storm that threatened the pilgrims but also calmed the sea forever, on which now blow only timid winds that help the sailors (*In gloria martyrum*, 5; de Nie 1985: 104). The less of such radiation, the less place for the sacred in this world. However, we must remember that the only receiver of this radiation is faith, while knowledge about the sacred place or the conviction about its constant presence in a place sets the attitude of the faithful. People are helpless in front of this knowledge, even if they want to avoid the influence of

235 According to Gregory of Tours, everything that touches the sacred body becomes sacred (*sacratum*); *In gloria martyrum* 6; qtd. after de Nie 1985: 104. This is probably the basis for some devotional memorials like *attactum*, a piece of material rubbed against relics or even a sacred image (from family collections: “A veil rubbed against the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa” glued to a microreproduction of the painting from Czestochowa, around 1960). Cf. the exemplum about the injured clothing: the Pope Saint Gregory the Great gave “certain princes” a relic of the dalmatic of Saint John the Evangelist, but as they were dissatisfied with the gift, he cut the fabric, which shed blood; Tubach No. 1107; *Legenda Aurea*: 224–225; also see Gregorius Magnus, *Epistolae* IV, No. 30.

236 It somehow radiates further on to those present, when people who have taken refuge in church have been granted the right of asylum, which is honored since the seventh century; Vauchez 1996: 11. Today, the police also cannot simply expel a group of refugees from a church. R. G. Bindschedler, *Kirchliches Asylrecht und Freistätten in der Schweiz*, Stuttgart 1906; M. Siebold, *Das Asylrecht der römischen Kirche mit besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Entwicklung auf germanischem Boden*, dissertation, Münster 1930; R. Reck, *Das Totschläger-Asyl der Reichsstadt Reutlingen 1495–1804*, Tübingen 1970; L. Bärnreuther, *Asylrecht und Freiungen im fränkischen Raum*, Würzburg 1968.

what is holy, like the two beggars, the blind and the lame, who were so happy with the financial fruits of their illnesses that they fled in the face of the procession with the relics of Saint Martin. The two beggars feared the relics will cure them, which will take away their jobs; however, fleeing in panic they stumbled upon the procession anyway and the relics did restore their health.²³⁷ They did not want it, but they believed it may happen.

237 *Legenda Aurea*: 836. The miraculum was adapted for a theatre play by André de la Vigne in *Moralité de l'Aveugle et du Boiteux* as a supplement to his hagiographic play *Vie de Saint Martin*, played in 1496. Knight 1983: 7, summarizes the debate about the play's genre with an allegorical interpretation.

9. The Stages of Spiritualization

At first, we have a belief in the omnipresence of the sacred – not only in the Scriptures – but it is not yet ontologically diversified from the profane. Before we begin to construct an overarching scheme, let us consider a small section for a brief overview of the process.

1. AN EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUALIZATION. Even such a remarkably popular form of piety as pilgrimage was subject to spiritualization. After the period of prosperity and stability in the thirteenth century (see chapter 1), new places of pilgrimage no longer emerge from the worship of relics. Instead of new relics, the pilgrims seek Marian sanctuaries associated with the worship of Madonna²³⁸ and the growing faith in miracles through her intercession. The number of Marian sanctuaries quickly multiplies, so that in the Middle Ages everyone has them within a day's reach (Chélini, Branthomme 1996: 164).²³⁹ We observe the phase of total spiritualization in the fifteenth century – especially in the circle of *Devotio Moderna* – during which many incline to the Benedictine idea of a spiritual pilgrimage,²⁴⁰ which one may conduct by walking around a monastery, a house, a city, or any area. One may support the illusion of traveling in the imagination with imitations of famous places, figures, and paintings (Chélini, Branthomme 1996: 165); finally, with special book guides.²⁴¹ Due to its inaccessibility to many

238 Rodericus, the Archbishop of Toledo, appeared as a spokesman for the rising worship of Mary already during Lateran IV. He undermined the cult of Saint James the Apostle as the patron of the pilgrims and apparently already considered the excess of temporality in worship as something inappropriate, for he was sour about this form of piety: “I would not like Mary to be buried in my cathedral so that believers would trample over her every day instead of praying to her in Heaven” (Herbers 1994: 257).

239 Noteworthy, there is a parallel with economics: “markets were carefully spaced out, this system must have placed most villagers at a convenient day's journey from a market” (D. Matthew, *Atlas of Medieval Europe*, Charlottesville 1992, p. 142); J. Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants, and Markets. Inland Trade in Medieval England, 1150–1350*, New York 1997. R. H. Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society 1000–1500*, New York 1996. For a general history of medieval entrepreneurship, see E. S. Hunt, J. M. Murray, *A History of Business in Medieval Europe, 1200–1550*, Cambridge 1999.

240 J. Leclercq, “Monachisme et pérégrination du IXe au XIIIe siècle,” *Studia Monastica* 3/1961.

241 One of the more popular was written in 1492 by Felix Fabri, *Die Sionspilger*, ed. by W. Carls, Berlin 1999. The author of this publication used here a latinized form of his surname that actually was Felix Schmid (c.1437–1502) and belonged to a Dominican

ordinary believers, the monastic life itself gained its spiritual form, preserved in the ideal of the Religion of the Heart or the Abbey of the Holy Ghost; the essence of the ideal was the translation of the monastic rule into a metaphorical model of the behavior of lay people.²⁴² Wessel Gansfort²⁴³ (1419–1489) described the idea of spiritual purgatory, in which we find the beginning of the Protestant negation of purgatory: that is, even here the Reformation is spiritualism, which did not reach extremes, for which Franck and other radical activists hated the “too moderate” Luther.

The chivalric culture refers to a special form of pilgrimage in search of a mythical relic: the Holy Grail. The legendary motif of the cup from the Last Supper, in which Joseph of Arimathea was to later collect the blood of the crucified Christ and then celebrate the first Mass, had many versions in literature, which mostly revolve around the task of Christianizing chivalry. Chrétien de Troyes’ *Perceval* (1180) presents Grail as the vessel for the Host. Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*²⁴⁴ (1220) still suggests the Grail’s relationship with the biblical, mysterious sacred;²⁴⁵ the miraculous powers that we know from exempla emphasize the importance of baptism.²⁴⁶ Two novels from the beginning of the thirteenth century contributed to the consolidation of the prevailing Eucharistic tradition

friar, the prior of Basel until 1468. The journey took 208 days and led to Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago de Compostela. One of the earliest such publications was *Geistliche Meerfahrt*, written by the Dominican nun Margaretha Ursula von Masmünster (c.1400–1447/8), while one of the latest appeared around 1600, *Eyn geistliche bilger fahrt / zu dem heiligen Land*, by another Dominican nun from Unterlinden near Colmar. Cf. Classen, [Review], *The Medieval Review* 99.11.06.

242 On the basis of an anonymous handbook *Abbey of the Holy Ghost*, MS British Library, Harley 2406, f. 61; cf. Riggio 1991: 264. Also see Whitehead 1998: 1–24. Falvey (1991: 50) remarks a similar program (“a cell in the mind”) used in charity work by Saint Catherine of Siena (Catarina Benincasa). Santa Caterina da Siena, *Epistolario*, ed. by U. Meattini, Rome 1979, pp. 1298–1302, offers her correspondence with the confessor about her care for a convict in 1375.

243 The following collection of articles presents the person of Gansfort: *Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Northern Humanism*, ed. by F. Akkerman, G. C. Huisman, A. J. Vanderjagt, Leiden 1993.

244 For the overview of the knowledge in the matter, see Hasty 1999, *A Companion to Wolfram’s “Parzival”*, Woodbridge 1999.

245 The terms “the fruit of salvation” and “similar to the Kingdom of Heaven” (238, 21, 24) connote paradise.

246 The Grail remains invisible to pagans and only appears after baptism (813, 19–21, p.380).

(and, therefore, the sacramental tradition as well): Robert de Boron's *Le Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal* and the anonymous *Queste del Saint Graal*. Especially the last one, written by a monk, describes the (thoroughly symbolic) spiritual perspective of the knights' journey: they go to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and find a Spiritual Palace, where a Graal liturgy is celebrated; only Galaad receives the privilege of contemplating the mystery of Saint Graal thanks to his outstanding moral qualities that exceed the earthly life.²⁴⁷

At different levels of culture, we see three principal phases of the process of the spiritualization of the sacred: (1) a period of constant physical presence at a specific place in relics (usually of a saint) that one may adore; (2) the sacred that manifests its existence incidentally, by answering the prayers with graces or manifesting to a chosen few; (3) the sacred that one can contemplate and access only by spiritual means.

2. THE SAINTS. The institution of the holy person²⁴⁸ itself is a certain limitation of the supreme *sacrum*, which appears through intermediaries. However, the sacred (mutually) enlivens and supports the unfettered worship of the saints: they resume the gospel miracles by stocking on wine, bread, and food by intercessory prayer; these themes appear in all vitae (Gurevich 1988: 78). Holiness is inextricably linked to miraculousness: saints constantly appear as mages and doctors (Gurevich 1988: 90); their ministry often is more temporal than spiritual. Like mythical heroes, they accumulate the best values of the group and focus the expectations posed to the kings. Beside securing temporal deficits of security and prosperity, a saint embodies the hopes of the lay people to

247 D. Śliwa, "Graal w literaturze," *Encyklopedia katolicka*: Vol. 6, col. 3–4. Noteworthy, the subject of one of the first new Latin tragicomedies was the pilgrimage of the Duke of Pomerania to Jerusalem: J. von Kitscher, *Tragicocomedia de iherosolomitana profectioe illustrissimi principis pomeriani*, Lipsk 1501 (H. Peters 1966: 34 with reference to M. T. Herricka, "Tragicomedy, Its Origin and Development in Italy, France and England," *Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* 39/1955, pp. 16–62).

248 For hagiography, see M. Goerlach, *Studies in Middle English Saints' Legends*, Heidelberg 1998; *Medieval Saints: A Reader*, ed. M.-A. Stouck, Peterborough 1998; S. Coue, *Hagiographie im Kontext: Schreibanlass und Funktion von Bischofsviten aus dem 11. und vom Anfang des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1996; *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. P. E. Szarmach, New York 1996; *Saints. Studies in Hagiography*, ed. S. Sticca, Binghamton New York 1995. The introduction and Polish bibliography appears in W. Schenk, "Kult świętych w Polsce. Zarys historyczny," *Roczniki Teologiczno-Kanoniczne* 13.4/1966, pp. 77–102; J. Starnawski, "Drogi rozwojowe hagiografii średniowiecznej w Polsce," in: Nieznanowski, Pelc 1994: 11–41.

participate in his holiness (Gurevich 1988: 91); this purely religious dimension begins to dominate.

The religious dimension manifests itself in the frequently described monopolization of the miracle by the saints approved by the Church, who takes control of the miracle as a “tool of social engineering.” Using Geertz’s terminology, we will talk about the strengthening of the belief in the factuality of higher being through a demonstration of the supernatural power. This argument will prevail in the construction of hagiographies; besides, over time, miracles appear only after death and sometimes raise greater interest than the current activity of the saintly people, P. Brown remarks with surprise. Swanson (1997: 155) explains this with the utilitarian approach of the faithful: what counts is not why someone became a saint, but what power he now has as an advocate of the living. There are examples of saints during life – of their creation or self-creation – and of the problems with the faithful, whose disappointed expectations often led to disgrace.²⁴⁹ The shift to the influence of saints after death becomes understandable, when we associate it with the increase in faith in the miracles by the intercession of the Virgin Mary. We read in this a manifestation of the awareness that the sacred is indeed beyond the ontological boundary (see below for transcendentalization), but it does not mean it is weaker. Saints lived among us, now they are in Heaven: this view holds an approximation of or at least a certain path to God. The miracle that comes not from physical relics but from the holy person already in Heaven²⁵⁰ seems even stronger because the belief in Heaven is stronger.

Despite this positive coupling, there is tension or a gap on the level of existence caused by the ontological remoteness of the sacred. The gap will be filled by the increase in the number of places of worship (see above). However, this tension results not from the imbalance between the separation of the sacred and the strengthening of faith, but from the fact that the sacred is one, while everyone carries faith inside themselves and must cultivate it in their place with family and friends. This is one of the aspects of the development of subjectivity: identity does not grow out of anything, it does not hatch by abiogenesis from the virgin soil of personality but results from the redistribution of external values, that is, their overtaking by individuals and personal representation.

249 Swanson 1997: 151–154. For a whole monograph devoted to this single matter, see A. M. Kleinberg, *Prophets in their own country: living saints and the making of sainthood in the later middle ages*, Chicago 1992.

250 Let us note the apocryphal emphasis on the Assumption of Mary against the canon.

The matter will appear different on the plane of biographical construction of holiness. What is essential here is the factor of temporal and most secular prestige: a postulate supported by people with high social status has a greater chance of widespread acceptance. Thus, the saints almost always come from outstanding families, which provides them with an indisputable and – more importantly – supra-class prestige. The concern for this class neutrality or openness (nothing new in this religion) probably explains the observation that the nobility of saints becomes irrelevant in the face of their sanctity, which would not so much become the peak achievement of piety as the sublime form of power (Borst 1973: 382). Otherwise – as Bertold of Regensburg observed – why has no peasant become a saint?²⁵¹ The peasant had no way to achieve prestige. Thus, one can agree that holiness is a sublime form of power. However, generally, it is simply spiritual power that loses its sophistication when excluded from the sacral frame.

There are other forms of assuming a secular value that end in its obscuration or even complete annexation. The prayer gesture was borrowed from the feudal culture. It is part of granting fiefdom: if the lord sits, the pleader kneels with folded hands; if the lord stands, the pleader also stands. The illustrated code of Saxon law, *Sachsenspiegel*,²⁵² which regulates most fiefdom relations, depicts the lord's acceptance of a request by his grasp of the pleader's hand (e.g., ff. 1^v no. 1 and 2) and rejection by the lack of this gesture and the turn of the head away from the pleader (1^r No. 5). In this way, the lord received vassal's tribute and gifts (Sczaniecki 1978: 50). In the commentary to his translation of *Parzival* (Lam 1996: 51, 8), the translator A. Lam more concisely interprets the gesture of commendation in the Germanic tradition: "The defeated folded his hands in a sign of surrender, the winner grasped them in his hands" (p. 411). *Sachsenspiegel* depicts more complicated situations with additional hand gestures; many illustrations show the lord indicating the type of fiefdom granted with his other hand (2^v no. 5); the renewal of the contract appears in the form of a vassal with five hands (6^v no. 3).²⁵³

251 The few exceptions include Saint Isidore the Farm Labourer and Saint Zita who worked as a maid.

252 In the collections of the Monastery of the Conventual Franciscans in Cracow remains a legal treaty by Nikolaus Wurm, *Rechtsbuch. Die Blume über den Sachsenspiegel*, dated 1399; qtd. after *Zbiory rękopisów w bibliotekach i muzeach w Polsce*, ed. by D. Kamolowa and K. Muszyńska (Church collection), Warszawa 1988, p. 147.

253 A systematic overview of the gestures in the illustrations of "Sachsenspiegel" is provided by the editor Koschorreck (1970: 24–28) in the volume of commentaries, in which no. 10 describes the commendation ceremony (commendatio) described here.

Apart from the rare cases of canonized soldiers, like the first protagonist of a hagiography, Martin, “civilian” saints were often stylized as knights. Saint James the Apostle wore armor even in the fifteenth century, when he became the patron of Spain and his role as patron of pilgrims weakened (Herbers 1994: 247). Thus, in the New Latin “first European tragicomedy” of *Fernandus Servatus* by Carlo and Marcellino Verardi (1494), Saint James the Apostle must still enter the stage of history in 1492 because an assassination threatened the life of the Spanish King Ferdinand (H. N. Peters 1966: 33). Christ himself was long presented in royal majesty; for instance, in van Eyck’s Ghent Altarpiece polyptych, *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*. The persistent applying of the attributes of an earthly ruler to Christ either has a two-sided function or means something else depending on the ideological framework; there were periods and environments, in which this served the sacralization of the king-defender of the Church. If it only was to build a glorious image of Christ, we should understand it as speaking in a known language that uses external and ideological means to build authority. From the eleventh century, the Church is a special monarchy (Duby 1980: 178). For instance, Hödl (1986: 63) suspects the annexation of the notion of nobility (*nobilis*), to which Neoplatonic theologians (Richard Fishacre, Master Eckhart, Ulrich von Strassburg) gave theological meaning by replacing the “dignus” of Thomas Aquinas, thus opposing the existing use which – they had to know about it – had a specific “class” meaning in contemporary society. According to Hödl, this would be the influence of Neoplatonic deification of humans following the biblical idea of “image and likeness” of man to God and stepping toward grounding the concept of human participation in divinity through cognition and intellect; not only through love as in earlier mystics.²⁵⁴

After exceeding the threshold of social acceptance and prestige, there could only occur the interception – which would annex and expel the previous element – or spiritualization and weakening. The same thing happened with love. The minute the troubadours described love, the poets-mystics metaphorized it, the writers-theologians spiritualized and reserved it only for metaphysical relationships – so the teachers-catechists recognized the love between people as unworthy of its name. After the assimilation stage into the value system (enculturation),²⁵⁵ the notion undergoes reconstruction from the inside.

254 We will return to the idea of imitating Christ, important in this context, in chapter 16.

255 In our chapters 2.7 and 3, we mention the bottom-up co-generation of culture. Still, we will show (chapter 15.7) how the same process happens among the broad masses who also first observe, then assimilate and reproduce (phase of active observation), then speak with their own voice and contribute (in terms of learning, they enter the

This is evident in the emergence of a new type of saint and character of the central cult: the human dimension of Christ, his sonship, suffering, and sacrifice. Simultaneously, the lives of kings after the break of the sacral-political unity – from around the thirteenth century – can no longer appear as *vita* (Sprandel 1982: 63).

3. THE NEW VENERATION OF MARY, propagated from the eleventh century and fully visible in the fourteenth (Sticca 1973: 80), has some features of secondary monopolization of the miracle – this time in the person of Mary – which probably also corresponds to the second process of Eliade’s theory of revelation; the unification of hierophany after a period of excessive dispersion. More importantly, we see here more than a reduction of the sacred to recognized relics. The new worship refers not to the carnal relics of Mary, because there are none; not counting the ear wax from her ears (*aurium sordes*) that received worship for the early Christian belief that the immaculate conception happened through the ear, which heard the divine word passed by the angel (*conceptio per aurem*).²⁵⁶ The more people valued all other remains of Mary, from tailoring utensils²⁵⁷ to the whole house, but it was a different quality. Generally, the holiness of Mary reveals her influence without the material mediation of carnal remains; it uses symbols whose material power is completely arbitrary: a human-made figure or painting²⁵⁸ that sometimes aspires to miraculous origin.²⁵⁹ In various alleged

phase of transfer). Then, a new factor appears in the system. The same process occurs in the family that brings up a child.

256 Meinardus (1988: 233–234); also there the beginning of the hymn by Thomas Becket, “Gaude, Virgo, Mater Christi, Quae per aurem concepisti, Gabriele nuntio,” *Analecta hymnica medii aevi* 1/1886, p. 559 ff. Even here we find a typological pairing: Satan tempted Eve through her ear; see J. Martin, “Ogmios,” *Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft* 1/1946, pp. 358–399.

257 Meinardus (1988) describes their history.

258 Pözl 1986, and Dünninger 1986: 72–84, discuss the history of the rivalry between and coexistence of images and relics, describe the anthropomorphic reliquaries along with sculptures and paintings serving as reliquaries, and especially concentrate on works of art with a sacral “excess” in the form of a built-in relic and “reliquaries” for the host. Also cf. J. H. Braun, *Die Reliquiare des christlichen Kultes und ihre Entwicklung*, Freiburg 1940; K. Szczepkowska-Naliwajek, *Relikwiarze średniowiecznej Europy*, Warszawa 1996.

259 The Catholic tradition allows for few exceptions like the Shroud of Turin or the Veil of Veronica, but also the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico which, according to tradition, materialized during the revelation and was preserved by a mysterious photographic or painting technique on the cloak of a Native American in 1531 (EK 6, col. 363–365). About this class of images “not made by human hand,” see entry

revelations, this medium can be accidental – for instance, an arrangement of light reflections somewhere on the glass – or purely visionary. Tradition complements the shortage of material motivation of miraculous figures and images with messages about “self-referential” revelations or interventions, which explicitly prove that a given artifact has been accepted as representation by the depicted; a method typically used by its earthly owners to strengthen their ownership. A special place is occupied by paintings attributed to Luke the Evangelist – a painter.²⁶⁰

In the Christological motifs of theology and literature, as well as in the iconography of Christ, one notices the emphasis on his passion that appeared with the beginning of the twelfth century. Previously, there dominated the presentation of Jesus as a priest and sage (*soter*; popular in catacomb painting), the “good shepherd,” or Messiah; then appeared the motif of Christ Pantokrator: the divine ruler of the world (Pochat 1986: 95); the time from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries knew the motif of the Lamb of God (most popular in the fifth and sixth centuries, LCI3, pp. 7–14); finally the West inclined to the image of Christus Rex in the royal majesty with the glory and triumph of the resurrection.²⁶¹ In the dialogic treatise *Cur Deus homo* (1098),²⁶² Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109)

“Acheiropity,” EK 1, col. 55; I. Wilson, *Całun turyński*, Warszawa 1983; *Święte oblicza*, Warszawa 1994; S. Waliszewski, *Całun turyński dzisiaj*, Kraków 1994.

260 They include the Byzantine original (destroyed in 1453) of the type common in the Eastern church, to which belongs the Black Madonna of Częstochowa that was brought to Poland in 1384 for the foundation of the Pauline convent, whose arrival from Hungary accompanied the enthronement of Hedvigis of Anjou. The early-fourteenth-century icon probably comes from the Neapolitan region. The current form of the painting is the effect of deep or perhaps complete renovation forced after its destruction, probably by the Hussites in 1430; Smoleń 1987: 249–50. This type of image is called hodegetria, which is discussed in LCI 3, col. 168–169.

261 Described this way in Anglo-Saxon theological treatises still in tenth and eleventh centuries. See B. C. Raw, *Trinity and Incarnation in Anglo-Saxon Art and Thought*, Cambridge 1997. About the Kingdom of Christ, see J. Leclercq, *L’Idée de la royauté du Christ au Moyen Age*, Paris 1959.

262 Anselm of Canterbury finished this treatise in 1098, during the four-year exile in Italy (1097–1100); as archbishop of Canterbury (from 1093), he was almost in constant conflict with the kings of England, and from 1099 he led a formal Gregorian investiture contest (*The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Church*: 73). The title question appears later as a chapter’s title in Hugh of Saint Victor’s *De Sacramentis*: Bk. 1, pars VIII, cap. VI; *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, Vol. 176, col. 310. Discussion about this matter also appears in the first part of Book 2 (col. 371–416). The relations between the English Church and the Papacy are thoroughly described in Heath 1989

justifies the importance of Christ's humanity as the Redeemer who accomplishes his mission as a human. "Why should only the God-human provide redress that saves people?"²⁶³ Because only man should do it, but only God can. The essence of this mission is, therefore, "to give infinite compensation for the sins of the world in the place of humanity" (Rahner 1987, 494), and to allow its renewal, usually called the restoration of likeness. Some interpretations replace the "sins of the world" with the Original Sin, which most spectacularly disrupted the harmony of the world during its creation. The outline of this solution (the science of recapitulation, see chapters 11.2 and 17) already appears in the writings of Irenaeus (d.202) and Pope Leo the Great (d. 461). Irenaeus includes Mary in the work of redemption, whose obedience "atoned for the disobedience of Eve," just as he describes Christ as the second Adam and "the center of the history of salvation."²⁶⁴ Pope Leo emphasizes the divinity of Christ as the co-author of the decision to save people after their fall and the importance of his voluntary acceptance of the servant's role in the work of repairing the human race.²⁶⁵ Paradoxically, on the backdrop of the spiritualization process, later perspectives more strongly emphasize other aspects of Christ's earthly life.

We will come back to the role of Christ's humanity and Marian miracles in the parts devoted to drama (subsections 16.6 and 19), but we again emphasize here the uniqueness of Mary and Jesus as saints, due to the separation of holiness from relics or spiritualization. They both lived on earth and now reside in Heaven; they left no bodies after them, except for Jesus' foreskin and blood. The main vein of the cult therefore focuses on what is beyond the ontological boundary. As a transitional phenomenon, we may consider the placement of three consecrated

and in a collection of articles edited by C. H. Lawrence, *The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages*, Stroud 1999. For general information about the social role of the English Church, see P. Heath, *The Church and the Shaping of English Society 1215–1535*, Oxford 1999.

263 "Quod satisfactionem per quam salvatur homo, non possit facere nisi Deus homo" (the title of ch. 4, col. 403). See below, chapter 16 about importance of Anselm of Canterbury for theology.

264 EK 7, col. 448–449; the fragment of Irenaeus's *Epideixis* from Michalski: Vol. I, pp. 170–178. Cf. the entry "Irenée de Lyon," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 1971: Vol. 7, col. 1923–1970.

265 "Sermo 1," *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*: Vol. 54, col. 190–193; LCI 3, col. 499–502. Also see twelfth-century sources and iconography.

hosts in the altar, if the church's founder had no relics at his disposal.²⁶⁶ A special example of a monastery that did not have a relic of its patron but was worshipping only its sanctity was the Monastery of Saint Saviour and Saint Bridget of Syon, East Anglia, founded at the beginning of the fifteenth century by Henry V (Gibson 1989: 21). Since people now had to cross the boundaries of worlds – life and death, and then salvation and condemnation – it is right to call this effect of spiritualization, based on such a radical distance of the recipient of worship, transcendentalization.²⁶⁷ Transcendentalization is accompanied by a compensatory multiplication of evidence for miraculous interventions in this world. We may treat it as a symptom of a transitional state, when people become accustomed to the new status of the fully metaphysical sacred (Perpeet 1987). However, we should venture further: it is about providing evidence of the parallel existence of metaphysical reality despite its separation behind an impassable border (aim: the maintaining of the belief in the factuality of the existence of the higher power). The next step is equally important: it strengthens people in constant vigilance over maintaining in Christianity the sphere of unholy things, the whole world of the profane. Let us not underestimate the reverse side of the miraculous interventions in this world: these are the signals sent by the rightful ruler to the user, so that he retains loyalty and ascertains that the entrusted world does not return to paganism or simply fall into the hands of the Enemy. Literary means (see chapter 23) and interactive communication media played an important role in fulfilling and driving this bloodstream of information (see chapter 14).

Let us consider prayer for our description of these transformations in the forms of piety related to the physical sacred.

4. THE FUNCTIONING AND EVOLUTION OF PRAYER also shows signs of spiritualization. Although the nature of prayer is by definition spiritual, the functions in which it appears may not be very metaphysical. Many wrote about the persistence of faith “in the visible effectiveness of prayer in everyday life” (Sprandel

266 J. Braun, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, Vol. 1, München 1924, pp. 544 ff; qtd. after Dünninger 1986: 74. These Churches were usually called the Saviour's, following a custom known in early medieval Hiberno-Scottish missions.

267 Thus, we will avoid the difficulties of explaining the doctrine of the bodily existence in the Heaven of Mary (rapture) and Christ (ascension). The situation of the latter has changed with Transfiguration and the concept of the so-called glorified or adored body. Regardless of the decisions about these elements, the metaphysical nature of the Heaven is beyond doubt, at least in relation to the Heaven before the end of the world, because then it is to be “a new and perfect state of this world;” Rahner, Vorgrimler 1987: 463.

1982: 88), how prayer is a magic spell understood not as a request for a specific intervention but as a magical procedure.²⁶⁸ The exemplum of Bede the Venerable is a good example: the man that prays for the soul of his supposedly deceased brother frees him from prison, in which he truly resided (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, chapter 4, 22). Preachers and theologians fight the superstition around prayer, or the magical approach (e.g. Nicholas Magni, see Bylina 1978). Moreover, there happen concessions to the “quantitative value of prayer” (Bylina 1997: 411) visible in the official career of the Holy Rosary (essentially a mantra).

However, this refers in the contemporary material culture to the general development of all measures as the basis for the exchange of goods and knowledge of the world; economics and science, mentality and methodology. So if a poor member of the confraternity could say thirty *Pater Noster* and *Hail Mary* instead of paying six groszys in cash as a contribution (Kantak 1933 I: 324) the adjustment of this conversion seems only natural. The longer time of prayer balanced the higher amount of money: after all, for a long time, *Pater Noster* and *Hail Mary* were used as time units. This sheds light on the matter of the so-called desacralization of time. While remaining within the reach of religion itself, if prayer is a gift, its multiplication does not necessarily mean a magical understanding:²⁶⁹ after all, God expects prayers. Perhaps only when there appear exchange expectations like fifteen *Pater Noster* for the release of fifteen purgatory souls, we may talk about “prayers approximating spells” (Bylina 1997: 412). The preachers fought against it, but the mistake was the human pride of certainty about the automatism of divine reaction. The reflex itself is based on the common-sense judgment about the value of intensification of prayer, because the essence of the procedure remains within the boundaries of the obligation to care for souls in purgatory. But even in the numerical structure of the Dominican Rosary (fifteenth century), there lies a rich theological program. Fifteen subjects of meditation divided into three cycles – the joyful, painful, and glorious – that cover the most important circumstances and stages of incarnation. Each cycle holds five secrets of ten *Hail Mary*, preceded by one *Pater Noster* and closed by one *Gloria Patri*. One usually meditates on a single cycle, while all three cycles

268 See K. Bracha, “Magia słowa. Świadectwa teologów i wierzenia popularne w XV wieku,” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 48.3/1991, pp. 17–32.

269 Or a folk understanding: Chrétien de Troyes writes that Queen Guinevere sends to Heaven “five hundred sighs,” so that they saved Erec from misfortune (*Zadziwiająca Historia o Ereku i Enidzie*, transl. R. Jarocka-Nowak, A. Nowak, Kraków 1996, pp. 9–10).

require three prayers of the Holy Rosary; the full 150 *Hail Mary* is called Marian Psalter.²⁷⁰

One should also not hastily prejudice the magic of benedictions (Bylina 1997: 412). Even if they were used in hiding (that is, without a priest), we should always first think about them as prayers – for protection, sacrifice, or the blessing of God – but also faith and support-seeking. Thus, we should treat as magic only the “servicing” treatments that use the sacred without faith in divine help, calculated for provoking and instrumental use of the power presumed in a blessed object, as if in a chemical reaction, regardless of the divine will. However, even when someone stole the Host, we should not only read into that the intention of magical use but also an indirect proof of the universal and strong faith in the Host’s extraordinariness. In the prayer frame of interpretation, other “attitudes toward the sacred” (Bylina 1997) lose a lot of their magical character that some scholars, including Delumeau, Le Goff, and Gurevich, too easily attribute to them.

Mrozowski (1997: 209ff) described a few examples of the almost literal placement of someone in the prayer frame; among others, Przechna, the donator of the *Greater Poland Antiphonary* (before 1350, the Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań – illustration 7, Mrozowski 1997: 210). Przechna ordered her portrait to appear in the beginning of the songs, thanks to which she had to be “sung” as part of the artwork and, thus, it carried her soul to the place all prayers go.²⁷¹ Mrozowski calls it sacralization because this place was reserved for the saints.²⁷² However, this is not a common rule, as there also happen “portraits” of authors in initials, so we do not necessarily have to describe this as the usurpation of sacrality. Instead, we may call this perpetuation of the act of prayer: the donator will now sing this prayer forever. It is hard to believe the portrait is the “soul” – perhaps, only the soul could aspire to holiness without blasphemy – if we consider, for instance, Mikołaj Słupek’s missal, in which the donator presents his

270 ODCC, p. 1127, s.v. *Mysteries of the Rosary* and further references. K. J. Klinkhammer SJ, *Adolf von Essen und seine Werke: Der Rosenkranz in der geschichtlichen Situation seiner Entstehung und in seinem bleibendem Anliegen*, Frankfurt 1972.

271 The inspiration for this apotheosis probably are the incipit of Psalm 25 (24), “Ad te levavi animam meam,” in which the manuscript painters early insert the founder of the book in the place of David with the harp or on his knees; Szaniecki 1978: 47.

272 Cf. A. Karłowska-Kamzowa, “Gotyk w kodeksach iluminowanych i malowidłach ściennych Wielkopolski (od końca XIII do początku XV wieku),” in: *Malarstwo gotyckie w Wielkopolsce. Studia o dziełach i ludziach*, ed. A. Labuda, Poznań 1994, p. 41.

soul in the form of a naked child.²⁷³ But even if the spiritual Recipient of prayers appears in the illustration, the sender may be understood in earthly-temporal terms. For instance, King David (not his soul) kneels in a medieval knight's costume next to a horse and a squire holding a sword, the crown rests on the lute; he prays to God floating in a cloud.²⁷⁴

We may consider that the following is a votive frame: "the offering of a gift to Heavens" in the form of the donator's image, which simultaneously represented him and contained his part (likeness) to propitiate a blessing (Witkowska 1978). The variety of votive intentions is troublesome. May we juxtapose the "more primitive Cracow's townswoman" carrying "her own wax image" to the Church with the canon who prayed in Latin and also donated the altar? If we remember the most famous examples of votive offerings – such as the one connected with the birth of Bolesław III Wrymouth²⁷⁵ – we will have to admit that it is not about the difference in education between particular groups of believers, but about civilization shifts that mean a move from the symbolic to discursive expression. Within the forms of piety, among others, this manifests itself in the fact that wax or metal figures known from the thirteenth century gradually give way to plates with an image, and then only text.²⁷⁶ As we see, the sender also went the long way from the motivated symbol to the text.

273 *Kodeks gnieźnieński* in Rusczyńska et al. 1962: Vol. 5, Bk. 3, p. 45, fig. 262; qtd. after Szczaniecki 1978: 48.

274 The missal funded by king John I Albert from the archives of the Convent of the Pauline Fathers in Częstochowa; Łoziński 1977: fig. 34.

275 "Have them make a sculpture the size of the infant;" Gallus Anonymus, *Gesta principum Polonorum* I 30. Szczaniecki (1978: 45ff) elaborates the example of the sacrifice of Bishop Tomicki.

276 Szczaniecki 1978: 45ff. Different types of votive tablets from before 1800 are described and reproduced in the series *Corpus inscriptionum Poloniae*, especially Vol. 9, *Województwo olsztyńskie*, Bk. 1, *Lubawa i okolice*, Toruń 1995; K. Beill, *Votivbilder*, Salzburg 1975; E. Harvolk, *Votivtafeln*, München 1979.

10. The Transcendentalization of the Sacred as a Civilizational Transformation

1. POWER AND CIVILIZATION. Taking into account the social phenomena that determine the conditions and consequences of the process of spiritualization of the sacred, we may speak of a civilizational transformation. The course of this change more or less corresponds with Elias' theory. In the first stage, the group of initiators and pretenders assimilates the formulas and values of the higher class. Then, they oppose the values of the higher group against those of their own, that is those selected and defined as own; for instance, the burghers opposed the aristocratic idleness with work, etiquette with nature, conventions with knowledge, and promiscuity with virtue (Elias 1980: 480). We may model the process of the separation of the Church as a social power that was an alternative to the power of the secular princes:

- 1) The overcoming of a threshold: the capture (or maintainance) of the necessary social prestige.
- 2) The adoption of a value scale, adjustment to the hierarchy by joining the elite, and seizure of the top of the social ladder; observation and annexation.
- 3) The spiritualization of power: a reinterpretation in spiritual terms, such as the Kingdom of Heaven; partly also assuming the forms of the cult of Roman emperors (Pontifex Maximus),²⁷⁷ and in some cases actually intercepting the administrative prerogatives and political position. In the Late Antique Church, the bishops became alternative centers to the imperial governors (Brown 1992). Later emerge prince-bishoprics with full secular power guaranteed by the imperial immunities since Charlemagne,²⁷⁸ the Church's jurisdiction separates itself from the secular state with a separate tax system and the right to mint coin. Some of the prince-bishoprics existed until the nineteenth century and now only the Vatican remains.²⁷⁹

277 According to Warmind 1993: 219, this is the last and almost invisible trail of pagan dependencies of the rituals of Western Christianity, which constituted an "obvious continuation" of the cult of emperors in the second and third century.

278 It was the first stage of development of the notion of *libertas ecclesiae*; Szabó-Bechstein 1991: 148–149.

279 The determinants of this process, dependent on the relations between various centers of secular power, are presented by Kaiser 1988: 107. The stronger power of the counts prevented the bishops from establishing their own states with the help of the king.

- 4) The spiritual transformation of the scale of earthly values *sub specie aeternitatis* (universal Christianity). People received the theory of their destiny understood as salvation by the Church (sacramentalism). This sacramentalism is the proper name of what some call the “clericalisation” of religious life in the thirteenth century. Swanson (1997: 111–113) links the sacrament of penance with the flourishing of the most important religious movements that appeared from the end of the twelfth century: the Beguines, Brethren of the Common Life, the third order, not to mention the most spectacular flagellants. This is only a step away from the confraternities and guilds placed by Kumor (1969: 513) in the parish (and therefore sacramental) model of the organization of society. In all these forms of organization, we observe the striving to subordinate everyday life to the precepts of religion, which includes formal steps such as founding own chapels,²⁸⁰ creating own parishes, and gradual overtaking of strict or tertiary religious rule. One can hardly distinguish this bottom-up pursuit from the Church’s top-down activities to get these new religious movements under control.
- 5) The transcendentalization of the sacred. Christ’s “Ascension” changes the position of people in nature and constitutes the world of the profane. There is no longer any island with the earthly paradise, though Brandan could still encounter it during his navigation.²⁸¹ The dualism of the sacred and the profane grows deeper.

The perception of the stages 3–5 surfaces from an eye-witness account. Around 1500, the experienced confessor and priest, the Augustinian J. von Paltz

Arnold 1991 prepared a monograph of the Duchy of Eichstätt that existed since 741 and in 1305–1802 was a prince-bishopric. Arnold emphasizes that the princes of the laity envied the sacred legitimacy of the state power of bishops; however, the prince-bishopric did not have full sovereignty because the bishops answered to their church superiors. The long history of the Polish Prince-Bishopric of Warmia is discussed by A. Szorc, *Dominium warmińskie 1243–1772*, Olsztyn 1990.

280 This also applies to the Italian *disciplinati* confraternities – flagellants that practiced self-flagellation in their headquarters and not on the street – although they confessed not to a priest but their leader, which was unorthodox (Swanson 1997: 120).

281 The figure of the sixth-century abbot is the protagonist of the famous poem from the first half of the tenth century *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis*, Polish edition by J. Strzelczyk, *Żegluga św. Brendana Opata*, Poznań 1992. Brandan must make a pilgrimage to witness with his eyes that the biblical miracles he doubted are true, which is a punitive pilgrimage; see chapter 5.4. The abbot should join the many prototypes of doubters like Thomas.

admonishes the faithful to change not only false attitudes but also behaviors in the interest of the salvation of their souls. Von Paltz particularly means that they should change external preparation for Church holidays with internal (Burger 1990: 321) and stop running from church to church on Good Friday (“*indiscreta discursio de una ecclesia ad aliam*”) without hearing any of the mass in full.²⁸² Von Paltz supposes that those superficial believers think that they contribute merit, but it is “the devil that hinders them to carefully listen to a single sermon about the Passion of the Lord.” The consolidation of the priest’s central position as the intermediary that began in the twelfth century seems to have completed.

According to Van Engen (1986: 547), the religious culture of the eleventh century saw the attempts of the people to move beyond baptism and implied faith – which involved passive participation and belief in what the Church says – and obtain the privilege and duty held by the saints. Although the Church formerly preferred the “non-parish” forms of piety – the prayers of the monks, the intercession of saints, the strength of the relics – the formalization of priest’s function did not reduce the tension that attracted to the sacred: the laity “sought access to fragments of the holy priestly culture” (prayer books, songbooks, chapels and church graves), and there were those who “sought access to holiness by means other than those approved by the Church.”

However, some too easy see manifestations of “clericalization” in such development of the Church,²⁸³ or of “paganism” or even “protest” in behaviors incompatible with a canonical pattern. Literary testimonies confirm that it was not so simple, as we read in the colourful biography of the great Austrian poet Oswald von Wolkenstein (ca. 1377–1445), whose large number of frivolous songs overshadowed his significant religious oeuvre. We should see in this mix a sign of “all-embracing piety:” it manifests in the attitude of care for the salvation of the soul, a turning towards God, and renouncing the world (Schwöb 1992: 151); while his love for the Mother of God hides an erotic note (Schwöb 1992: 150). The fine arts around 1400 concentrate on the subject of Mary and the sacraments.²⁸⁴

Thus, at the end of the fifteenth century – generalizing on the situation of Germany, examined by Burger (1990), and England according to Gibson (1989) – the sacramental form of piety seems already fully established. It is

282 We will immodestly ask, did they ever run to see the performances of the Passion Mysteries?

283 C. W. Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, Berkeley 1982, pp. 170–172; for a different view, see J. Laudage, *Priesterbild und Reformpapsttum im 11. Jh.*, Köln 1984; qtd. after J. Van Engen 1986: 547.

284 “Vorherrschenden marianisch-sakramentaler Themen;” Ringshausen 1977.

only natural to belong to the Church and the number of wealthy foundations increases. Heretic movements ceased, so we saw none of their temptations in the writings of von Paltz. Eastern England remains peaceful for hundred years after the trials of heretics after 1430 in Norwich – fifty-five accused, three executed (Gibson 1989: 30). Another scholar of the region concluded from that fact that the religious life of the Church was sufficiently rich, varied, and tolerant to left-wing orthodoxy (the Lollards) to meet the needs of the majority of the citizens (Tanner 1984; qtd. after McMurray Gibson 1989: 31). Thus, von Paltz's critique only refers to behaviors related to Church teaching or resistance to priest's prohibitions (pp. 326). Analyzing the English testaments, McMurray Gibson finds it "striking just how little prescience, even in the years immediately before the dissolution of the monasteries, the English will-making classes seemed to show about the possibility of change as vast and sweeping as the English Reformation was to be."²⁸⁵

The persistence of the elements of popular piety lasts for a long time, manifesting in the coexistence of contradictory moods: "the tendency to simplify and tame the sacred, and the inclination for a quiet internalized piety" (Moeller 1965: 7). Considering the enormous social, political, and religious changes in European societies of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Happé (1997: 91) notes how stable in them was the idea of a Passion play cycle and the will to stage them no matter the cost.

2. THE SACRALITY OF THE KING. We notice the characteristic counteracting of transcendentalization – or an attempt to use the sacred outside of the Church – not only at the emperor's court but also in the history of monarchy, especially French. For a long time, the French monarchy celebrated the theory of *religion royale* that combined the cult of the saints Denis and Remi with pretensions to superiority over other kings, based on the sacred continuity of the monarchy (Ehlers, p. 154). The French kings fought to regain the sacred status by leading wars, plotting intrigues, forming coalitions – sometimes with new religious orders – and multiplying legal measures that were to prove, for example, that the

285 McMurray Gibson 1989: 27, offers this as proof against the still-lingering theory of the decline of mood in the so-called waning of the Middle Ages, when people supposedly sensed "the approaching end of the era of One Belief, One Faith." On the contrary, the last decades of this era saw an increase of "perpetual" foundations – still combated by the Lollards – until the takeover of these funds by the crown treasury was announced (1545).

king of France is more religious than the pope.²⁸⁶ The Investiture controversy virtually never ceased (Assunto 1982: 86).²⁸⁷ The superiority of the secular power received defense by many theoreticians and poets. For instance, the poet Walter von der Vogelweide uses religious imaging in songs that elevate the idea of the Empire over the papacy (Wells 1978: 494, 507). The especially expressive in biblical and liturgical references among the poems of the Archpoet (*Archipoeta*, c.1130–1165) is “Imperial Hymn (VII),” clearly noticeable from the first two lines: “Salve, mundi domine, / Cesar noster, ave” (Langosch 1943: 122–138). According to Marianne Ott-Meimberg (1992: 30), one of the German versions of *The Song of Roland* (c.1170), by priest Konrad, intertwines the religious and political implications into a peculiar “political theology” (the inclusion in the genealogy of King David).²⁸⁸ In the Dominican circle surrounding the French King Louis IX, there appeared a rhymed officium in his honor, *Ludovicus decus regnantium* (Epstein 1978). The greatest promoter of the imperial idea was no other than Dante Alighieri.²⁸⁹

Political polemicists like Marsilius of Padua, Wycliff, Ockham, or Luther usually defended the sovereignty of secular power while exacerbating the expectations toward priests. Wycliff circle again promoted Donatism – a priest’s holiness or sinlessness as a condition for the validity of the sacraments and legitimacy of spiritual power – but, at the same time, they also imposed requirements on the rulers: “a virtuous woman has a greater right to rule than a promiscuous prince.”²⁹⁰ Without the support of the German princes – of course, only those virtuous – Lutheranism would not have gone beyond Wittenberg; and there

286 *Licet juris*, 1338, against Pope Boniface VIII but after his death. Kay 1971: 181–184, called the second, “French” phase of the acute controversy over the investiture “the Convocation Controversy,” because it did not concern the significant ruling divisions between the Pope and the King of France, but was actually a ritual test of strength. Its essence was a test of loyalty. In a bull from 1302, *Ad nostram praesentiam evocamus*, Pope Boniface VIII mainly called upon those who were potential advisors to the French king, to his political base; the king understood this exactly and, in retaliation, he summoned – a synod of the church.

287 Later relationships between the Church and the secular rulers in the fifteenth century are described by J. A. F. Thomson, *Popes and princes, 1417–1519*, Londyn 1980.

288 *Das Rolandslied des Pfaffen Konrad*, ed. by C. Wesle, Tübingen 1985.

289 Dante’s political views are described in the collection of articles edited by J. R. Woodhouse, *Dante and Governance*, Oxford 1997.

290 L. de Bonald w *Législation primitive*; qtd. after Ferry 1993: 20. Did Wycliff mean a female cook?

would not be much left of it today, had it not been for the virtuous municipalities supporting the Calvinist breakthrough.²⁹¹

Besides the French Church who developed significant independence – Gallicanism was legalized by the Pragmatic Sanction in 1438 – and the Churches of the Reformation, even Napoleon incarcerated the Pope (1809–1812) who refused to recognize his sovereignty,²⁹² who protested after the incarnation of the Papal States to the First French Empire, and was stubbornly refusing to annul his marriage with Josephine. However, in the eighteenth century, even the Austrian seemingly orthodox Catholicism assumes anti-Roman qualities (Josephinism, Chélini, Branthomme 1996: 207).

From among the significant efforts of kings to regain the status of the sacred, which the masses never thought to be completely lost, two projects achieved particular success: (1) the literary myth of the Holy Grail that survived centuries of lively reception in different incarnations and now increasingly experiences presence in the popular culture,²⁹³ and (2) the so-called royal touch presented by Marc Bloch (1924): a forgotten attempt to rebuild the sacral charisma based on doing miracles, thus in the convention of popular piety.

- 1) The protagonist of Wolfram's *Parzival* becomes the lord of the Holy Grail, that is the king-priest. "This office combines the functions of the king and priest, a utopian idea of medieval society which grew increasingly distant after the Investiture controversy" (Schlosser 1987: 58).

We still do not know who around 1165 disseminated the fictitious *Letter of Prester John*, another king-priest and alleged ruler of a Christian state somewhere in Asia.²⁹⁴ The letter was addressed to both Emperors (the East and the

291 In other contexts, see W. S. Jessee, R. d'Arbise, "Aristocratic patronage and the question of heresy," *JMH* 20/1994, pp. 221–245; K. B. MacFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, Oxford 1972.

292 Napoleon: "Your Holiness is sovereign in Rome, his relations with me are the same as those your predecessors with Charlemagne. You are sovereign in Rome, but I am its emperor." Pious VII: "I reply with apostolic frankness that the Holy Father ... does not recognise and has never recognised, in his states, any power superior to his own, and that no emperor has any rights over Rome;" Mercier 1986: 233.

293 Ten Venne (1992: 263–274) notes the motif of Grail in a carnival farse.

294 Strzelczyk (1996: 80–85) offers the elementary literature in the matter; also see the entry of D. Huschenbett, "Priesterkönig Johannes," in: VL, Vol. 7, pp. 828–842; among the newer works, there are three dissertations: U. Knefelkamp, *Die Suche nach dem Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes. Dargestellt anhand von Reiseberichten und anderen ethnographischen Quellen des 12. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*, Gelsenkirchen

West) and the Pope, while its meaning supported both the parties. At the time of its creation, the party that needed information about a powerful ally the most were the crusaders. Maintaining of the mystification was probably more useful for the Pope, as the letter described a model of a theocratic state, simultaneously powerful and flourishing. We may consider this text a fantasy like the Fortunate Isles or even an echo of the earthly paradise.

We may attribute the role of the mystification with Prester John to narrative works that do not have this flaw. The vision of living at the Castle of the Holy Grail in Wolfram's *Parzival* is perhaps even more utopian and idyllic. But it clearly corresponds to the courtly images of paradise and suggests happiness not only in the spiritual dimension: it simply is an eternal feast supplied by the Holy Grail, carelessly diminished to the role of the wishing table.²⁹⁵ Even then, there appeared a vision competitive with Wolfram's. In this other perspective and contrary to Wolfram, Gottfried von Strassburg does not seek an equation of the mundane world and the underworld like (*Ausgleich zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits*) but a complementation of the moral calling by the fulfillment of the worldly obligation (*innerweltliche Erfüllung*), which obligates the individual with the highest requirements. However, the thesis that the tragic message of Gottfried's *Tristan and Iseult* is a manifestation of bourgeois mentality – with its reluctance to court worldview (Schlosser 1987: 57–58) – appears to probably echo the positivist belief in the existence of bourgeois literature at the beginning of the thirteenth century (see chapter 15). Instead, what suffices for an explanation is the formation of the separateness of the profane world as a result of the transcendentalization of the sacred.

- 2) Royal touch or *curatione regum per contactum* was a tradition of worship cultivated at the English²⁹⁶ and French courts from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, according to which the touch of the royal hands healed scrofula. The first to cure was Edward II in 1323 (Bloch 1998: 161, ft. 1), a notably weak king and controlled in 1311–1322 by the English parliament

1986; Bejczy (1994: 329–334) offers a list of all manuscripts and editions before 1600; B. Wagner, “*Die Epistola presbiteri Johannis*”; *lateinisch und deutsch; Überlieferung Textgeschichte, Rezeption und Übertragungen im Mittelalter; mit bisher unedierte Texten*, Tübingen 2000.

295 Parsifal 239, 5, p. 173: “By the power of the Grail;” 809, 25–29; p. 379: “From the Grail they courtly drew / venison” If we did not know Wolfram's favorable attitude toward court values, one could seek here a virulent satire in these irritatingly detailed menus.

296 Shakespeare noted this tradition in his *Macbeth* IV.iii.

(Cantor 1993: 515). The last known record from 1825 concerns the French Charles X (Bloch 1998: 404), who thusly tried to restore the old tradition, interrupted during the revolution. But the custom expired in England even before that. According to Camille (1989: 211), both cults prove not that powerful miraculous images were part of a lower popular consciousness; instead, they were a source of spiritual prestige for weak kings, and a way to increase income for both the Church and the rulers.²⁹⁷

The clear aims of the sacralization of the king appeared in the ideology cultivated since the thirteenth century at the Castilian court, which promoted the belief in the divine origin of the king and his unceasing relationship with God,²⁹⁸ created an aura of holiness around his person and fostered the cult of his exemplary life (Nieto 1992: 301). We could find similar examples in the ideology of many monarchies.²⁹⁹ In our cultural circle, caesaropapism lasted the longest in Russia, and it is hard to say if it disappeared with the last tsar. Besides, in the whole world, a king-atheist is something bizarre and the few presidents-agnostics must wear very thick make-up on television to gain the trust of the voters and best should have no noticeable traits of character at all. Some kings even managed to return to the Church, though in a convoluted manner: the king of England is the head of his Church, likewise the kings of Denmark and Norway. Of course, in countries with reconstructed sacral-political unity, the king must be a believer and his heir to the throne cannot change religion without giving up the promising career (Dąbrówka 1995a: 291–292).

Noteworthy, there was at least one theological opposition to transcendentalization, because it emerged from a spiritualist position. With his revelations, Joachim of Fiore was provoking the coming of the Holy Spirit to earth.³⁰⁰ In terms of the process of transcendentalization, Joachim's position was

297 Cf. Kantorowicz's breakthrough study on the two bodies of the king. E. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Political Theology*, Princeton 1957; also see J. Topolski (1996: 320–332).

298 Nieto 1992: 300: "Une relation uninterrumpue entre Dieu et le roi."

299 The examples of saint kings appear in the collection of articles edited by A. Boureau, C. S. Ingerflom, *La royauté sacrée dans le monde chrétien*, Paris 1992.

300 We should not be amazed that Thomas Aquinas disagreed with Joachim of Fiore. See W. J. Schachten, *Ordo Salutis. Das Gesetz als Weise der Heilsmittlung. Zur Kritik des hl. Thomas von Aquin an Joachim von Fiore*, Münster 1980. M. Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Profetic Future*, Stroud 1999, studies the figure of Joachim of Fiore in the context of medieval millenarianism.

a passionate but ineffective revival of the vision of the renewal of the earthly paradise, in which we would be resurrected in our former bodies.

3. INDIVIDUAL ETHICS. The transcendentalization sequence should include two other important novelties that follow a single idea: exit from the choir. There is not a single breakthrough one could pinpoint, but many things appeared simultaneously: there emerged a solo troping from the Gregorian unison chant, while the celebrant received a distinguished role in the liturgy. Finally, there surfaced a need for personal contact with religious literature, which stimulated the production of didactic writing. Its incredible heyday in the fifteenth-century Netherlands influenced the significant reevaluation of the social functions of literature, which returned the superiority to religious motivations over the socio-political.³⁰¹ On the other hand, the scene of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnesses the rise of very humane values and anti-values, which lead clownish disputes and initiate games worthy of the tragedy of kings (chapter 24). Both phenomena signal that a new type of human entered the arena of culture: the individual shaped by the Christian anthropology, including the philosophy of “the new way” (John Buridan), which at the end of the thirteenth century, began to free itself from theology, and started to account for all that is human, not only for the soul: “The fact that the science of morality primarily concerned the specific people with their individual traits gained it the name of monastics, that is individual ethics. It gave rise to individualism.”³⁰²

We have said before that the symbols that build the religious system must also convey the systemic sacred, which ensures internal cohesion for the complex. This is the purpose of the whole range of prefiguration motifs, typologies, and prototypes that anchor the news in old prophecies, provide them with mutual explanation and motivation, thus structuring the two-part system. The system retains internal tensions, but the biblical whole thrives in oppositions,

301 Team research results published in the series edited by Mertens *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid*, Amsterdam 1993 (Vol. 18), as part of the research program “Culture and Literature of the Netherlands in the Middle Ages,” headed by F. P. van Oostrom from the University of Leiden.

302 Markowski 1992: 37; cf. also M. Markowski, “Die Rezeption Johannes Buridans Kommentars zur Nikomachischen Ethik des Aristoteles an den mitteleuropäischen Universitäten angesichts der in den Bibliotheken in Erfurt, Göttingen, Krakau, Leipzig, Melk, München, Salzburg, Wien, Wrocław und im Vatikan erhaltenen Handschriften,” *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 27/1984, pp. 89–131. C. Morris, “Individualism in 12th century religion,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31/1980, pp. 195–206, considers the earlier period.

because the New Testament builds all its authority on opposing to the Old Testament and developing the latter's arguments to frame own instructions, to evidence continuity, convey authenticity, highlight novelty, and translate obscure places in ancient prophecies.³⁰³ Embedded in popular literature³⁰⁴ and liturgical codifications,³⁰⁵ this apparatus worked too well not to spread outside of the area of church literature.

The next stages of the practice of this apparatus are similar to the spiritualization of the sacred or even parallel to this process. The biblical allegoresis not only bore fruits that explained tradition but also liberated allegory as the principle of original artistic – especially literary – creation, which Janina Abramowska (1995: 59) described as “feedback between allegoresis and allegory.” Simultaneously, already the Middle Ages spread the practice of metonymic imaging, which complements and replaces allegory. A breakthrough comes with the exemplary method, further developed by the fictional practice, which substitutes exemplarity with typology. The parallelity of these processes lies in the fact that imaging increasingly departed from Scripture and Tradition, while the known subject matters become replaced by a collection of more contemporary, “earthly,” and human motifs. Their pictorial value increasingly and indirectly expresses revealed truths that transcendentalize themselves (move away like the spiritual *sacrum*). However, the realism and actuality of component motifs brings the text closer to the recipient. We will see the duality of this movement even further (chapters 18.2, 5, and 7; reception aesthetics and constructivism).

The most visible manifestations of the operation of the new mechanism of the world – in which Providence no longer personally directs every step of each individual – appears in the different cast of social roles. First and foremost, the role of human individual grows, but there also grows the need to differently objectivize the factors that function in the human world. Artists personify these factors as

303 This is a summary of Michel's overview (1992: 51–57) of the functions of typology.

304 The most popular influence was that of, among others, *Pictor in Carmine*, ed. by K.-A. Wirth, Berlin 1993; *Biblia Pauperum, a facsimile and edition*, ed. by A. Henry, Aldershot 1987; *Bible Moralisé*, ed. by R. Hausherr, Vol. 1–2, Graz 1973. *Biblia pauperum: Kings MS 5 British Library*, London-Luzern 1993–1994, Vols. 1–2; *Biblia Pauperum = Armenbibel: die Bilderhandschrift des Codex Palatinus latinus 871 im Besitz der Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*, introduction and commentary Ch. Wetzel; a transcription of the Latin and High German along with translation into modern German by H. Drechsler, Stuttgart 1995.

305 For more on the influence of liturgy on biblical exegesis and especially the preaching, see chapter 20.3.

allegorical characters often disguised as ancient deities and, finally, there appear the human figures created by the will of the author (see chapter 12.6, 5).

The role of people can grow according to the process of the increase of self-awareness and psychological knowledge, which many conventionally link with Abelard, whose approach transferred the essence of penance from external punishment to internal repentance (Le Goff 1980: 39). By analyzing each intention, Abelard introduced a distinction between the absolute ethics of deed and the ethics of motivation (Piekarczyk 1987: 267).³⁰⁶ The essence of the breakthrough – that no writer could ever introduce into the social reality – is time factor implied in the emphasis of intent: it matters, if we investigate the intention of an action and state the consistency or difference between intent and effect. Such an approach is not required if we detach each deed from the course of other activities, as was the case before the introduction of obligatory individual confession combined with public penance, introduced in the tenth century and obligatory for all believers from 1215.³⁰⁷

The putting of deeds in time and their processuality was not a matter of intellectual reflection on the human individual but a manifestation of change in social mechanisms. From the sixth to the ninth century, confession and penance also were individual, but they effected in the private act of repaying guilt with an ailment or suffering.³⁰⁸ However, the deed is completely individual not

306 The differentiation itself was known previously: “The Almighty God praises or condemns not actions but the piety of actions, not things but the causes of things, not what one does but in what spirit.” *Libri carolini*, in: PL 98, col. 1162; MGH, Leges, Sect. III 2 Suppl., p. 150; qtd. after: Sprandel 1962: 36.

307 Canon 21 of the Fourth Council of the Lateran (Geary 1991: 469). The course of the liturgy of private penance according to the Roman-Germanic Pontifical of the tenth century is given by Nadolski (1992: Vol. 3, pp. 98–100) along with public penance in the same Pontifical (100–101) and in Durand’s Pontifical (101–102); cf. C. Vogel, *Le pécheur et la pénitence dans l’Eglise ancienne*, 1966, pp. 208–220. About the linguistic individualization of confession, see E. Feistner, “Zur Semantik des Individuums in der Beichtliteratur des Hoch- und Spätmittelalters,” *ZdPh* 115/1996, Bk. 1.

308 Most often, penance was measured by the number of fasting days, which was the subject of various exchanges, e.g. for a monetary fine for charitable purpose. The penitential of Bishop Burchard of Worms (965–1025) devotes much attention to the methods of calculating tariffs: *Corrector sive Medicus* (c.1010); Nadolski: Vol. 3, p. 97. In his entry “Burchard von Worms,” Kerner (VL 1, p. 1121–1127) does not mention this work. Also cf. C. Vogel, “Composition légale et commutation dans le système de la pénitence tarifée,” *Revue de droit canonique* 8/1958, pp. 289–318, 9; 1959, pp. 1–38, 341–359.

because it was committed by one person or in privacy but – on the contrary – by its objectification: by the act of the public appearance of perpetrators, who thus assume responsibility toward the community and separate themselves from it. Hence, the perpetrators allow its members to perceive them as persons. This is the essence of the inquisitorial procedure in the judiciary (see remarks on the processualization, chapter 2.7).

We observe here the paradox of subjectivity and objectivity described by Walter Ong (1967: 171): by saying that something is real, beyond me, outside of my consciousness and in this sense it is objective, I do not mean something without any connection to me, but something I have a connection with and which is connected with me.

So that certain objects may become objective for me, they must come into a relationship with me, they must affect me, so that I can perceive them as separate objects. It also means the possibility that I will consider anything affecting me to be objective and even, in a way, real. The paradox of subjectivity and objectivity is the mechanism for building subjectivity (chapter 21). Everything that enters relationship is establishing a whole.

We consider the other effects of the closing of the sacred behind an ontological boundary and reflect on the new dualistic topography of the world in chapter 23 (Miracle Play).

4. THE UNITY OF INTELLECT. We should consider here the significance of the Church's persistent combating of the idea of monopsychism.³⁰⁹ This struggle was important in several aspects: soteriological, gnosiological, and psychological. They all begin to operate with the notion of an individual unique human soul. In turn, as a matrix of subjectivity, the individual soul becomes an indispensable link in the process of civilization.

It is only understandable that Thomas Aquinas³¹⁰ fought against the theory of monopsychism. If a single person was to participate in the supraindividual and eternal rational soul – in which all past and future generations meet – it would only blur the division between man and the world of the spiritual sacred, God. Individual responsibility for own salvation is then impossible. To the persistence of the Averroist views long after their Paris ban of 1277³¹¹ testifies the fact that

309 They overview the results of research by Krop (1992), presented in the introduction to the selection of texts by Siger of Brabant, the most eminent philosopher who proclaimed the Averroist idea of a single intellectual soul, shared by all humanity.

310 *De unitate intellectus, Opera omnia*, Vol. 43 (editio Leonina).

311 Text published with a German translation and commentary by K. Flasch, *Aufklärung im Mittelalter? Die Verurteilung von 1277*, Mainz 1989. For a broader background

Lateran V (1513) again condemned faith in the existence of “only one soul” (Krop 1992: 54). Evidently, many still perceived these views as dangerous to soteriology based on individual participation in the sacraments. The communicational character of the sacraments is also conditioned by the unity of human will. Thomas Aquinas defends such soteriology against the position of Augustine of Hippo and Boethius, who distinguished between will and reason or even a multiplicity of powers (Bonaventure, Alexander of Hales): “free decision is one power.”³¹²

What seems now equally obvious is Thomas Aquinas’ radicalization of Albertus Magnus’ opposition to the idea of “supraindividual unity of the material, potential human intellect” (Hödl 1986: 59). While Albertus Magnus allows the approaching of the human intellect to participate in the universal divine intellect by assimilation and improvement, Thomas excludes this transcendental path of approximating the divine secret (a remnant of the Platonic idea of cognition as a revelation, *unio mystica*, conjunction) and limits cognition to the individual being. It is “in the process of intense individual cognition – concepts, judgments, argumentation – [that] the human intellect achieves its realization” and it does not receive knowledge about objective states through illumination (Hödl 1986: 66). We reach the secrets of the Creator not in states of exultation, but by learning the secrets of creation with our own powers.

Individual cognitive effort is both the condition and content of the individuation process and, thus, enters the process of civilization as one of those factors that co-organize it and which develop in this participation. Let us note that Thomas Aquinas’ reductional³¹³ and individualizing³¹⁴ position enables us to

in the matter, see J. M. M. H. Thijssen, *Censure and Heresy at the University of Paris: 1200–1400*, Philadelphia 1998.

312 *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, 2, p. 313.

313 Villwock (1992: 125ff) notices in the views of Bishop William of Auvergne (1249) the reduction of the soul to its possibilities and unity in his treatise *De anima* III 1, in which he seeks to overthrow the mistake of some who believe that the soul is composed of natural ability or potency (“destruere, errorem quorundam, qui putaverunt eam compositam esse ex viribus sive potentiis suis naturalibus”); the sight belongs to the essence of the human soul no less than reason (“virtus visibilis non minus est ipsa anima humana essentialiter, quam intellectiva”). V 5, *Guilelmi Alverni opera omnia*, Paris 1674, repr. Frankfurt 1963, Vol. 2, pp. 87, 120; qtd. after Villwock 1992: 125, ft. 45, 46, 125: “The same applies to moral capabilities. They too are inseparably connected with the cognitive capabilities.”

314 Let us note the etymological meaning of the individual: something indivisible that stems from the division of a universe and that cannot be further divided; at least not until Freud, if we were to assume his risky hypothesis for a moment.

understand the previously presented mechanism of deed objectivization: by way of perception, we determine the scope of objective things with our subjectivity; it remains impossible as long as we are immersed in a supraindividual being. When we consider something to be objective, because we perceived it subjectively, then we allow the shape of the objective world to depend on the reception sensitivity of the subjects.

Hence, there is but one step to recognize that the cognitive apparatus of the subject creates the details of the objective world. We develop this constructivist theme in chapter 13.4, in which we consider the subject's self-creation. Already now, let us note a parallelism between the theory of monopsychism and Latin as a common transnational language of worship. There is no bond between them, but their fall may have a common cause – the development of individual subjects.

Apart from the purely psychological or anthropological layer, one can see the mapping of spiritualization and transcendentalization onto the dispute over the spiritual individuality as well as a succession of appropriation of the entire sphere of spiritual beings by Catholic theology, visible in the fight against Neoplatonic spiritism, the diabolization of all demons, magical practices, and folk superstitions.³¹⁵

Katabasis-Anabasis. A parallelism emerges between the exclusion of the holy sacred from the chaos of this world and the separation of the individual soul from the monopsychic cloud; between the transfer of the sacred to the metaphysical sphere and the descent of the individual soul to a separate body. Simultaneously, the “social pressure on individuals” causes the internalization of social coercion in each of them. There is a great regrouping of energy: the individuation of the spirit in one direction and, in the opposite, the transcendentalization of the sacred. Is this one spirit that divides itself into a holy stream going to Heaven and the profane stream that remains in the partly disposition of people? We observe and describe the effects of this division of waters: the moment from which a human being ceases to participate in the supraindividual intellect, it leaves some sphere, and cares for the return to the Universal Being. The once ubiquitous sacred separates itself from the sphere of human everyday life, leaving only uncertainty about how people should control it.

315 About the demonic nature and the origin of superstitions, see the works by one of the main theologians trained at the University of Kraków, Jacob of Paradies (Jakub z Paradyża, 1381–1465), *De potestate daemonum*, an unpublished manuscript (Cod. München SB 18378) described by Bracha 1999.

Part III. The Profane: The Human Estate

The presented constraint of rationing the material symbols with potentially sacral character was a visible aspect in the process of changes in the ontology of the Christian sacred.

Many consequences convince us that we may treat the reduction of the scope in the presence of the holy sacred in the world as a civilizational factor. Out of these consequences, we signaled the separation and individualization of the world of the profane and the responsible human individual. Its behaviors reveal their specificity on various, if not all, planes of existence, which we can demonstrate in relation to the sacred (chapter 11), nature (chapter 12), ourselves in the social hierarchy (chapter 13) and in horizontal relations between people (chapter 14).

11. Lower Tiers of Sacrality

The transfer of the sacred to the sphere of transcendence compels the believers to seek other behaviors that fulfill similar functions or merely create a place for them. Both animate movement among the lower tiers of the sacred on the Becker scale. Behaviors of that kind could have functioned in parallel to the sacred as more visible signals, in which the sacred found its competitors, accompaniment, or strengthening.³¹⁶ “[R]ituals consecrate Life. This consecration can also be effected in an indirect way, by transforming life itself into a ritual” (Eliade 1958: 460). The splendor of the temples, chasubles, processions, and paintings are quite important elements of religious participation for many believers. This explains not only the development in the forms of piety but also their coexistence, which does not necessarily mean “two cultures.”

1. THE NON-SACRAL LEGITIMIZATION OF POWER. We deal here with a specific inter-branch flow at the tiers of sacrality. This flow was even bigger on the side of secular power. The exclusion of the king from the Church forced many feverish and intense ideological efforts to legitimize the prestige legitimize and to compensate for its deficit. Nieto (1992) provides a textbook description of the construction of royal majesty in the Castilian monarchy of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. It is hard to find a more complete and systematic list of the tools of rhetoric and apologetics used in the service of propaganda and legitimization of power; and all of this seems to be premeditated. Beside literature, iconography played an important role: Muir Wright (1993) investigates its open application in the construction of the authority of sovereign royal power from around 1240.

The desacralization of monarchy formed the greatest civilizational consequences, which forced the rulers to build legal tools to justify sovereignty (that is, the exclusiveness and independence of royal power),³¹⁷ to establish administrative structures as the basis for effective rule, and to develop court

316 Nevertheless, it remains doubtful whether the impact of the sensual impulse relies on the absolute power of the visual, or does it require a different training. It may operate so swiftly due to the associations from the period of its use in the context of the holy sacred.

317 The legal arguments of the supporters of the Emperor saw first effective use in 1158, during Barbarossa's rule, in the Diet of Roncaglia against the Lombard cities (Seppelt, Löffler 1995: 229), which aroused such fear that the first statutes of the University of Paris from 1215 forbid the study of the Roman law (Kuksewicz 1986: 191). About the later relations between the Lombard cities and the Empire, see E. Coleman, “Sense of

ceremonies and artistic patronage as means of maintaining prestige. Thus, royalty had to develop new methods and means of communication.

Let us recall the pseudolitururgical Latin drama *Ludus de Antichristo*,³¹⁸ in which the large load of political content justifies the assumption that the work arose at the court of Emperor Barbarossa (Langosch 1943: 93), whose claims to universal power were to be justified by the idea of *translatio*, embodied by the Emperor superior to “single kings.” The drama begins with the Emperor’s request that the kings pay him tribute and fight in the interests of the empire:

Here, the EMPEROR directs his envoys to each of the kings, first to the French king, and sings:

As historiographers say

The whole world paid tribute to the Romans.

What the diligence of our ancestors has gained,

Their successors squandered with their slothfulness.

During their rule fell the power of this empire,

Which the grandeur of our might is recreating.

Community and Civic Identity in the Italian Communes,” eds. Hill, Swan 1998: 45–60. “Church and City, 1000–1500,” ed. D. Abulafia 1992.

- 318 Ft. 95. Published and translated by K. Langosch (1943), but also in *Geistliche Spiele*, Berlin 1957. The later discovered fragments appear in the edition by G. Vollmann-Profe, *Ludus de Antichristo*, Vol. 1–2, Göttingen 1981. In his extensive monograph, H.-D. Kahl (1991) proposes the title *Ludus de finibus saeculorum* as more fitting for the whole contents of the drama, in which the thread about the Antichrist is only part of the Act II. The genre itself results more from systemic coercion – the work is intended to be sung entirely like liturgical dramas – than from any connection with the liturgy. Other editions and literature, see Kahl 1991: 112–116. The theatrical aspect is described by J. Wright, *The Play of Antichrist*, Toronto 1967; H. Weidhase, “Regie im *Ludus de Antichristo*,” *Festschrift für K. H. Halbach*, Göttingen 1972, pp. 85–143; H. Rosenfeld, “Die Bühne des Tegernseer Antichristspiels als Orbis Terrarum,” *Literatur und Sprache im europäischen Mittelalter. Festschrift K. Langosch*, Darmstadt 1973, pp. 63–74; K. Bate, “The Staging of the *Ludus de Antichristo*,” *Actes du IVe colloque de la Société Internationale pour l’Etude de Théâtre Médiévale*, Viterbo 1984, pp. 447–452. For the motif of the Antichrist in medieval drama, see G. Jenschke, *Untersuchungen zur Stoffgeschichte, Form und Funktion mittelalterlicher Antichristspiele*, Münster 1971; H. D. Rauh, *Das Bild des Antichrist im Mittelalter. Von Tyconius zum Deutschen Symbolismus*, Münster 1973; K. Aichele, *Das Antichristdrama des Mittelalters, der Reformation und Gegenreformation*, Den Haag 1974; M. Litz, *Theatrum sacrum und symbolische Weltansicht. Der staufische “Ludus de Antichristo”*, Frankfurt a. M. 1990; G. Vollmann-Profe, “Tegernseer *Ludus de Antichristo*,” VL 9, pp. 673–679.

Therefore, let each of these kings these former tributes
Pay to the Roman Empire today.³¹⁹

The King of France does not idle and presents his own unmatched reason to impersonate and represent the Roman continuity. The polemics of the rulers is a good source of the drama, and it was the fruit of authorial invention, which went beyond its textual basis: *De ortu et tempore Antichristi* written by Abbot Adso from Montier-en-Der,³²⁰ thus surpassing the genre limits of the liturgical drama.

Another but less exceptional testimony are the monumental foundations of representational codices, which Ott (1992) describes as “political novels” (*Staatsroman*). Their graphic layout directs their meaning to the outside and affects the public sphere. For a change, romance motifs appear on a smaller scale; they served to present court values and self-confirm their system from the inside, on objects of personal use and in interiors, in a closed circuit (*exklusive Öffentlichkeit*).

The Church’s demand for its own media and relevant literature was not smaller, and we may even talk about a rivalry – a kind of cultural investiture controversy – also in this field; as we saw in the example of the Grail, which we will systematically consider below (chapters 14 and 15).

2. REDUCING THE HOLY SACRED DOES NOT ELIMINATE SACRALITY. How does the pair *the sacred–the profane* appear in the religious perspective against the previously introduced sociological spectrum sacrality–secularity? The former retains its usefulness. We must only explain that the reduction of the sacred of the first tier on the Becker scale heavily burdens the lower tiers of the scale, which happens outside of the holy sacred – and we inadvertently think about

319 *Ludus de Antichristo*, lines 1–8, Langosch 1943: 196: “Tunc IMPERATOR dirigit nuncios suos ad singulos reges et primo ad regem Francorum dicens: Sicut scripta tradunt / hystoriographorum, Totus mundus fuerat / fiscus Romanorum. Hoc primorum / strenuitas elaboravit, Sed posterorum / desidia dissipavit. Sub his imperii / dilapsa est potestas, Quam nostre repetit / potencie maiestas. Reges ergo singuli / prius instituta Nunc Romano solvant / imperio tributa.”

320 Adso Dervensis, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi, necnon et tractatus qui ab eo dependunt*, ed by D. Verfielst, CCCM 45, Turnhout 1976; Albinus the Hermit wrote an extended version, PL 40, col. 1131; PL 101, col. 1289. R. Konrad, “*De ortu et tempore Antichristi*”. *Antichristvorstellungen des Abtes Adso von Montier-en-Der*, Kallmünz 1964. For more about visions of the end of the world, see B. McGinn, *Visions of the End. Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, New York 1979; M. Häusler, *Das Ende der Geschichte in der mittelalterlichen Weltchronistik*, Köln 1980; R. K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages. A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art and Literature*, Seattle 1981.

it in terms of the profane. As there are two different spheres that exist outside of the holy sacred – the tiers 2–8 on the Becker scale remain sacral while the last four belong to secularity – we do not have to abandon using the pair the sacred–the profane in a strictly religious meaning; except that “our” profane includes both completely secularized matters and the stabilizing behaviors like ceremonies, rituals, and customs. Those remain “sacral” in Becker’s understanding, but they are no longer “sacred.” The diminishing presence of the holy sacred causes the opposition holy–non-holy to reapply to the world accessible to the humankind on the basis of structural proportions (see later chapters for more).

We approximate the widespread use when preserving the religious basis for defining the opposition. To observe the dividing world through the lens of sacrality does not exclude the inclusion of human activity, and can even explain its peculiar rationality. This especially emphasizes the aspect of innovation, so important for Becker’s theory. As we shall see below, the world left to the humankind after the reduction of the holy sacred changes. It is interesting that only now there appear theological justifications, thanks to which the humankind may transform or even improve the world (Hödl 1986) with the highest authorization. The world after the fall of the Parents is not the same that originated in the days of creation; therefore, it requires repair (Krolzik 1993a: 46). Thus, medieval Europeans seek not usurpation but a continuation of the Covenant, as witnessed by Christ’s mission that already Irenaeus (d. 202)³²¹ interpreted as the mission

321 “[T]he Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself;” *Adversus haereses*, Bk. V, “Preface,” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts, Vol. 1. Also see Żurek 1993: 36–39. The elaboration of Irenaeus’ take on the doctrine of recapitulation, see E. Scharl, *Recapitulatio mundi. Der Rekapitulationsbegriff des heiligen Irenaeus und seine Anwendung auf die Körperwelt*, Roma 1940; N. F. Moholy, *The Doctrine of Recapitulation in St Irenaeus*, dissertation, Laval (Québec) 1948; P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Le milieu divin*, Paris 1957; M. Kaczmarkowski, *Stosunek Chrystusa Pana do Kościoła wg nauki św. Ireneusza*, Lublin 1960 (MS from the Library of the Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski); J. T. Nielsen, *Adam and Christ in the Theology of Irenaeus of Lyon*, Assen 1968; B. Częsz, *Związek Ducha Świętego z Kościołem w ujęciu św. Ireneusza i w interpretacji montanistycznej*, Poznań 1993. The history of the reception of the Latin translations of Irenaeus, see S. Lundström, *Die Überlieferung der lateinischen Irenaeusübersetzung*, Uppsala 1985; for more literature, see the entry by B. Częsz in EK 7, col. 448–450; also see the entry “Irénee de Lyon,” *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, Vol. 7, col. 1923–1969; ch. 3.1.3, col. 1949–1952.

of recapitulation: a renewal of everything and fulfilment in Christ what “Adam began and interrupted” (Simon 1992: 420; see chapter 18).

The new status of the sacred also is so different that it encourages some to oppose it to the previous phases, as Eco (1996: 112) inclines when following Rudolf Otto’s book *Das Heilige* (1917, 1968; eng. transl. *The Idea of the Holy*). The intentional transhistoricity and transreligiousness of the concept of the holy developed by Otto limits its usefulness in explaining real processes. Rationality as the deepest core of holiness suffices to explain an aspect of the holy sacred, but it leaves us empty-handed in the face of the vast expanse of religion as a concrete and, therefore, always historical system of culture. Moreover, for some time now we cannot afford to overlook the historical relativity of the notion of “rationality” and its dependence on the situation of the subject (Nowak 1993: 212; see chapter 7.2). The incorporation of reason into the order of all historical human behaviors is one of the greatest achievements of Elias’ theory of civilization (Wild 1982: 63).

However, the benefits of the separation of the spiritual and even transcendental phase from the earlier ones – proposed by Otto and Eco – do not outweigh the losses. Whereas, the psychological effects (*tremendum*) more often simply, inevitably, and systemically shift when the proportions change, because the earlier spatial representation of the ontological difference becomes qualitative: what once was a distant region of this world (Dante: the action is happening on Thursday, on Mars) is now a fundamentally different and transcendent world. Following the “primitive” spacialization of time – visible in the medieval painting technique of simultaneity – we may speak about the early spatialization of ontology; it is also visible in the representations that accentuate the difference in level: God overlooks the Earth from a cloud and the clearly marked vertical distance signifies ontologically different realities.

However, the substantial dissimilarity in the perception of the sacred by Rudolf Otto seems to mostly belong to the secondary psychological effects of the modern separation of people from religion. Modernity prevents the almost “fraternal” relationship with God described by the mystics or even Old Testament prophets and patriarchs. Even popular devotion always made people wait for a fatherly – if not a partner-like – reciprocity³²² in a contractual relationship. We may consider this a feudal undertone. However, already Western patristics was

322 There is even a certain familiarity here, which the Polish language even expressed with diminutives such as *Bozia* or *Pon Bócek* (*tremendum!*). Such things are unthinkable in the Protestant devotion, and Otto was Protestant. Cf. the “folk” custom of humiliating the saints in revenge for failing to fulfil their patronage duties; it consisted of

more personalistic and inclined to regard salvation as a dialog between the sinful human and God; the Eastern patristics represented a more cosmological position and framed salvation as the incarnation of the Logos (Rahner 1987: 321). The Western sacramentalism developed on the communication of the sacraments. Hence, where there is communication – and one with a “loving deity” – there is no *tremendum*.

The essence of the change as seen through the relations of the humankind and the world boils down to the fact that the world once was an inviolable deposit entrusted to the humankind, who now no longer wants an exclusive lease but a title of ownership. Again, the parallel development of the idea of civil law as the foundation of property law, mercantilism, and as a general mainstay of durability co-occurs with this process; but should we treat it as an automatic shift toward a lower tier of sacrality? The position of the market and money seems particularly interesting: they proved incomparably more resistant to various social disasters – hunger, plagues, wars – that destroyed older institutions and values (Kaye 1988).³²³ Certainly, the universal care of societies for the stability of measurement systems and for the reliability of money features on the Becker scale as high-level sacrality, stipulated with severe penalties.

3. THE ABSORPTION OF MYTHOLOGY (INTERPRETATIO CHRISTIANA). Against the background of the reduction of the holy sacred, the humanistic recurrence to the ancient pantheon looks differently, even when it seems to dominate the entire Renaissance landscape. The relations between Christianity and the Greco-Roman mythology never developed unambiguously and often passed through highly volatile events. The negation of the Greco-Roman heritage effected in demonization and iconoclasm coexistent in various proportions with attempts to adapt by rationalization, interpretation, and even complete borrowing. There was also a negative adaptation in which the deities of antiquity were interpreted as biblical fallen angels.³²⁴ This kind of reinterpretation – so characteristic of the integrative Christianization practice – paradoxically also strengthened the system, which expanded its field of activity by embracing

interrupting worship, blocking pilgrims, and even humiliating relics: throwing them on the floor of a church, shouting and beating them (Geary 1985: 114–115, 120).

323 Especially the urban communities inclined toward that, as their governments were responsible for the measurement systems before the state entered that role in the nineteenth century; see W. Kula, “Miary i wagi,” *Encyklopedia historii gospodarczej Polski do 1945 roku*, Vol. 1–2, Warszawa 1981, pp. 510–518; idem, *Miary i ludzie*, Warszawa 1970.

324 Justin Martyr, *Apologia II*, PG 6, p. 451; W. Kemp, LCI 2, col. 171.

the pagan tradition and giving it a new meaning; thereby gaining both confirmation of the presence of powerful forces hostile to God and creating new evidence of his constant overcoming of them. This is how one gains believers: by covering the largest area of reality with a new network of cognitive structures, which frames different ways of orientation inside of it. We may only compare with this the equally effective change of the past that Christ accomplished through the salvation of the Old Testament prophets from eternal damnation mentioned in the apocrypha.

Until the fourth century, *interpretatio christiana* relied on the fairly free use of the allegorical potential of ancient gods and demigods to present Christian values (Kemp 1994: 171). Probably due to the change of political status (state religion), there follows a trend of their demonization, which seeks exclusivity for the divine, which should not come as a surprise in a monotheistic religion: “For all the gods of the nations are idols” (Ps 96:5). Saint Martin saw devils in the form of Jupiter and Mercury, sometimes Venus or Minerva, but he considered Mercury the most dangerous, as the God “enjoyed the special cult of the Galls.”³²⁵ This scheme repeats in the Christianization of other peoples: along the legal protection of Germanic temples (*Lex Frisionum*),³²⁶ we see a neutral, derisive, or humiliating images of the pagan deities (Kemp 1994: 173).

After the end of Christianization, everywhere in non-religious areas and the non-sacral sphere – outside of churches – the ancient pantheon was not a threat and served as a convenient carrier of various contents: most often, we encounter Greek and Roman gods as allegories of nature like Chronos-Saturn as time, but also cosmological, intellectual,³²⁷ and moral allegories. The moral interpretation – an excellent alibi for overtaking pagan achievements – prevailed in the reception in twelfth to fifteenth century and mostly based on textual, not

325 M. Plezia in a commentary to Jacobus da Varagine 1996: 831.

326 The Law Code of the Frisians was a codex of custom law written in 802, published by K. A. Eckhardt et al., 1982; Siems 1980. Other law collections of German nations are gathered in the Monumenta Germaniae Historica (MGH) in six volumes of the series *Leges Nationum Germanicorum*, Hannover 1888–1969.

327 As in the encyclopaedic programme of the fresco cycle at the Spanish Chapel in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence: seven planetary deities watch over the seven liberated arts, which in turn appear as full depictions of their outstanding representatives, such as Jupiter–Arithmetic–Pythagoras (LC 71, col. 649–651). For more on this and other programs, see J. von Schlosser, “Giusto’s Fresken in Padua und die Vorläufer der Stanza della Segnatura,” *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 17/1896, pp. 13–100.

iconographic continuity (Fichte 1980: 28). The early fourteenth-century *Ovide moralisé*³²⁸ and *Gesta Romanorum* from the mid-fourteenth century perpetuate the old vein of searching for a parallel between mythology and the history of salvation; the most important earlier impulses came from Prudentius (*Psychomachia*) and Fulgentius.³²⁹ There are examples of including mythological figures as prefigurations in typological sequences: Isis with little Horus as the statue of Mary (Kemp 1994: 177) and Ganymede as a statue of John the Evangelist.³³⁰ Whereas various other threads of pagan culture enter the treasury of prefiguration like stoic ethics in Ambrose's thought (Pochat 1986: 93) or *Plato christianus*.³³¹ The latest research dates esthetic reception of antiquity from the early Christianity, its varying use of mythological motifs in art regulated by the ubiquitous rhetorical tradition that uses diverse methods of actively "forgetting" of the old by giving it new meanings.³³² The last stage supports the previous demonization with isolation (Kemp 1994: 171): traces of Greek gods becoming "the embodiment of typical beauty or dignity" already appear in the writings of Dürer and settle for good in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

328 For an elaboration of this French translation and commentary of *Metamorphoses*, see R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth: Classical Mythology and Its Interpretations in Medieval French Literature*, Stanford 1998.

329 *Mythologiarum libri tres* by Fabius Planciades Fulgentius (late fifth – early sixth century) saw two waves of renewed interest: before they appeared among the first prints – three incunabula – they entered most of *Gesta Romanorum* collections thanks to the author of thirty-one alterations of *Imagines Fulgentii* (the Brit Holcot?), whose full title says a lot about the moralising intention and the iconographic potential of the work: *Commentarium super Fulgencium continens picturas virtutum et vitiorum sub ymaginibus deorum et dearum, quos coebat vana superstitio paganorum* (Szostek 1997: 24).

330 In *Ovide moralisé*, A. Kozicka, EK 5, col. 855. In *Reading Myth*, R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski gives examples of subversive adaptations of mythological threads. *Ovide moralisé* compares Ganimedes' homosexuality with the Incarnation because both are to be "contrary to nature" (112, "contre nature"); qtd, after A. Allen, [Review], TMR 98.10.09.

331 E. von Ivanka, *Plato christianus. Übernahme und Umgestaltung des Platonismus durch die Väter*, Einsiedeln 1964.

332 M. Carruthers (1998: 56) applies here a notion from cognitive studies, "appropriation," and she also conveys a more detailed study of the matter with reference to T. F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, Princeton 1993, which moreover gathers the cases of eliminating the pagan deities. R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski examines this process in medieval French literature, after Jauss calling it the "fictionalisation of myth."

classicism. We should also allow their earlier idealization in literature conducted by the imagination of readers.

4. NEOPLATONIC ANIMISM. We consider these important matters in the history of culture to draw attention to the need to add the effects of the presented shift when explaining the sources of the Renaissance. For ideological reasons, classical mythology assumed some functions of the holy sacred. However, this does not mean that the former caused a secularization, but only used the vacant place and was used as inferior money in place of gold: like a rubber dummy instead of a steel knife in the actor's hand.

So distant from the Platonic contempt for the body in its valorization of the humankind, Neoplatonism seemed to ally Christian anthropologists like Thomas Aquinas, but it did not happen, despite the common view that human freedom and dignity result from their likeness to God; a view that seems to have prepared ground for the early modern idea of the human rights (Hödl 1986: 70). Beginning with the sixth century, Neoplatonic Christianization of beauty and light entered the Christian aesthetics for good,³³³ because one could easily connect them with God. After all, even today it remains quite convincing to non-physicists that light is identical with the supersensual beauty of God.³³⁴ Not only without hassle but also with some benefit did one receive physical evidence of God's emanational presence and – more importantly – this included all the beauty of the world in the definition of God: the perceptible and thinkable in all possible inferences (inductive, deductive, and abductive; Tatarkiewicz 1988: 33). This example shows the inclusion to Christian thought of such fundamental physical phenomenon as light and momentous general psychological notion as beauty. Such conviction had to greatly strengthen the prestige of the new religion.³³⁵

333 The breakthrough came with *Corpus Areopagiticum* or *Corpus Dionysiacum*, a collection of theological treatises written around the year 500, mistakenly attributed to the first bishop of Athens baptized by Paul the Apostle, Dionysius the Areopagite. In 827, Emperor Michael II donated a copy of the work to the monastery of St Denis near Paris (Pochat 1986: 105), which was there translated into Latin by John Scottus Eriugena (Tatarkiewicz 1988: 33).

334 Robert Grosseteste (ca. 1175–ca. 1253) explains the uniqueness of light in terms of physics: light is simple, indivisible, unmeasurable; its beauty is “not in the number, not in the measure, weight, or anything like those, but the whole charm consists in its sight” (*Hexaemeron*, 147; Tatarkiewicz 1988: 207; Pochat: 160).

335 The work of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite held popular influence “throughout a thousand years” (Tatarkiewicz 1988: 34), while we encounter the view about the divinity of beauty even today (Max Wildiers). “The Neoplatonic corpus the strongest influenced Gothic, especially Suger, the Victorines, and Lullus” (Pochat 1986: 105).

However, there was no room for the Neoplatonic demons or the “intelligences” that directed planetary movements. Their diabolization belonged to systemic necessity: spiritualistic monism aspired to the role of the only causative reality, hence could not be reconciled with non-Christian spirituality, especially with the “Neoplatonic animism” (Crombie 1982, vol. 2: 235). Already Augustine of Hippo challenges the Platonic theology with the rhetorical question: “What kind of religion that is which teaches that men ought to employ the advocacy of demons in order to be recommended to the favour of the good gods.”³³⁶ Instead, Augustine of Hippo only allows angels and saints to operate as intermediaries, but not as recipients of worship.

After the baptism of this world, the Church had to Christianize the entire “underworld,” to take it into exclusive possession. This second goal is just as natural as the first one: the global aspirations of the salvific mission in this world. In the conclusion of chapter 22, we will consider whether the second goal was not even more important than the first. For we should also understand Christianity literally as putting Christ at the head of the whole cult, which already was the concern of the apostles; suffice to consider Paul the Apostle who opposed the “worshipping of angels” (Colossians 2:18) as a diminishing Christ. Thus, Christ’s position was undermined even more by the worship of demons – immortal beings who still succumb to human weaknesses – in which Platonic tradition wanted to see the intermediaries between gods and people.

The removal of demons from the space between gods and believers did mean a more severe demarcation between their realms, but nevertheless brought them closer. The contact between God and the humankind not only becomes possible but must be direct. Those who removed the middlemen with the will to compete must have known it. Hence, this was probably the effect they sought.

One may wonder whether the transcendentalization of the sacred in sacramentalism did not motivate a compensatory revival of the experience of the emanating presence in light: after all, the Gothic was born in the monastery of St. Denis. W. Haug (1990c) elaborates on this matter.

336 Augustine of Hippo, *De Civitate Dei*, [the title of] ch. 18, Bk. VIII, p. 311 [transl. by Marcus Dodds]. Augustine of Hippo devoted the whole five books (VI–X; especially books VIII–IX) to combat the philosophical basis of the worship of demons conveyed in the writings of Apuleius and Hermes Trismegistus.

12. The New Place for People in Nature

1. THIS WORLD AND THE OTHER WORLD. The diminishing of the place held by the sacred in the system of sacramentalism had to change the views on the place of people in this world, which led to the crystallization of a new anthropology. However, the spiritualization of the sacred itself would not cause change in the ontological status of the world and its inhabitants. It happened only when the deprivation of the universal presence of the sacred was recognized as the departure of God to Heaven and, thus, when people started to understand spiritualization as transcendentalization. The essence of the division of the two spheres can be expressed with the words of Thomas Aquinas that he used in the context of the sacraments: “no supernatural effect can be caused by a creature.”³³⁷ What is left on this side of the border of “the other world” is the world of the profane and its human hosts: Christians.

One of the “technical” causes of this division of worlds could simply be the extent of the “kingdom of Heaven.” The enormous apparatus of salvation integrated such vast resources of human experience and imagination that it could not fit into this world as its parallel, invisible dimension; as it happens in simpler religious systems.

In the human dimension, the earthly life and the eternal life serve as the distinction between “this” and “the other” world. The world of the profane and the world of the sacred are therefore environments in which these lives are to take place. Maintaining the tension between the worlds may function as a starting point for the journey to cross the border – in order to enter the kingdom of Heaven – but the difficulty of the road ahead may discourage many. Fighting this discouragement was the task of preachers. This is how von Paltz formulated their duty: “Sinners, do not despair!” Great sinners, *maximi peccatores*, should not despair that they are already lost, as God has given the Church instruments of grace, which are enough to save even them.³³⁸ The social teachings of the church also developed a theory of counteracting this despair outside of the Church. We shall return to this subject in chapter 15. Before the mid-fourteenth century, philosophers already developed a precise program for the happiness of the “individual and wholesome human not only in the eschatological order but also in

337 *Quaestio de Veritate* 27, 3, Paris 1889; qtd. after Plater-Zyberk 1937: 15.

338 “O sunder und sunderin, verzweifelt nicht!” J. von Paltz, “Die himmlische Fundgrube,” *Werke 3 Opuscula*, Berlin 1989, p. 317.

the surrounding worldly conditions.” As Mieczysław Markowski (1992) remarks, this so-called felicitism was inspired by the works of Jean Buridan and enjoyed considerable influence throughout the entire fifteenth century, especially in Central Europe.³³⁹

The sheer defining of the boundaries of this world was not an easy task and the process never truly ended, as did not end the evolution of views about the place of the sacred.³⁴⁰

Let us present the division of reality into the sacred and profane as a structural proportion A:B.³⁴¹ Each demarcation of an internal division of a certain area of behavior causes further divisions and proportions in the newly-separated subdivisions, which reflect the previous differentiation:

A:B (the sacred:the world)
(a1:b1):(a2:b2)

Where a1: b1 reflects the division of the sacred (A) into “heavenly” (a1) and “earthly” (b1); on the one hand the Heaven and God (a1), on the other hand the spiritual and sacramental sacred with the sacraments (b1). The a2:b2 is a division of the world (B) into a part devoted to God (a2) and a part yet unaware of him or eluding him (b2). This means that we have two worlds: the world of good will with the broadly-understood Church and the kingdom of Satan; or otherwise

339 Mainly with the vast commentary to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*; the many copies and old prints, including Paris incunabula from 1489: J. Buridanus, *Quaestiones in Aristotelis “Ethica Nicomachea”*. There (1.1, f.22ra), Buridan poses the question (18), “can a person be truly happy already in the earthly life?” “*utrum homo possit dici vere felix in hac vita.*” Markowski 1992, p. 39.

340 Much has been written about the topography of the afterlife. Let us only look at the three Heavens and two Hells that Brendan saw during his navigation, already in a text from the middle of the twelfth century (Strijbosch 1999: 55).

341 This method was applied by C. Lévi-Strauss (*The Savage Mind*, U of Chicago P 1966: 94) to anthropological material: “the double division of the whole society into the two classes of men and women (now ritually as well as naturally differentiated) and the group of men into the two classes of old and young, initiated and uninitiated, according to the principle that the uninitiated stand in the same relation to the initiated in the society of men as women do to men within the society as a whole. But in consequence men forego embodying the happy side of existence for they cannot both rule and personify it.” The last sentence concerns the paradox of the social superiority of the humankind combined with the association of masculinity with the bad and ominous time of year for a given community; we will recall this when discussing the concept of weak spirit by John Scottus Eriugena.

christianitas:mundus; civitas Dei:civitas diaboli. The condition for the formation of new proportions is the persistence of the same factors (including mental processes) that underlie the first proportion.

Our history takes place between the inauguration (sacramental sanctioning) of ontological duality and the secularization of duality, in which the demons of nature substitute God (the humanist Neoplatonic Spiritism; Trevor-Roper 1969: 181). Noteworthy, Levack explains the hysteria of witch trials with the spread of humanistic demonological theories, which were explaining the dangerous proximity between the world of the human soul and the world of demons. Knowledge is power, therefore regions without these theories, like Russia, witnessed no witch hunts. In turn, the seventeenth century reduced these demons to the forces of nature (the materialist monism of mechanical philosophy; Galileo, Descartes, de La Mettrie).

Haug (1979: 34–35) employed a similar scheme in the field of literature: “literature reproduces the irrational element in the transition between this world and the other world in the relationship of I-You.”³⁴² Thus, literature translates the jump between two ontological fields into the language of interpersonal relations. These relations are best seen on the theater stage, on which living persons define, change, or sustain them before our very eyes.

2. ONTOLOGICAL DUALISM, which we discussed at the beginning (chapter 3–4), referred to the general categories of existence (matter-spirit) and does not coincide with the pairings that we deduce from the above structural proportions that cover the area of religious phenomena. Both the sphere of spirit and matter can undergo division, which religions consider to be the result of a balance between the forces of good and evil, while philosophical systems consider it the balance of the forces of nature.

An extreme example comes with Catharist dualism, whose principles distinguish a radical condemnation of matter opposed to spirit. However, the condemnation is not a universal precept even in Catharist thought, as it only concerns the conduct of the Chosen, among whom there often appeared cases of suicidal asceticism or abstinence.³⁴³ The difference between Catharist dualism and the

342 “»Mittelalterliche Literarisierung des Themas« trägt das irrationale Moment im Übergang zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits auf die Begegnung zwischen dem Ich und dem Du über” (Haug 1979: 34).

343 Runciman 1996: 150–151; also see R. Nelli, *La philosophie du catharisme. Le dualisme radical au XIII^e siècle*, Paris 1975; G. Rottenwöhler, *Der Katharismus*, Vol. 1–2, Bad Honnef 1982. A selection of documents is offered by W. L. Wakefield, A. P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, New York 1969.

dualism manifest in the distinction between the sacred and profane stems from the place where both concepts draw the boundary of the human world, that is, in the proportion dividing A (the spiritual world) into a1 (the sacred) and a2 (the profane) and B (the material world) into b1 (the sacred) and b2 (the profane).

However, not only the religious content but also the dialectical radicalism of the Chosen was the main source of their prestige (Kłoczowski 1973: 174). Among the lowlier Cathars, more “biblical” than the Bible itself, appears a radically ethical division of nature as “divine” (the God of Good) and “devilish” (the God of Evil). According to Graziela Liceri, a resident of Montañou, God created only those things that are useful to man. She did not believe that God had created the wolf, flies, or the Devil;³⁴⁴ this duality is a manifestation of Manicheist influence. Both schools in Cathar theology – the strictly dualistic, Manichean, and the monarchian, “which argued that the evil God was a fallen angel” – maintained that “the devil created the earthly world out of envy for God’s dominion over the heavenly world” (Runciman 1996: 141).

In the Cathar theory – taken from Saint Paul or perhaps merely coincidental (1 Thessalonians 5:25, Hebrews 4:12) – the spirit-soul-body triad (spiritus, anima, corpus) again separated part of the spiritual world (b1) susceptible to the influence of the evil spirit. A shepherd from Montañou, Pierre Maury, believed that only the soul lives and animates the body while the spirit produces images, dreams, and thoughts; the spirit may be alien, the Holy Spirit (a1), but also the Devil (Registre 3, 222, Segl 1990: 173).

As can be seen from the efforts of Bishop Fournier, the Church combated cosmological or theological dualism as Manicheism, identified with the application to Satan of an equal or independent role (reserved for the holy sacred). It was not just a view of an outstanding theologian and zealous inquisitor.³⁴⁵ Geremek aptly notes (1978: 56 and n.) that one of the functions of the exempla was the demonstration of strength of the evil spirit, but also control over it. This was a simultaneous exaggeration and reduction of the power of Satan that happened

344 *Le Registre d’Inquisition de Jacques Fournier, évêque de Parmiers (1318–1325)*, ed. by J. Duvernoy, Vol. 1, Toulouse 1965, p. 304; qtd. after Segl 1990: 171; J. Fournier later became Pope Benedict XIII.

345 By the way, the impressive theological abilities of the participants of these interrogations inspires admiration; after all, they were illiterate peasants. But it also motivates a sinful association with Carlos Castaneda’s “field discoveries”. It would be interesting to see what would be the result of the inquisition of Fournier, if it was carried out with the same zeal and diligence among the God-fearing clergy of that time (not to mention today).

in two ways: the Devil as the enemy of God yields to a higher power – most often saints, as we see in numerous motives in hagiographic messages and legends – or the common folk effectively outwits or ridiculed him, which remains in the whole genre of anecdotal folklore. Another way is to harness the Devil to moralize or punish: such Devil may be described as a servant of God (de Vooyes 1974: 166ff) that only replaces angels in the dirty work.³⁴⁶ According to Brojer, the first half of the thirteenth century first saw displacement of angels with the Devil “in areas related to punishment or condemnation after death” (1996: 171). However, Brojer’s assertion that the figure of the angel was “greatly desacralized” (1996: 175), is not careful enough, which we may prove with the scholastic method: if the angel has lost some competence in favor of the Devil, does it mean that the Devil has become more holy? Absit! If not, then it means that the Devil gained something that no longer granted holiness to the angel who, therefore, could not share some competences and lose anything of his sacredness (QED). It is rather about the effects of the spiritualization of the sacred and the concentration of holiness in Christocentric sacramentalism. The relative increase in the role of the Devil reflects the growing awareness of the separation of the world of the profane, for which people are themselves responsible and must, therefore, recognize their enemies and allies (see chapter 17.3, 22.6, and 25.6).

3. NON-SACRAL LEGITIMATION OF KNOWLEDGE. Catholic theology countered Manicheism with Thomist emphasis on the unity of body and soul. If the sacred is distant and connection indispensable for individual salvation, such a solution is logical: only in the spirit can one communicate with the spiritual God. This makes the human body “the House of God” and excludes it from the automatic Manichean (and Platonic) contempt, against which the first church fathers polemicized with the Gnostics.

In terms of communication with God, there was no singular position, which reflected the significant differences in ontological views. For the sake of transparency, we confine ourselves to two schools, arbitrarily relating them to the two mendicant orders, which gave rise to influential intellectual formations: Dominicans and Franciscans. We may link the former with the Aristotelian tradition (Averroism), the latter with the Platonic (Augustine’s ideas, Neoplatonism), but there are some similarities between the two. They concern the issue most interesting to us here: the idea of the triplicity of soul

346 The monograph on angelology was prepared by D. Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, Oxford 1998; also see Brojer 1996.

that Aristotle took from Plato;³⁴⁷ whereas the Franciscans (Bonaventure,³⁴⁸ Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus)³⁴⁹ contrasted the two lower souls (vegetative and sensual) to the higher soul: the mind, as only the mind comes from God (Krop 1992: 55). The position of the triplicity of soul was opposed by the Dominicans, who propagated the theory of one soul which, moreover, is suggested by Aristotle (*De anima* I, 5 41 1b). Dominicans argued that the three aspects simply are different abilities that enable man to experience, think, and biologically subsist.³⁵⁰ Thomas Aquinas goes further and grants exclusivity to the rational soul: “there is no substantial form but for the intellectual soul.”³⁵¹ This unification step is just as significant as Abelard’s ethical relativization of deed and intention. If all the theories would not hold – the (anti-Platonic) theory of a single (non-triple) soul, the (anti-Manichean, close to Aristotle) theory of the unity of the soul and body, and finally the anti-Aristotelian theory of immortality of the soul – then not only the sacrament of penance would lose its meaning, but the whole system of sacramentalism would fall apart.

In the ontological theory of Thomas Aquinas, the natural and supernatural domains were organically connected in the Being of God, in which we participate by reason and faith that we may convey as “everything belongs to us, we belong to God” (Hödl 1986: 68). This formula results in a limited and sufficient sovereignty of the human world; with the gift of “likeness,” we received

347 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246 B–D, depicts the soul as a chariot with two horses and one coachman; Aristotle, *On the Soul*, III ca. 4–5, 414 b 30, 429 a 27, 430 a 20–25.

348 Bonaventure, *Opera omnia*, Vol. 1–10, Collegium S. Bonaventurae, Quaracchi 1882–1902.

349 L. Veuthey, *Jan Duns Szkot. Myśl teologiczna*, Niepokalanów 1988. A monograph about his moral views with a bilingual selection of texts was prepared by the Franciscan A. B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality*, Washington 1986. Johannes Scotus, *Doctor subtilis, ordinis minorum opera omnia*, Vol. 1–26, Paris 1891–1895; new edition entitled *Commissio Scotistica: Ioannis Duns Scoti opera omnia*, Vatican [ongoing since] 1950.

350 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I q. 76, art. 1 and 3: “eadem numero est anima in homine sensitiva et intellectiva et nutritiva.” Elsewhere, we find an interesting observational proof for the unity of the three souls: “the soul in man is both vegetal, sentient, and rational. The following example also attests to this, namely, that when the operation of one power is intense, that of another is impeded; and contrariwise, there is an overflowing of one power into another” – *Quaestiones disputatae*, q. 11. The matter is elaborated in a monograph by R. Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas: A Commentary on Aristotle’s De Anima*, Yale 1999.

351 “Nulla alia forma substantialis est in homine, nisi sola anima intellectiva;” *ibid*, art. 4.

everything to manage our cognition and will so as to lift our individual existence to a level that would allow us to connect with God, gain divine insight, and observe God. Therefore, Thomist dualism does not divide the world between good and evil. Evil and the errors of nature (*malum naturae*) are part of the natural order (Hübener 1991: 22); but this opposition derivatively sneaks into the human world by proportion.

While the Church Fathers (Augustine) classified the shape of the natural order as a consequence of the original sin (*mala naturalis defectus*), understood as punishment for sins (*poena peccati*), scholasticism “silently withdrew” from this position and placed the natural order next to law order (*ordo iustitiae*) as merely another code, which they also removed from the time frame (Hübener 1991: 22).

The withdrawal of philosophers from the moral evaluation of the natural evil is reflected in the views of Thomas Aquinas toward the language of allegory and the resulting, radically dualistic distribution of meanings. Umberto Eco (1994: 112) describes this approach as “precise yet new because it sanctions the end of the allegorism of Cosmos and makes place for the rational study of phenomena.” Thomas Aquinas accomplishes this by limiting the spiritual sense (*sensus spiritualis*) exclusively to what is an allegory *in factis*; that is, by reserving this form of exegesis for the Holy Scripture. Only there and in relation to the holy history “some things appear as a figure of other things,”³⁵² while the secular history “consists of events and not signs” (Eco 1994: 114; signs given by God). As Thomas Aquinas writes that, “in all science and creation of human ingenuity, there is only literal meaning” (*Quaestiones quodlibetales* VII, 6, 16; Eco 1994: 114). This wording – argues Umberto Eco – is noteworthy because it destroys universal allegorism, typically early-medieval world of imagination, and the hermeneutics of nature. This is partly a secularization of nature and the history of the world, of the entire post-biblical world in which God does not rule (Eco 1994: 114–115).³⁵³

The desacralization of the natural order does not immediately exclude the role of God, but only means that sacrality ceases to be the only source, proof, and

352 So does Thomas define spiritual meaning in *Quaestiones quodlibetales* VII, 6, 15: “Sensus spiritualis... accipitur vel consistit in hoc quod quaedam res per figuram aliarum rerum exprimuntur;” qtd. after Eco 1994: 114.

353 This does not mean at all that metaphoric imagery in poetry is excluded, but it has a different character, it is not a sign of God hidden in the text, but a way of expressing a certain thought in accordance with the author’s intention, with the use of rhetorical tools. (Eco 1994: 115–117). See chapter 22.1.

guarantor of meaningfulness. This especially applies to human works. A useful distinction is made here by John Du Bois (1986: 332), who divides cultures into two types: in one as the criterion of significance is declared the alleged intention of a structured statement – it is a humanistic-rationalist position typical of Western culture since the Enlightenment; the second type are the “manticist” cultures, in which the recognizable structure is enough to identify something as significant, not necessarily as a result of some intentions. The difference between the two types is particularly evident in the approach to the coincidence of events: humanistic-rationalistic reasoning ignores them, while manticist discerns in them undeniable and indisputable signs. Let us add that these are not two opposing standpoints but the area between the poles of autonomous and heteronomous meaningfulness. In this case, we may interpret the “struggle of humanists for the right to study astrology” as manticist beginnings of the scientific method that looks for autonomic meanings contained in natural phenomena (laws of nature).³⁵⁴ The manticist element proves how difficult it was to depart from universal allegorism and “hermeneutics of nature,” with top-down heteronomous meaningfulness. The departure of the sacred to Heaven meant a threat to the meaningfulness of this world, and that threat required compensation. What was and is serving this purpose are all “self-explanations:” the theories of causative self-sufficiency and internal self-organization of the phenomena of this world.

The aesthetic manifestation of such impulse appears in the displacement of simultaneous composition in art and theater by illusionist one.³⁵⁵ The former clustered components to convey set ideas (conglomerates of meanings), the latter reconstructs the path leading to the idea by allowing the viewer to “invent it.”³⁵⁶ Here, every detail and actant plays a role; the contribution of each must

354 Borkowska (1978: 237) refers to a collection of articles from the Polish-Italian conference *Magia, astrologia et religione nel Rinascimento*, Wrocław 1974.

355 Scaliger in *Poetices libri septem* (I, 21) fought simultaneity as a method that dispels the illusion, because he emphasized the unity of time and probability; cf. Sarnowska-Temeriusz 1985: 482.

356 See the definition of cognitivism by Piaget (chapter 18.5). H. Brinkmann (1930: 25) wrote about the primacy of meaning over external form in a religious spectacle. I elaborate the matter of transfer from symbolicity to discursivity of communication in my article from 1995a; also see chapter 8, as well as below for the cohesion of cycles and the transfer from *tableaux vivants* to spectacles.

be revealed. According to the nineteenth-century theories of the Renaissance,³⁵⁷ Hennig Brinkmann beautifully describes the effects as the causes: “Only under the sign of humanism it became possible for man to create a world for himself that previously was only given to him” (1930: 24).

Just as God’s exclusion from justice has not reduced but increased the frequency of the motifs of divine justice in literature (see chapter 23.3), so do multiply in literature motifs of providential phenomena presented as God’s punishment or the foretelling of future events called omen, *prodigium*, or *praesagium* (Borkowska 1978: 238). For the astrologers, these motifs are perhaps an attempt to translate nature by itself, but in historiography they are a rhetorical effect, often achieved by abusing historical facts; not to evoke a thrill in the readers, but to convince them that whatever happens in this world has a meaning and, thus, relates to the humankind.

However, this current was not immediately dominant in theology. Heiko Oberman (1978: 83) dispels the “myth of the Thomist phalange.” During the life of Thomas Aquinas, the most influential theological text was *Sentences* by Lombard; *Summa Theologica* gained influence only from the fifteenth century.³⁵⁸ Noteworthy, what coincides with the “rehabilitation” of the Dominican Thomas Aquinas and his canonization is the renaissance of interest in Augustine of Hippo,³⁵⁹ which accompanies the “Franciscan hegemony” that lasts until Erasmus of Rotterdam (Oberman 1978: 83).

According to Swieżawski, only the late Middle Ages saw “[t]heologians return to the age-old question posed by St. Anselm: *Cur Deus homo?*” They answer that the actual reason for incarnation was not the vastness of the original sin, but the greatness of the humankind whose nature makes him open to God: *est capax Dei* was the answer of many Scotists and humanists. Later, Pico della Mirandola states that it is thanks to the incarnation that a human being is capable of “transforming from a microcosm into a microtheos.”³⁶⁰

357 They exaggerated (Burckhardt) the role of the Renaissance turn; Curtius countered this approach. For a systematic overview, see *The Renaissance: A Reconsideration of the Theories and Interpretations of the Age*, ed. T. Helton, Madison 1961.

358 Frank (1954: 184) mentions it among the works known to Gréban, the author of the oldest French mystery play.

359 Dante still used it in marginal fragments, but Petrarch recommended the reading of *Milleloquium Divi Augustini* by Bartholomew of Urbino (d. 1350), a collection of fifteen thousand quotes from the works of Augustine of Hippo (Oberman 1978: 83).

360 Swieżawski (1998: 56) refers to A. Castellán, “Variaciones sobre la cosmo-antropología del humanismo,” *Annales de Historia Antiqua y Medieval* 16/1971.

Nonetheless, already the “second Augustin” – Hugh of Saint Victor – opens a way that even after the catastrophe of the original sin, the humankind retains the “memory” of God, which offers us a starting point on our return to God “through knowledge and virtue” (Aumann 1993: 143). We try to prove here that the third way was more important; that is, the dignifying of human beings by the Incarnation.

Moreover, there activated ways of preaching against the moods of eschatological resignation and melancholy. Swieżawski traces the mood of the final phase of the Middle Ages (1998: 55): “All pursuit of holiness becomes illusory; a life imbued with true humanism and evangelical ideals turns out to be quite unreal and completely beyond the reach of man on earth.” However, this is a one-sided picture because it does not account for the difficult optimism of the *Devotio Moderna* (see chapter 18). What is the common characteristic of all these options is that they strive to change the traditional interpretation of the curse of the original sin.

4. SCHOLASTIC HUMANISM. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the revision of scholastic humanism, which actually was nothing more than a new reading of the deepest message of the New Testament. Hübener (1991: 23) considers the removal of the natural order from the holy time and the affirmative approach to the world³⁶¹ as a significant deviation from the idea of the history of salvation; there even was a theory of *melioratio accidentalis*,³⁶² according to which the *innovatio mundi* announced after the Last Judgment will not be fundamental at all, and will only cover certain elements. The revision concerned several important ideas:³⁶³ (1) the understanding of time and history, (2) the assessment of manual labor, and (3) the position of people in nature.

- 1) As in other areas, Christian historiosophy also divided into the Eastern and Western veins already during the patristic period. The former emphasized the sacrality of the world and urged to counteract changes to recreate the old order. The most influential theory in the Western vein was created by Augustine of Hippo: the main theme of history is the struggle between *civitas dei* and *civitas mundi*, while in reality, there is only *civitas permixta* and the City of God does not yet exist even within the Church; the community of the faithful requires constant improvement according to the

361 This is how I understand “die augmentatorische Weltformel,” which foregrounds a vision of the world that includes the lower element (*decor qui nunc est*).

362 Richard of Middleton, *De novissimis*; qtd. after Hübener 1991: 23, ft. 123.

363 Points (1)–(3) refer the results of U. Krolzik 1993; also see H. M. Nobis, “Die Umwandlung der mittelalterlichen Naturvorstellungen,” *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 13/1969, p. 34–57.

Gospels' guide. In the West, the renewal currents were strong and numerous. The mood of belief in *reformatio in melius* contributed to the evolution of the Church itself while it also accompanied wider social changes; that is, organized them, supported them, or simply was their symptom.³⁶⁴

- 2) Furthermore, the attitude to labor differed between the East and West. The East preferred contemplation over work or even treated labor as mortification; in the evening, some unraveled the carpet woven throughout the day. The West sought to dispose of the odium of labour as a penalty for the original sin. Many saints engaged in manual labor. The monasteries after Benedict – who raised the idea of labor and prayer to the rank of principle, already known to fourth-century anchorites – even described fieldwork as care for the paradise garden. The work ethos was part of missionary activity. Western missionaries were builders, farmers, and technicians. The secular Cistercian brothers (neobenedictines) acted as a link that transferred skills to cities and guilds. From among authors who emphasized the value of mechanical works and human labor stands out Alan from Lille (ca. 1128–1202; Alanus ab Insulis) who wrote the radically humanist treatise *Anticlaudianus* with the concept of the “new man” who may achieve divinity (apotheosis) without the grace of God (Simpson 1995, 132). If this is not a remnant of the doctrine of apocatastasis, then at least an indication that the doctrine of atonement by Anselm of Canterbury has not yet received universal acceptance. The doctrine reduced the effects of the Incarnation, depriving people of the comfort of total absolution of sin, Reconciliation, and Redemption by the power of the Passion. Contrary to patristic views, the Incarnation did not restore human divinity (Athanasius of Alexandria), but only did what we could not achieve ourselves: the adequate reparation for the sin of Adam. Although, the “remission of sins that are past” (Romans 3:25) did not erase the burden of responsibility and penance for own present sins.
- 3) The most far-reaching change was necessary in the assessment of human relation to nature. Patristic views based on the biblical message and Stoic teachings generally depict the world of nature as completed in the work of creation and given by the Creator to the humankind as his supreme creation (Genesis 1:28); we are only supposed to master the world (Genesis 2:15). This “anthropocentric teleology” was only impeded by the consideration of the effects of the original sin. Its crucial effect is not the simple loss of paradise comforts or the loss of the privileged position; on the contrary, both result from the loss of something much more important: “the image and likeness” to God.³⁶⁵

364 Krolzik argues that the movement of the poor truly questioned feudal Christianity. Joachim of Fiore wrote that the life of every human must change if the world is to change, but only the chosen ones will do that, those who open themselves to the future of the Holy Spirit (Cistersians? Fiore left them).

365 According to the theory of Rupert of Deutz and Bernard of Clairvaux, people lost his LIKENESS (goodness or virtue) as a result of the original sin, but they retained the IMAGE of God (reason and free will); see Constable 1995: 167. We find an echo of this view in the fifteenth-century work of Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*

From then on, the humankind suffers; according to Hugh of Saint Victor,³⁶⁶ the suffering stems from four reasons: ignorance, sin, heavy speech, and misery; these reasons underlie a different division of knowledge. For each of the shortcomings “which organize the temporal life,” a remedy lies in a branch of philosophy: theory, practice, logic, and mechanics.³⁶⁷ The revolutionary inclusion of mechanical arts in the philosophy (*scientia*) consists in the recognition that they can help in the reconstruction of *imago Dei* (Krolzik 1993a: 48) equally with revealed truth (*intelligentia*); the main path leading to this is, as we already know, the Incarnation.

The classical path of following Christ had to again “open the passage from the visible and material world to the invisible and immaterial” (Honorius of Autun).³⁶⁸ However, not all approaches account for the full dimension of the Incarnation: it can only be the salutary work of God and only belong to soteriology. Since the eleventh century, the increasingly popular views emphasize the eschatological duties of believers, who should act for their salvation, including modelling their lives after Jesus’ human behavior.³⁶⁹

The inclusion of the everyday in the strife to repair human life – that we encounter in the writings of Hugh of Saint Victor – brings significant empowerment to mundane skills. This follows the fact of God’s traditional “likeness” to people, contained in the image of God the Builder.³⁷⁰ Writing about how

III, 55.2 (work finished in 1456, first printed in 1473): “This is natural reason itself, encompassed about with great darkness, yet still retaining power to discern the difference between true and false, good and evil, although it will be unable to fulfil all that it approveth, and enjoyeth no longer the full light of the truth, nor soundness of the affections.”

366 *Eruditiones didascalicae* (1130); see chapter 15.1.

367 D. F. Blackwell, “The artes liberales as Remedies. Their order of Study in H. of Saint Victor’s “Didascalion”,” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 45/1989, pp. 115–124.

368 Constable (1995: 167) points to the commentary *In Cantica Canticorum* (ad 5.1, PL 172, col. 433BD) about the pre-establishing of incarnation, and to *Libellus octo quaestionum* (2, PL 172, col. 1187C) about the destiny of the humankind to apotheosis as the cause of incarnation.

369 The next chapters closely examine this aspect of incarnation.

370 Conditor, *Didasc.* VII.11, PL 176, col. 820A, 745D; see Tatarkiewicz 1988: 182. The very concept of God the artist was already known to Cicero, Philon, Plutarch, and has become a topos in patristics since Basil of Caesarea (329–379; Pochat 1986: 97). *Homilia in Hexaemeron* IV 33 c, PG 29, p. 80; qtd. after Tatarkiewicz 1988: 28: “We walk around the world as if visiting a workshop in which the divine sculptor exhibits his wonderful works. The Lord, the creator of these miracles and the artist, calls us

admirable they are, Hugh of Saint Victor accidentally sighs: Why do we talk about God's works here, while even human trinkets arouse an extraordinary admiration from the blinded eyes?³⁷¹ Much more important is the "un-deification" of the image of "the world as a machine (*machina*) that we see with our earthly eyes."³⁷² A clear manifestation of understanding of the human world as profane can be recognized in the separation of the work of God, the work of nature, and the work of arts that imitate nature.³⁷³ Hence, the caring meticulousness with which it describes so many different aspects of human activity, including them into the work of restoration of God's likeness.³⁷⁴ It contains not only the classification of sciences and practical skills but also the list of greatest scholars and inventors.³⁷⁵

Hugh's position bases solely on Latin sources (Crombie 1960, vol. 1: 218) and can be considered humanistic.³⁷⁶ Hugh of Saint Victor thought it necessary that

to contemplate them." Curtius (2013: 576–578) analyzes the topos *Deus artifex* in his Excursus XXI.

- 371 "Sed quid de operibus Dei loquimur? cum etiam humanae industriae fucos adulterina quadam sapientia fallentes oculos tantopere miramur?" *Didasc.* VII. 12, PL 176, col. 821B.
- 372 "Sicut duo opera, id est opera conditionis, et opera restaurationis distinximus, ita duos mundos esse intelligamus visibilem, et invisibilem. Visibilem quidem hanc machinam universitatis, quam corporeis oculos cernimus, invisibilem vero cor hominis quod videre non possumus" (*De arca Noe morali*, pars 4, cap. 7, PL 176, col. 672D). Swieżawski (1998: 67–68) connects the emergence of the concept of *machina mundi* with the fifteenth-century reception of Lucretius, after the "discovery" of the manuscript with his *De rerum natura*, which Poggio Bracciolini brought to Italy in 1417, after finding it "in the ruins of a German monastery;" it was in this work that the first use of the term *machina mundi* appears, according to H. M. Nobis, "Frühzeitliche Verständnisweisen der Natur und ihr Wandel bis zum 18. Jahrhundert," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 11/1967, p. 44; however, the words I marked in the text by Hugh of Saint Victor are an exact synonym of *machina mundi*.
- 373 "Sunt etenim triplicia opera, id est, opus Dei, opus naturae, opus artificis imitantis naturam" (1.10, PL 176, col. 747C).
- 374 "Duo vero sunt quae divinam in homine similitudinem reparant, id est, speculatio veritatis et virtutis exercitium; quia in hoc similis Deo est, quod sapiens et justus est" (1.9; PL 176, col. 747A).
- 375 *Didasc.* III.2 (PL 176, col. 765–767).
- 376 Against the amazing opinion of Curtius (2013: 556) who claims that Hugh of Saint Victor was an "obdurate antihumanist;" cf. C. S. Jaeger, "Humanism and Ethics at the School of St. Victor," *Medieval Studies* 55/1993, p. 51–79. P. J. van Geest noted the similarity of Hugh's method in *De sacramentis* with theological anthropology, a new discipline of theology created by Karl Rahner (1904–1984), which places the question about the human at the centre of theological and ethical tasks, alongside

all human forces should be harnessed for the work of rebuilding the *imago Dei* (1.8), while defining the likeness to God as “wisdom and justice” (*in hoc similis Deo est, quod sapiens et justus est*, ch. 2.9). In doing so, Hugh knew that so far – according to the traditional distribution of freedom – only “plebeians and non-noble youth sought craftsmanship skills in the mechanical arts,” thus beyond the liberal arts.³⁷⁷ In this way, Hugh probably continues the “Benedictine” position, which recognizes the value of deliberate work that brings us joy and which orders (especially the Cistercians) to use machines for monotonous work.³⁷⁸ Pochat summarizes (1986: 145) that mechanical arts obtain in Hugh’s work “a considerable culture-forming function, and we should understand them as an element of civilization,” whereas “beauty becomes indispensable from an anthropological viewpoint because it satisfies human curiosity and desires” (1.10).

The inclusion of the banal fact that work is made through the shaping of matter (“as in architecture”) made Hugh include activity itself in the essence of art (*operatio* or processuality, see chapter 2.7). Until then, others remained satisfied with the knowledge of rules (Tatarkiewicz 1988: 176). Theoretical reflection created a place for these rules in the concept of “usus” which, according to Aristotle, was the second most important component of art beside the rules; this “practical skill” was acquired through “diligence.”³⁷⁹

This symptomatic reference to experience was neither isolated³⁸⁰ nor fully abandoned, although it did not enter scholasticism in its full extent. The classifications

traditional questions about God, the world, and history; K. Rahner, “Anthropologie, theologische,” *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche I*, Freiburg 1957, p. 619; qtd. after van Geest 1995: 95. The similarity is that Hugh, by dividing history into the work of creation and the work of repair (see previous paragraph), presents the history of the world from the human, not God’s perspective (van Geest 1995: 94, ft. 7).

377 “Plebei vero et ignobilium filii in mechanicis propter peritiam operandi” (*Didasc.* 11.21).

378 Even if we are unsure whether the invention of the watermill was made by a certain abbot from Gaul, Gregory of Tours, *Liber vitae patrum*; MGH, *Scriptores*: 2. *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* 1.2, ed. by W. Arndt, 1885, pp. 661–744, 735, informs us that such an opinion prevailed, and that is already a lot.

379 T. Michałowska, “Reguły,” SLS: 786–790, 787; for more, see Michałowska, “Reguły w staropolskiej sztuce poetyckiej,” *Estetyka – poetyka – literatura. Materiały z konferencji naukowej poświęconej zagadnieniom literatury staropolskiej*, ed. Michałowska, Wrocław 1973, pp. 7–50.

380 Proven by the number and popularity of handbooks of mechanical arts, e.g. *Heraclius – De coloribus et artibus Romanorum* (10th c., ed. 1964); *Theophilus: Diversarum artium schedula* (ca. 1100; Pochat 1986: 131) – recently edited with parallel Polish

of sciences that use the Arab sources – which transmitted to Europe interest in magic – also emphasize the usefulness of mechanical skills, thanks to which “people obtain resources necessary for family needs.”³⁸¹ Since then, the practical side of human activity remains interesting, however to a varying degree. For Roger Bacon (ca. 1210–1294), the justification of the theoretical teachings lies in their useful results (Crombie 1960, Vol. 1: 220), while their aim serves the Church and repairs people: discerning the sources and causes of human errors and improving people and society. Dominion over nature is intended to defend Christianity, while the discovery of scientific truths directs minds to the contemplation of the Creator and, thus, helps evangelize humanity.³⁸²

By a mere accident, we may conclude these considerations with remarks about the achievements of another Bacon – Francis (1561–1626). Admittedly, Francis Bacon comes from a different era but, in his theory of science, we find a similar program to restore the likeness of all people to God and dominion over the fallen nature. Bacon directs his idea of *instauratio*³⁸³ against the anthropocentric teleology of nature: nature was not created for man, we must understand it, adapt it, and fight for dominion over nature with mechanical arts. Therefore, *instauratio* is a strong positive motivation and not just a simple effect of desacralization, which removed the requirement of inviolability.³⁸⁴ In its germinal form it appeared in the works of Hugh of Saint Victor, who proposed that “secular or earthly literature” (philosophy) should deal with the work of creation (nature), while religious literature (theology) with the work of reparation (of man), which

translation: *Teofil Prezbiter, Diversarum artium schedula. Średniowieczny zbiór przepisów o sztukach rozmaitych*, trans. S. Kobiela, Kraków 1998.

381 Such position by Dominic Gundissalvi (second half of the twelfth century) in *De divisione philosophiae* (Crombie 1960, Vol. 1: 218–219). Interestingly, he assumes a family’s point of view; cf. my remarks on the construction of a family in chapter 1.9. The spectrum of matters related to the family in medieval Christianity is elaborated in the collection of articles edited by C. Rousseau and J. Rosenthal, *Women, Marriage and Family in Medieval Christendom: Essays in Memory of Michael M. Sheehan*, C.S.B., Studies in Medieval Culture, No. 37, Kalamazoo 1998.

382 B. Dembowski, EK I, col. 1248; Crombie 1960, Vol. 1: 74.

383 The name stems from one of his works, *Instauratio magna* (1605; The Great Renewal). See the theory of recapitulation in my chapter 18.

384 M. Wykurz (1993: 18) remarked on this explicitly in reference to the socio-political, for which the split of dependencies between the Church and the secular powers became “peculiarly de-sacralized, thus becoming the realm of transformation, combat, and development.”

he called *opus reparationis*.³⁸⁵ The humanists like Da Vinci, Ficino, Mirandola and later Francis Bacon, form this thought as reducing nature to a material that one can freely shape according to will. The most striking intellectual program is Francis Bacon's *The Great Things of nature, more especially in so far as regards the needs of Man*.³⁸⁶ An outstanding early manifestation of these tendencies is probably seventeenth-century French gardening.

There is no need to decide whether it is possible to talk about the "first industrial revolution" as early as the Middle Ages but, if so, it was performed by humankind as the *cooperator Dei*.³⁸⁷ The history of science and technology has revealed a plethora of innovation in a wide variety of fields – construction, machine tools, shipbuilding, reels, glasses – even in the fourteenth century, which some scholars sometimes present as a period of regression after the "renaissance" of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It is worth considering whether – since the Middle Ages already are a sequence of "numerous Renaissances"³⁸⁸ – one should not add yet another at the end of the era in the form of Bacon's *instauratio*.

5. PROCESSUALITY. We may vividly observe the difficulty of abandoning speculation – thinking in the frame of recent terminology that determines the class of phenomena and excludes certain dependencies by default – on the example of gravity: Aristotle claimed that the heavier the body, the faster it would fall. One

385 "In his omnibus opera restaurationis considerantur in quibus divinarum scripturarum tota versatur intentio. Mundanae sive saeculares scripturae materiam habent opera conditionis. Divina Scriptura materiam habent opera restaurationis" (*De Sacramentis fidei Christianae*, Prol. lib. I, cap. 2; PL 176, col. 183). Book 8 is exclusively devoted to the matter of repairing people. For more on the relations between theology and natural history, see K. Thomas, *Man and the natural World*, New York 1983; *All Geschöpf ist Zung' und Mund. Beiträge aus dem Grenzgebiet von Naturkunde und Theologie*, ed. H. Reinitzer, Hamburg 1984.

386 *Magnalia naturae, praecipue quoad usus humanos*, attached to the 1628 edition of *New Atlantis* by Sir Francis Bacon, which actually belonged to the *Instauratio* project. The whole spectrum of cognitive measures and specific practical issues, which is of interests to us, is elaborated in the collection of articles edited by Iwańczak and Bracha, *Człowiek i przyroda w średniowieczu i we wczesnym okresie nowożytnym*, Warszawa 2000.

387 A notion ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite: "omnium divinus est Dei cooperatorem fieri," *Caelestis Hierarchia* III (Krolzik 1993a: 42).

388 M. Andreev (1989: 36) aptly noticed this, while R. Wild (1982: 201, ft. 31) attributes the possibility of the influence of Antiquity having an effect after two thousand years not to some timeless values but to the constant repetition and activation of successive renaissances.

had to wait until Galileo to climb the tower in Pisa to prove that two stones of different weights would fall simultaneously. T. S. Kuhn attributes similar puzzles in Aristotle's science to the fact that he did not distinguish the category of mechanical motion as something other than a change of state (1987: 20).

Interestingly, this is a breakthrough necessary in other areas as well: the necessity to treat social phenomena not as states but processes is the most important principle of Elias' theory of civilization, which sees the essence of its historicity not in explaining the past but in examining the historical transformations of phenomena (Wild 1982: 57).

Also Zur Lippe considers it necessary to break the "Greek repulsion"³⁸⁹ to motion in order to create an anthropological aesthetics³⁹⁰ by attributing to this lack of the idea of physical motion a number of negative consequences, including the perception of the world as a series of transition states between a completely defined initial state and a completely defined final state,³⁹¹ especially the fixation (*Fixierung*) of mental identity.

Ulric Neisser (1999: 181, 190–191) stresses the need for motion in two of the three basic observational systems; localization in the environment and interpersonal sensitivity: "To get a better sense of the environment we will move around, thus exposing ourselves to occlusion and kinetic depth information; to elicit responses from a partner, we may make active gestures." Mary Carruthers has demonstrated the importance of motion in constructing memory resources in societies with a predominantly oral tradition, both in terms of ancillary visual representations and real commemorative activities like processions: "Patterned movement, as in procession, is a basic memory foundation; it "places" us individually within a community as an *imago agens* within a memory location" (Carruthers 1998: 55).

389 Remarkable examples come from the paradoxes by Zeno of Elea. As Kuhn proves, the error of Zeno's paradoxes lies precisely in bringing motion to a series of locations; while we cannot replace dynamics by statics, if we think we can – as in the case of a cinema film that consists of a series of motionless frames – then it is but an optical illusion, not a physical fact.

390 Previously there was another postulate, that of an overcoming of Aristotelian subtraction anthropology and the restoration of "sister relations between all beings," forgotten due to the Judaeo-Christian opposition of humankind to nature (zur Lippe 1987: 18).

391 "Die ganze Welt wird ... als Durchgangsstation von einem vollendeten Anfangs- zu einem vollendeten Endzustand erlebt" (zur Lippe 1987: 18).

6. OLD PLAY WITH A NEW CAST. The theory of Paul the Apostle that the body is the temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16) was probably the foundation upon which the Christian conception of humankind was built. Its dualism was different from the Platonic way that contrasted the soul with the body and the human (microcosm) with the macrocosm.³⁹² When discussing with the Platonists Marsilio Ficino³⁹³ and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola,³⁹⁴ the Christian humanist Callimachus assumed the inseparable unity of body and soul when proclaiming that “rather than the body, it is the immortal soul, as the place of memory and decision-making, that is the habitat of good or evil.”³⁹⁵ Thus, here, not the body is evil, but human works that are ill-conceived (ungodly). This position appears in drama (see chapter 26). The above oppositions accompany the inseparable individuation: the separation of an independent human being (chapters 3 and 10.4).

We mentioned a different approach to human vocation by contrasting the position of the great German writers of the thirteenth century, Wolfram von Eschenbach and Gottfried von Strassburg. To put it simply, the former wanted to shape a human otherworld, while the latter required us to strive for the implementation of the divine plan.

The influence of scholastic revisionism on the issues of natural order and of the good and evil becomes visible in the change of the character of thirteenth-century exempla: the alignment of ethical perfection to God’s measure and a metaphysical absolute weakens:

in place of the strict opposition between the order of God and the earthly realm, there appears a complex narrative about human fate that accounts for the psychology of the individual and social situations. [The characters no longer personify good and evil but] show lessons that stem from good and bad human behavior, from the wisdom and foolishness of people, from their knowledge and cunning (Geremek 1978: 56).

392 See M. Kurdziałek, “Średniowieczne doktryny o człowieku jako mikrokosmosie,” *Średniowiecze w poszukiwaniu równowagi między arystotelizmem a platonizmem*, Lublin 1996, p. 271–310.

393 The theological and philosophical position of Marsilio Ficino is elaborated by A. B. Collins, *The Secular is Sacred: Platonism and Thomism in Marsilio Ficino’s Platonic Theology*, The Hague 1974.

394 Mirandola’s view on the scholastic tradition is described by A. Dulles, *Princeps Concordiae: Pico della Mirandola and the Scholastic Tradition*, Cambridge 1958.

395 *Philippi Callimachi Epistulae selectae*, Published by I. Lichońska et al., Wrocław 1967; qtd. after Skubiszewski 1997: 233.

Geremek rightly opposes Tubach's³⁹⁶ hypothesis of the genre's secularization during its late-medieval belletrization. Rooting the plot in everyday life very much corresponded with "the curriculum of the contemporary Christian teachings" (Geremek 1978: 61; see chapter 18 on the program of imitating Christ).

This is confirmed by Haug's comments (1979: 32) about literature taking the place of mythology, or becoming independent. In Haug's opinion, it is impossible to speak of "a secularization or transposition of mythical complexes on another level, on which the narrator can utilize them freely." This literary shift entails a retelling of myth from own perspective that keeps in mind the individual sphere with its historicity and problematizes it in contrast to the objective laws governing the course of mythical processes.³⁹⁷

Let us note that *Nacherzählung* is active observation, an imitation of a pattern, a staging of an old play with new cast. According to Haug, the issue with fictionalization is different; Pavel precisely links its root with the "inflexibility" or inadequacy of biblical material for mundane needs: due to the inadequacy of the old mythological and mystery ontology, the new historical status of the profane could not use biblical material that was reserved for the sacred. This could only happen discursively, with the help of a new material – fiction – whose truth could not (and should not) be compared to the truth of the Bible; this had to be a collection of theories from the autonomous world of the profane (Pavel 1981: 239). Pavel's approach was probably influenced by Durkheim's understanding of religion as a restricted sphere. The only difference between the two positions probably lies in the fact that Pavel presents the conditions of the whole process that happened, while Haug highlights the first phase of the process of

396 "Exempla in the Decline," *Traditio* 18/1962, p. 407–417; qtd. after Geremek 1978: 57; F. Tubach stated that the exemplum had become a "mirror of life," an organic part of the social context, and a vessel for literary imagination and folklore, but – instead of enjoying the maturity of the genre, which moves from the "coherent [because still schematic!] sum of religious norms" to reach its full potential – Tubach interprets all of this as "the fall of exemplum!" We must also clarify the terminology that may give rise to misunderstandings: the "mirror" in numerous titles (incipits) of moral literature has not lost in the Middle Ages anything of its programmatic character; it remained a model to follow, not a mirror walking along the main road.

397 "Die literarische Ablösung vom Mythischen erscheint damit nicht, wie man gemeint hat, als eine Art Säkularisation oder Transposition mythischer Komplexe auf eine andere Ebene, auf der sie dem Erzähler frei zur Verfügung stünden, sondern literarische Ablösung heißt zunächst Nacherzählung des Mythos mit einer neuen Einstellung, Nacherzählen im Blick auf das Geschichtlich-Individuelle und seine Problematisierung gegenüber dem objektiv-gesetzlichen Ablauf mythischer Prozesse."

fictionalization, when literature and mythology were still very close and served each other. Because medieval fictionalization “does not aim to clash the personal and human sphere with the divine sphere; the irreversibly singular with the universal mythical process. Instead, it breaks up the myth into experiencing the chasm that divides the I and the You of the beloved.”³⁹⁸

This model can be generalized by transferring the “break-up of myth” first to all the relationships that bind a couple of people – not only those in love – and then to other relationships of opposites between individual human and groups. In all cases, the degree of the “break-up of myth” indicates the advancement of the sense of independence of a person in the world of the profane. Whoever perceives this process as positive will present obedience to the myth as excessive submission, thus, accusing the weak as unable to exercise their freedom. According to Fichte, such an idea lies at the heart of Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale*:³⁹⁹ “If the absolute power of God ... does not mean the restriction of man but rather his unlimited freedom, then man is given the opportunity to shape his destiny and create the kind of order he desires” (Fichte 1980: 93).

This does not follow a rule that the less myth, the more freedom and happiness. Excessive human pride that neglects the sacred (“myth”) appears also as the source of misfortunes, which we will closely analyze by discussing the development of subjectivity in drama.

These remarks do not pretend to explain the multithreaded issue of philosophical foundations, circumstances, and consequences of spiritualization. Their exhaustive presentation is a separate research problem.

398 Haug 1979: 34: “[D]ie mittelalterliche Literarisierung zielt also nicht auf eine Auseinandersetzung zwischen dem Persönlich-Menschlichen und dem Göttlichen, zwischen dem Irreversibel-Einmaligen und dem universellen mythischen Prozeß, sondern sie bricht den Mythos auf die Erfahrung der Kluft hin auf, die das Ich vom Du des geliebten Menschen trennt.”

399 *The Knight’s Tale*, Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*. We return to the matter of freedom in chapter 13.2.

13. From the Universalism of Obedience to the Pluralism of Predictability

1. SELF-CONTROL. Discussing the sacraments, I raised the importance of penance for civilization. In the previous chapter (12.2), I added some remarks about the Dominican theory of one soul and the unity of soul and body. Together with the ability to say “my fault,” there appears an awareness of choice and decision; freedom (free will) is bound to responsibility for one’s actions and the world, that is to say, to one’s subjectivity which, in most general terms, can be defined as the center which makes decisions on spending energy. One may compare this to the role of a commander in a battle, who decides what happens on which flank; in both cases, the scope and effectiveness of the made decision is a measure of the center’s strength; I shall develop this view in the next subchapter (13.2).

We know from Elias that the modern personality is based on self-control. It involves building an apparatus of self-evaluation in the individual soul through the civilizational process. Le Goff describes this apparatus as the “unification of conscience” and associates it with the institution of confession and a more general shift in mentality which he defines as the “coherence of behavior” fostered by, among other things, the development of the corpus of canonical law.⁴⁰⁰ However, one cannot agree that the purpose of the entire confessional and canonical practice was to maintain the merchant’s activity within a tradition based on respect (LeGoff, *ibid.*).

Historians are probably wrong in ignoring the enormous scope of cooperation based on honor, respect or obedience. Although, the transition from feudal Christianity based on obedience and personal agreement to a society which functions by virtue of the predictability of the behavior of anonymous free subjects who apply certain rules – that is to say, the transition from *universitas* to *societas* – did not happen merely thanks to the salutary French Revolution.

Let us recall that, for different reasons, the anthropocentric teleology, which was characteristic for the universalism of obedience and which assigned man the dominant role over the rest of the creation, started to fall apart: in Hugh of

400 “The Church also contributed to the coherence of behavior by elaborating a body of canon law and a theologico-moral theory of usury. This decisive change in Western man’s mental structures began in the 12th c. (Abelard)” (Le Goff 1977: 37ff). According to P. Sheingorn, already “Anselm assumes that it is the responsibility of the individual to initiate the process of penance” (1985: 38).

St. Victor, an element of humanity's ethical responsibility for nature after the fall appears (Krozlik 1993a: 49). All these tendencies manifested themselves vaguely under the slogan of the emergence of the world of the profane, which is governed by the people, that is, Christians.

It was necessary to make this clarification, which suggests the characteristics of the then anthropology, because, for instance, by limiting one's vision of man to the figure of a merchant and sharing the Marxist conception of work as the most important of all figurations,⁴⁰¹ Le Goff arrives at a narrow definition of rationality (as efficiency and effectiveness depending on measurement exclusively),⁴⁰² but only in order to attribute far too extensive effects to it, namely – the secularization of time. However, the scope of these changes was much broader, and the increase in merchants' self-awareness hardly explains anything, if we do not treat it as a fragmentary sample of changes at all levels of social interaction.

If we were to focus merely on political factors that influenced the diminishment of the universalism of obedience, we should point to the fall of the unquestionable prestige of the Church and lay rulers as institutions which together represented the universal order (Ringshausen 1977: 226). This fall, in turn, was a consequence of the investiture contest and the Great Schism. The emergence of two hierarchies of power (clerical and secular), which are additionally heterogeneous, marks the end of the universality of obedience and undermines trust in this form of social organization. The only way to guarantee the continued functioning of two coexistent and territorially undivided systems within a diarchic structure is to move the source of loyalty inwards, to base it on the predictability of behavior.

The increasingly complex division of labor and the broadening of the scope of necessary exchanges compels cooperation and creates a state monopoly for the use of violence. The pacification of society from the inside is achieved through exerting social pressure on individuals and their internalization of social coercion. This approach produced the following results: the softening of contrasts in one's behavior toward oneself and others, the equation of affects (directly manifested, internalized experience of feelings). The weaker contrasts were accompanied by the enrichment of nuances, which required closer observation

401 In his *Theory of Communicative Action*, Habermas criticizes Marx for situating the logic of human development in the realm of work and material production; unfortunately, his own proposition is not free from Hegelian teleology; see the discussion by B. J. Whitton (1992: 300ff).

402 Le Goff writes of an interdependency of the rationalization of time and the beginning of the organization of work.

of the others' behaviors. Together with the growing importance of experience, of understanding the others' motivations and regularities that govern these motivations, a specific form of reason was shaped, namely – a historical form of a particular molding of the “household of the soul” (*Seelenhaushalt*; Elias 1969: 378; qtd. after Wild 1982: 61–62).

Thus, coercion turns into rationality (that is, knowledge of the effects of actions); self-control of behavior requires the development of the ability to anticipate complex consequences and take them into account in making one's decisions (Wild 1982: 61); Elias calls it *Langsicht*; the anticipation of consequences is simply a different form of intentional action; they both serve a disciplining and rationalizing function. And yet, both of them are only a result (or form) of self-control; after all, what else would self-control mean?

2. PREDICTABILITY. But why just coercion? After all, this is only a special instantiation of the general phenomenon of the world comprehension: external instructions turn into an internal pool of knowledge, experience, and self-awareness; just as *Fremdzwang* produces *Selbstzwang*, so *Fremdwissen* produces *Selbstwissen*. Jaeger is right to criticize Elias for underestimating education, without which it is impossible to explain various undertakings meant to civilize the clergy and the laity in the period before the heyday of feudal and court society (1985: 259). Elias himself admits that the internalization of coercion is not necessarily the result of its actual exertion: coercion does not work by posing an immediate danger, but it works through adaptation influenced by the awareness of its existence and knowledge of its mode of operation. This kind of adaptation is cognitive in the sense of being based on (rational) anticipation of possible consequences.⁴⁰³

Therefore, we must speak openly about the cognitive drivers of the process of civilization: to what extent does Elias' theory agree with Geertz's theory of religion? The emphasis on the individual (sometimes quite direct) also occurs

403 “Es ist auf mannigfache Weise vermittelter und ein weitgehend voraussehbarer Zwang oder Druck, den sie (Monopolorganisation der körperlichen Gewalt) beständig auf den Einzelnen ausübt. Sie wirkt zum guten Teil durch das Medium seiner eigenen Überlegung hindurch. Sie selbst ist gewöhnlich nur als Potenz, als Kontrollinstanz in der Gesellschaft gegenwärtig; und der aktuelle Zwang ist ein Zwang, den der Einzelne nun auf Grund seines Wissens um die Folgen seiner Handlungen über eine ganze Reihe von Handlungsverflechtungen hinweg oder auf Grund der entsprechenden Erwachsenengesten, die seinen psychischen Apparat als Kind modelliert haben, auf sich selbst ausübt.” N. Elias, *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation*, Bern 1969, p. 328 (qtd. after Wild 1982: 60).

when he or she sees the universality of certain beliefs; in turn, the adoption of a universalized belief concerning facticity is nothing more or less than a form of transition from *Fremdwang* to *Selbstzwang*; that is, religion is a civilizational process, in which a higher-order agent is the source of external coercion. We may see this in different types of behavior. There is, for instance, religious penance whose validity depends, not on the fear of punishment, but on internal repentance, that is, self-assessment resulting from the adoption of a scale of values sanctioned by a higher being. We see a similar testimony in the sacramental death performed in accordance with the art (*ars moriendi*) and followed by a due funeral (see chapter 14). One could strengthen and perpetuate this testimony by establishing a testamentary ecclesiastical or charitable foundation. Gibson rightly notes (1989: 6) that the significant increase in the number of legates of this kind in fifteenth-century England, as well as the purchase of indulgences, cannot be explained merely by the fear of death; instead, they are also manifestations of “religious individualism,” active participation in the mysteries of faith, and efforts to save the soul. However, the latter aspect should be supplemented by a remark about the double addressee of this kind of gestures: not only the beyond but also worldliness. Apart from long-term benefits in the work of salvation (the foundation of the chapel provided many years of memory and prayer), such ostentatious gestures strengthened the position of the deceased’s living family, held by others in high esteem and regarded as leading exemplary lives. Yet, the main beneficiary is the religious system itself, which, while inheriting the many fortunes, uses them to confirm its own truthfulness.

Elias himself draws a parallel with psychology: the story of the transformation of external coercion into internal coercion is the story of the relationship between ego and superego (Wild 1982: 65). But these Freudian personifications are demons; one can combine every possible cause and effect to hypostasize them as daringly as neo-Platonic intelligences were released into the ether;⁴⁰⁴ however, rather than hypostasizing, one should see the movements that define it as demonstrations of the gradual and relative manifestation of the subject’s range: the subjects recognize their range as a function of own predictability. In turn, the latter can be understood either as the sum of predictable behaviors

404 Just as it is possible to discuss the role of superego or ego, in meteorology one could invoke the fact that the high atmospheric pressure always fought against the low pressure (“Wo ein Tief war, soll ein Hoch werden...”), or that storms consume fog and then spill out moisture (with small frogs).

or merely as a result of each act of defining, that is, of adopting a makeshift boundary between self and non-self on the basis of effectiveness estimates.

In this way, we notice different stages of the quantization, structuring, temporary aggregation of the person, that is, the elementary unit (of social interaction and social evolution, the actor of figuration, the echo induced by incoming stimuli, resonantly separating adequate – hence interacting – elements). This minimum unit, whose calculability we measure, can be a herd, tribe, corporation, family, couple, one person of a certain condition (gender, age, strength, descent, state, nationality), any person (human rights charter), or a certain aspect or persona within a person's personality. Thus, we obtain something similar to an "unending conversation" (K. Burke 1941: 111) – only this time it occurs, not with reference to the history of humankind, but within human subjectivity. Ockham's clear opposition between the will and reason⁴⁰⁵ already teaches us to understand subjectivity in somewhat collective terms. Therefore, we should not despair that

there is apparently no single central neural control system in the head, no Cartesian center of decision. Instead, behavior results from the overlapping activity of many partially independent "modular" systems.⁴⁰⁶ Those systems are not constrained by any central executive, but by the physical body and the real environment as well as by their mutual interconnections (Neisser 1999: 180).

In philosophical anthropology, there is plenty of conceptions which tend to replace a single subject with various constructions. Helmut Plessner, for instance, describes the "weak subject," which is the structure of agendas, partial subjects (connected to social roles that man plays in life), linked by a certain cognitive bridge: it is the centrifugal self, which consists of certain acts that make it possible for man to look at himself from the outside or above.⁴⁰⁷

This implies, not a complete break-up of subjectivity ("the death of the subject"), but its dynamization. The situation is similar as in the case of the discovery

405 See the next paragraph.

406 As in the case of body organs, also the nervous system develops specialized skills, such as the location of an object in space or its recognition, which are independent of each other (for instance, one can recognize an object, but cannot grasp it) and only jointly guarantee the proper functioning of the body.

407 See also E. Paczkowska-Łagowska's entry "Plessner Helmut (1892–1985)," in: Skarga 1994: 384–398; the entry discusses Plessner's two most important works: *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch. Einleitung in die philosophische Anthropologie* (Berlin 1928) and *Macht und menschliche Natur. Ein Versuch zur Anthropologie der geschichtlichen Weltansicht* (1931). The author considers Plessner to be the creator of contemporary philosophical anthropology, alongside Scheler and Gehlen (p. 398).

of the internal structure of the atom: although the atom was disintegrated into a series of “particles” circulating around themselves (or perhaps only moving to and fro, pulsating – no one really knows), many things can be still described the same way as at the time when the atom was imagined as a homogenous tiny ball.⁴⁰⁸ In the case of subjectivity, according to A. Karmiloff-Smith (1997: 121), developmental psychology reinforces the belief that a child is capable of recognizing others as actors (“agents capable of self-initiated action”), not as “objects amongst other objects,” even before the age of seven, that is, earlier than Piaget assumed.

Let us add one more generalization. Elias explains the driving force behind the process of civilization by the growing complexity of figurations, that is, in quantitative terms. However, earlier we spoke of a systemic, qualitative difference, which at an early stage forces a change in the definition and functioning of loyalty. It cannot be based (as in the case of universalism of obedience) on the implementation of an imposed norm, but it rests on negotiation and the estimation of mutual predictability (predictability of behaviors) of interacting partners. Based on this generalization, it is easier to assume that obedience, or heterodynamics,⁴⁰⁹ was also the foundation of a certain rationality and a certain civilization, unless we consider the so-called barbarism as the lack of civilization.⁴¹⁰

Obedience continues to be the ordering principle of Islam, whose influence on social systems is so profound and so difficult to limit by the framework of predictable law that it determines the area of a different civilization.⁴¹¹ The differences between these areas are quite well characterized by the relationship

408 The theory of science distinguishes between realistic and empirical theories; according to B.C. van Fraassen, (*The Scientific Image*, 1980), it is enough that the theory explains observable phenomena (constructive empiricism) and does not have to prove the existence of objects that it postulates (like elementary particles). See A. Grobler’s entry “Fraassen, Bastian Cornelius van,” in: Skarga 1994, Vol. 2: 123–130.

409 The terminological opposition of autodynamics-heterodynamics was introduced by the founder of historical ethology (*historische Verhaltensforschung*), A. Nitschke, in his “Aschenputtel aus der Sicht der historischen Verhaltensforschung,” in: *Und wenn sie nicht gestorben sind... Perspektiven auf das Märchen*, ed. H. Brackert, Frankfurt a. M. 1980: 71–88.

410 The myth of the barbarians who destroyed the Roman Empire is so strong that it is commonly believed that they were only wild pagans and not Christian (Arian) kingdoms.

411 This is not to say that there was no Islamic law (for instance, there was the classic collection of the ninth-century al-Bukhari), but that it had a different status, somewhat similar to that of early canon law. A great variety of trends within Islam is highlighted

of the faithful with the Supreme Being. Ph. Meyer describes this relationship in Islam as “absolute submission,” whereas in China it is “indifference” and in the West “submission with the right to dialogue.”⁴¹² The development of a formula that enabled this dialogue, i.e. reconciled God’s omnipotence with the freedom of the human will, was the outcome of numerous debates. One of the most important such formulas developed before the Reformation resulted in William Ockham’s influential propositions.⁴¹³ God’s absolute power (*potentia absoluta*) does not limit human freedom of choice, but rather fosters free decision making; it would be impossible for people to ever earn God’s favor if they were unable to choose between different options and if their choices would always be forced or non-accidental.⁴¹⁴

To misunderstand this is to confuse providence with predestination, that is to say, with fatalism which, according to Fichte (1980: 91), was criticized by Chaucer in *The Knight’s Tale* quoted earlier (chapter 12.6). Its main protagonist, Theseus, the prince of Athens, recommends “to make virtue of necessity” (*to maken vertu of necessitee*). Chaucer’s narrator faces his audience with the following choice: a prison with the possibility of watching one’s beloved, or freedom which shatters the hope of ever seeing her, but which nonetheless gives a chance to do something to win her back. Looking at the fate of two aunt brothers, princes of Thebes in love with Theseus’ sister, it is not hard to see that the one who regained his freedom (Arcita), and then broke orders and risked his life to win his beloved Emily, ultimately dies a purely accidental death, while his place is taken by his

in the collection edited by J. Renard, *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*, Berkeley 1998.

- 412 Ph. Meyer, *Złudzenie konieczne. Biofilozofia*, trans. W. Jadacka, Warszawa 1998, p. 197. According to Meyer, “Islam” means “submission” in Arabic, and those who reject it are called “disobedient” (p. 196).
- 413 Although his influence on his contemporaries should not be overestimated, he often appears in studies on Chaucer; H.R. Andrett wrote about it in *Chaucer’s “Troilus and Criseyde.” A Poet’s Response to Ockhamism*, New York 1998. See Fichte 1980 (I shall discuss his conclusions later); Ganim 1983; Gradon 1971; Jordan 1967; also see R. Burlin, *Chaucerian Fiction*, Princeton 1977; P. Boitani, “Chaucer’s labyrinth: Fourteenth-Century Literature and Language,” *The Chaucer Review* 17.3/1983, pp. 197–220, especially p. 214ff.
- 414 Fichte 1980: 9, with a reference to: *Guillelmus Ockham, Quodlibeta Septem*, I.q.16: “voco libertatem potestatem, qua possumus indifferenter et contingenter effectum ponere ita quod possumus eundem effectum causare et non causare, nulla diversitate circa illam potentiam facta.” William of Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions*, Vol. 2, *Quodlibets* 1–7 (Yale 1998).

second brother (Palamon), who, in turn, suffered a double torment and after seven years managed only to escape from prison.

Saying that there is no “divine participation” in the story and “the human will is autonomous,” Fichte forgets that Chaucer refers to the Greek gods, who did receive prayers and did not merely debate with each other about the unfortunate triangle but when Venus did not get her way, her father, Saturn, sent Pluto’s furies, which frightened off Arcita’s horse and killed him. Therefore, this story can be seen as a vivid juxtaposition of Christianity and paganism (“Oh, cruel gods!”), or perhaps even of the New and Old Order. However, it does not matter to what extent Fichte’s interpretation is accurate. It is still important to put the problem in the context of the philosophy of man. Insofar as Chaucer juxtaposes an active and passive attitude, his story is a demonstration of the success of the man of strong will; even if the success is temporary. Such an interpretation indicates the need to assume a gradation of the sovereignty of the subject who cannot right away detach himself from the divine will. I shall explain this in more detail in Part 5.

3. THE SCHOOL OF SELF-CONTROL. Let us signal the analogy between the formalization of religion in centralist sacramentalism and the assumption of Elias’ theory: increased state control results in stricter moral norms, formalization, and surrogate ceremonialization or ritualization of behaviors. Elias speaks of transforming external coercion into internal coercion, which takes the form of self-regulation, and which is based on restraint (*Ansichhalten*) and self-control. Elias’ discussions of secret mechanisms and open procedures that civilize customs in the secular area are well known. Let us give just two examples of the efforts of the people of the Church made in shaping and promoting Christian norms. Behind these, sometimes banal rules, there is evidence of man’s struggle for complete control over himself precisely for religious reasons. However, we should note that the history of early church pedagogy was the subject of many studies by Stephen C. Jaeger, the results of which he summarized in the monograph titled *The Envy of Angels* (1994). What is of particular interest to us is that *ars vivendi* was the principal subject of teaching in the tenth- to twelfth-century cathedral education system, which was formed under the auspices of Emperor Otto and his brother, Bruno the Great (Archbishop of Cologne), in order to promote the custom of Roman court emperors (Jaeger 1985: 259). Teaching had not so much a bookish character as a charismatic one: it was not the text, but the behavior of the master that was the means of transmitting moral values (*elegantia morum*). It was not until the disintegration of the sacral-political unity brought about by the Investiture contest that the charismatic teaching came to an end, gradually replaced by its scholastic alternative in newly-established colleges.

Abelard, for instance, no longer acted as a role model for the youth. To be sure, Abelard's influence had also a charismatic quality, but in a purely intellectual dimension.⁴¹⁵

Courtliness and courtly humanity were, next to Christian ideals, the most powerful civilizing forces in the West since ancient Rome. If the perception of this role has been dim in modern times, it is partly because court bishops and worldly clergy lacked historians who observed their civilizing role directly (Jaeger 1985: 261).

However, it is hard to agree with Jaeger that the condition of this wave of civilizing was secular investiture, "the emperor's granting of bishoprics to his favorite courtiers" (1985: 262). Since this wave spread from the imperial court to the whole state, the process could only be disrupted if the bishops were the only group of dignitaries dependent on the emperor, and if his position became so weak that someone else appointed chaplains. Nonetheless, even in the case of bishops, emperors and kings acted quite independently and often failed at keeping up any appearance of courtliness. Without going into a deeper discussion, let us pause over the following question: perhaps, it was not so much the administrative subordination of the Church to the emperor but the fact of their undisturbed cooperation that was the condition, or driving force, of this wave? More recent research revealed voices which no longer share the former admiration for Otto's uniqueness and narrow his ambitions to nothing more than "reforming the papacy."⁴¹⁶ Most probably, the direction of this intended "reform" was not determined by the fact that the emperor's court adopted Byzantine titulature. Although, we find here an indication that it was modeled not only on Ciceronian humanism of Rome but also Eastern Caesaropapism, which concealed its tyrannical face behind the veil or niqab of courtly ceremony. Indeed,

415 T. Reuvekamp-Felber in his 1994 review of S.C. Jaeger's work, *ZdPh* 118/1999, pp. 111–115; here p. 112; see chapter 17.3. Two educational methods correspond to the previous distinction between imitative (observational) learning and cognitive learning through ready-made rules or theories. Cf. our chapter 20.3 for a statement about the superiority of theory over practice.

416 K. Görich, "Otto III. Romanus Saxonicus et Italicus. Kaiserliche Rompolitik und sächsische Historiographie," *Historische Forschungen* 18/1993; R. Michałowski, "Polityka Ottona III w nowym oświeceniu," *Przegląd Historyczny* 85/1994, pp. 151–156; G. Althoff, "Otto III, Darmstadt 1996;" based on J. Strzelczyk's review: "Dwaj wybitni władcy w ujęciu porównawczym (Otto III. – Heinrich II. Eine Wende?)," eds. B. Schneidmüller, S. Weinfurter, Sigmaringen 1997, *Przegląd Historyczny* 89.1/1998, pp. 453–466. Also see Althoff's *Otton III*, Wrocław 2000.

the theatricality of courtly custom was infused with insincerity, falsehood, and constant suspicion, because the manor house was a field of intrigue and rivalry (as Jaeger himself admits). In a group divided into factions, there is not only the problem of loyalty but also that of responsibility. When the Church, represented by a court bishop, gets into the courtly game, divine authority may become implicated in people's private affairs. It is not enough to mention the resistance of the "conservative religious clergy" among its causes when discussing the failure of the imperial-ecclesial program of civilization. Instead, we should recall the same necessity by which the Church, insofar as it was meant to serve everyone, had to reject trial by ordeal. After all, what kind of a Body would it be if one of its members would fight another?

Getting back to the main theme, we shall refer to another opinion by Jaeger: that the monastic environment hampered the proliferation of courtly manners and that "courtliness can by no stretch of the imagination be seen as having arisen in the monastic life" (1985: 262). However, we may infer from the below quotation that the ideal of courtliness was not that detestable to monastic pedagogy, although it was differently called.

The passage in question comes from a monastic textbook of good manners from the mid-thirteenth century, *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione*,⁴¹⁷ most probably written by the Franciscan David of Augsburg (d. 1272), whom Kurt Ruh⁴¹⁸ counts, together with Bonaventure, among the "fathers of religious psychology, strongly developed in the circles of *devotio moderna*, and methodical meditation that springs from it."

417 The first part of this work (which is the source of the quotation below) is a set of rules for the religious novitiate (hence one of the titles is *Formula Novitiorum*). The work was sometimes attributed to Bernard, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Bertold of Regensburg (1210?–1271). It was preserved in 370 manuscripts (figure from over a hundred years ago). The first part is contained in Bernard's collection PL 184, col. 1189–1198 entitled *Ad quid venisti* ("What did you come here for?" – to which he obviously replies: "Venisti ad serviendam Deo"). The Latin version of his name is David de Augusta. For a critical edition, see A. C. Peltier in Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, Vol. 12, Paris 1868, pp. 292–442, and separately Collegio di San Bonaventura, *Quaracchi* 1899. The second part of the work is the treatise "Formula de interioris hominis reformatione ad proficientes," which teaches the reader how to control the three powers of the soul: reason, will, and memory, and how to combat sinful affects. The third part, "De septem processibus religiosorum" organizes the path of improvement into seven steps: "fervor, labor, consolatio, tentatio, remedia, virtus, and sapientia" (qtd. after Seebohm 1996: 71).

418 In the entry "David von Augsburg" (VL 2, pp. 47–58); see chapters 5.1 and 18.6.

XVII. "On modesty and self-control"

All your actions and statements, and behaviors, and appearance, and walk, should be decorated with humble modesty. Let nothing vain or inflaming appear in you, nor be struck by conceit or audacity. For modesty is the greatest pride of a monk, especially of a young monk... For just as God's fear shapes people and equips the interior of each to embrace the blessing, so modesty gives order to external behavior. Let no one be so close to you that you forget about deep modesty. Let thy walk be appropriate: do not lift your feet higher than you need; do not lift your head up but bear it moderately lowered; never allow your eyes to wander around; do not show up panting but keep balanced and modest movements. As you sit down, do not lie down on the sides, nor stretch out your legs, especially in the presence of others. For the outward disorder of the flesh accuses the ungodly thought. Let your moderate laughter be heard rarely and without giggling. For good upbringing is more pleasing to God than playfulness. Try to keep your face calm, without indignation or anger, for these failures are highly unpleasant to God.⁴¹⁹

250 years later, Johannes von Paltz considered as an instigation of the Devil the internal compulsion that makes a faithful person go on pilgrimage without consulting his parish priest or family or such that makes him unable to last through the whole mass. One cannot invoke the Holy Spirit's call to pilgrimage to justify one's disobedience to the superior; it is not an excuse an apprentice can give to the master or a farmhand to the farmer (Burger 1990: 323). Let us see how naturally a purely social theme is intertwined in the pastoral argument: the need for predictable behavior toward family and superiors. However, there is no lack of a supernatural partner, but it already rests on a spiritual contact. Insofar as one's

419 David de Augusta (the Latin form of his name), *Ad quid venisti*, PL 184, col. 1196 (in Bernard's collection). XVII. "De verecundia et modestia:" "Omnes gestus et sermones tui, et mores, et aspectus, et incessus, quadam humili verecundia debent esse ornati. Nil appareat in te elatum et pomposum, vel audaciae vel praesumptionis notabile. Verecundia enim est maximum decus in Religioso, praecipue in juvenibus: ita ut qui eam postponunt, vix aliqua spes sit de eis quod boni fiant et virtuos. Sicut timor Domini componit homines, et ordinat interius omnia ad beatitudinem: ita verecundia componit exterius ad disciplinam. Nemo sit tibi ita familiaris, coram quo verecundiae penitus obliviscaris. Incessus tuus sit maturus: non leviter curras sine necessitate; nec vultum tuum erectum geras, sed mediocriter depressum; nec vagus sis oculis; nec brachia incomposito gradu incedas, sed piano et humili gestu. Sedens non pigre te in latus inclines, nec crura longe extendens, maxime presentibus aliis. Exterior enim incompositio corporis iudicium est indevotae mentis. Risus tuus sit moderatus et rarus, sine cachinno. Magis enim vult Dominus bonitatem quam dissolutionem. Stude vultu esse serenus, et non turbulentus vel indignabundus; quia Deo hoc vitium valde displicet."

relation to God is concerned, self-control spans over thoughts as well. Von Paltz devotes a number of sermons to its development.

“Another sermon on the offensive character of evil thoughts”

Know that the evil spirit terribly hates devotees of the Most Holy Mother of God, people at Mass, and those who pray to the saints. Therefore, when the spirit can no longer harm them, it scares them with thoughts that they call offensive. He can throw them to the heart of every man regardless of his will, and these thoughts are very disgraceful and inaccessible, against the Mother of God or against the holy sacrament, or against certain saints. (C iii) Therefore, we must learn how to resist such thoughts, [when the thoughts return for the third time, this is how one should pray]: O, Mother of God, I ask you, please be patient with me, a poor sinner, and do not despise me because of such evil thoughts against you that come to my mind against my will. Please, bear witness that I would never want to have any thoughts other than full respect (C iiij).⁴²⁰

4. A STABLE IDENTITY. In Elias, the path of civilization is the path of socialization of individuals, while the structure of personality reflects the grid of conditions: their goals and limitations (Wild 1982: 65). However, if the process of civilization was tantamount to the process of socialization, it would have to end as soon as individuals become socialized. But what happens next? What do they do after socialization? Do they create a culture? (Civilization as irreversible, cumulative processes; while culture as fluctuating processes?)

Individuals continue to build their thorough self-dynamics by enriching their experience and equipping themselves with various abilities useful in different circumstances. This moving of the world into the interior of a human being or making it easily accessible is a constantly accelerating process. We perceive it as the formation of subjectivity.

This important aspect of the civilizing process is not linked with the mysterious desacralization of time, but with its deployment, quantification, and

420 “Die ander sermon von den bösen gedancken miszbitung” (C iii). “Es ist zu wissen das der boes geist sunderlich hasset die liebhaber der hochgelobten mutter gottes und meszhoerer und heyiligen erer. Darumb wann er ynsunst nicht mag geschaden, so engstet er sy mit gedancken die man heysset die gedancken der miszbitung die er kan einem menschen ane seyn danck yn seyn hertz werffen welche gedancken sere schentlich seyndt und unerlich wyder die muter gottes adder wider das haylig sacrament ader wyder etlich heyiligen” (C iii). “Darumb ist not zu wissen wie man sollichen gedancken sall wyderstehen.... Ach du muter gots Ich armer suender bit dich hab gedult mit mir unnd vorschmehe mich nicht umb solcher schnoeden gedancken willegg die mir eynfallenn wyder dich.... bitt ich dich dasz du meyn getzeug sein woellst das ich der gedancken nymmer anders haben wil dann tzu erlicher bedeutung” (*Die himmlische Fundgrube*, 1491, C iiij).

distribution in the figurations of the profane, in which it served as a measure of the coordinate that is necessary for full individualization. Without a specific past and a predictable future, a human being cannot be a responsible individual. However, this requires “a very precise division and measuring of individual time;” at the same time, it teaches one “to subordinate the short-term desire to the necessity of long-term interdependence” (Elias 2000: 401).

An irreplaceable source of experience of individuality is the judicial process, which depends on accountability (legal personality).⁴²¹ The external expression of this personality is the possession of a seal, which spreads rapidly around 1200 to all social strata, even subjects and slaves or serfs (Bedos Rezak 1988: 317–318).

The legendary individualization is based on fixing a certain part of the preferences,⁴²² choices, and experiences of a person as permanent and inalienable. Thus, it is all about acquiring some capital (by definition inviolable and therefore “sacral” in Becker’s sense). One needs to watch over these savings, just as every petty saver has to guard his treasure. Hence the strong self-control and control of others; even though man is now more liberated from the pressure of the holy sacred. His time is no longer measured by church bells. But does he have more time? An aspect of the increase in lower-level sacrality appears here (see chapter 11). According to Goffman, the image of man is sacred and the means of expression necessary to maintain it are ritualistic. With the growth of self-dynamism (the so-called secularization of worldview), the image becomes more important and opens a way to the absolutization of man; this increases the weight of lower-level sacrality, which safeguards this intimate sacred. As a directive of conduct, predictability itself is also a form of sacrality in the sense of Becker, because it presupposes the possibility of predicting future behavior as an extension or derivative of what we know at the moment.

The fixing of preferences, or self-creation of identity, is to some extent a consequence of those social phenomena that have driven the transformations described above as a transition from obedience to predictability. The identity of the obedient is not relevant to the mechanism of obedience. In turn, the mechanism of predictability cannot work if the identity of its participants does not

421 Cf. my own paper, A. Dąbrówka, “The trial scenes in medieval drama,” in: *European Medieval Drama, 1998: Papers from the Third International Conference on Aspects of European Medieval Drama, Camerino, 3–5 July 1998*, eds. Sydney Higgins, Fiorella Paino, Camerino, Macerata 1999, pp. 77–98.

422 L. Nowak’s definition of freedom (1993: 210) is based on preferences: “Freedom is the ability to guide oneself solely by one’s own preferences.” More complex reflections on freedom and rationality can be found in J. Habermas (1997).

maintain a certain minimum of determinateness and stability: one cannot arrange anything with someone who does not know who they are or what they want. As we have already noted, discussing the paradox of objectivity and subjectivity (chapter 10.4), the distinction of the person from the choir precedes everything.

A key role in these successive stages plays the progressive coordination of the person in time and space. On the one hand, measurement entails a separation, limitation, taming, and civilizing. On the other hand, it is tantamount to individualization: after the establishment of a system of coordinates, the identical, indistinguishable points acquire individuality which is represented by unequal numbers.⁴²³ This brings to mind the method of determining identity by giving one's coordinates in the social space. Thus, we can distinguish between the objective identity (coordinates identified outside by others) and the subjective identity (self-presentation) or the permanent identity and the occasional identity. The scale of variability can be classified as an indicator of social mobility in a given culture; in this view, civilizational differences rest on the proportions of the influence of external factors, as well as those related to choice.

The use of coordinates automatically forces the coordination – and thus the harmonization – of standards. And vice versa – to some extent, the harmonization is implemented precisely in such a way that it forces the determination of coordinates.

The harmonization of standards has a history of its own. For a long time, perhaps even today, it has taken place within the framework of corporate life, which characterized the order of medieval cities. In this order, “both work and leisure activities were usually carried out only within specific communities” (Tandecki 1995: 8). The “theatricality” of medieval society⁴²⁴ does not stem from a predilection for strong artistic impressions but rather results from the will, privilege, and compulsion to demonstrate standards,⁴²⁵ a force that reveals the face – or perhaps just a mirror image – of freedom.

423 M. Heller, *Szczęście w przestrzeni Banacha*, Kraków 1995, p. 118. Here, it is worth to note that it was Descartes who invented the system of coordinates (x - y); the analytical geometry he built on it (to replace descriptive geometry) is a truly revolutionary contribution to science, probably no less important than the celebrated cogito formula.

424 Widely discussed in literature. See, for instance, the collection *The Performance of Middle English Culture* (J. P. Paxson et al., ed., Woodbridge 1999).

425 Not accidentally, however, theatre is an ideal place to demonstrate standards of communities: A. Dąbrówka, “Staging a Mirror, Establishing Harmony: Theatrical Constitution, Display and Control of Value Systems,” in: *Images of the City*, ed. A. Rasmus and M. Cieślak, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle 2009, pp. 2–16.

14. Confraternities as Media in the Civilizing Process⁴²⁶

The functioning of confraternities can be described according to the tasks that they were meant to fulfill. However, for heuristic purposes, our classification shall not be based on the accounts of confraternity members, but rather on the actual outcomes of their actions; not those direct – like participation in funerals – but the far-reaching and within the perspective of eschatological safety. These effects will in turn be associated with the civilizational functions distinguished by Reiner Wild (1982) in his attempt to ground literary studies in Elias' theory of civilization.⁴²⁷

1. As mentioned in chapter 2, Elias' dynamic representation of civilization relies on Lloyd's structuralist methodology: causal relationships between action, consciousness, institutions, and structures serve as the driving force of social change. The central concept here is figuration, understood as a network of interdependencies that pertain to each individual; society is the sum of these interdependencies between individuals.⁴²⁸ As the *agens* of history act not the people but the conflicting figurations, in which everyone participates and to which everyone contributes, but which simultaneously socialize and confine us. This relationist approach interprets European civilization as a process of social integration and attributes the emergence of self-control and moral will to political circumstances; as an unintended consequence of the monopoly on violence in centralized states. As we indicated

426 This chapter corresponds to my lecture "Confraternities as media in the process of civilization: Western Europe and Poland," held on May 10, 1998 at the 33rd International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, a session sponsored by the Society for Confraternity Studies. I would like to express my gratitude to Professors Joëlle Rollo-Koster (University of Rhode Island) and Konrad Eisenbichler (University of Toronto).

427 It should be noted that the social phenomena described by N. Elias constitute the subject of a study by J. Arditi entitled *A Genealogy of Manners: Transformations of Social Relations in France and England from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago 1998).

428 "[D]as, was wir Gesellschaft nennen ist weder eine Abstraktion von Eigentümlichkeiten gesellschaftsloser Individuen, noch ein System oder eine Ganzheit jenseits der Individuen, sondern vielmehr das von Individuen gebildete Interdependenzgeflecht selbst." N. Elias, *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation*, Bern, 1969, pp. LXVIIIff.

earlier, this explanation appears to be insufficient, since we should also account for religion and other cognitive domains (see chapter 13).

2. Given the field of operations of confraternities, their activities coincided with other phenomena associated with the second Christianization offensive in Europe. We have determined sacramentalism as the theological outcome of the latter; politically, it effected from the Investiture controversy. The objective of the Christianization offensive – which we may simplify as Gregorian Revolution yet it was no private crusade – was to “bring the *ecclesia universalis* of the Creed within the reach of daily experience in the form of learned sodalities and lay confraternities. In the course of the century institutions and ideas had been developed which could now prove their viability” (Oberman 1978: 93). The step before was to jointly lay foundations for a new social order to replace the pagan tribal associations (Bredero 1986: 299).⁴²⁹ But, now, both the Church and lay rulers set separate goals, thus tearing the former sacral-political unity apart. This does not equate to a constant war between these realms, but instead reflects their urge to legitimize separate authority. They would mutually bestow it long and often enough anyway; but, otherwise, they would constantly consolidate their own rule, not just by using force and imposing jurisdiction but also by setting up their own apparatus of legitimation that served to expand their influence based on loyalty.

In addition to theological aspects discussed in chapter 11, one psychological factor played an important role in this parting of ways: both sides – mainly the Church, but not exclusively – have lost much of their authority in the event of the Great Schism and the formation of national kingdoms, which resulted in a profound reevaluation of the concept of universality. We should not underestimate the confusion experienced at the time across all communities in relation to the reciprocal acts of humiliation that neither side of this power struggle did shy away from. However, we may also reduce this factor to systemic circumstances: the distribution of powers changed with the emergence of various centers that expected loyalty and in exchange offered benefits like immunity;⁴³⁰ that is, for the

429 J. Le Goff attempts to explain feudal relationships in a familial context, thus situating it in pre-Christian tradition (German *ankinden*), *The symbolic ritual of vassalage* (Le Goff 1977: 237–287).

430 See B. H. Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space. Power, Restraint, and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe*, Ithaca, 1998. Lateran IV, Constitution 43: Clerics under no obligation to laymen are forbidden to take an oath of fidelity to them (Ne sine causa clericus fidelitatem laico faciat); also see chapter 10.2, on the loyalty phase of the investiture controversy.

recognition of certain common values and active attitude toward them; in other words, a community of shared intentions.

3. The state of affairs that allowed such approach did not occur by chance; according to Kumor (1969), it resulted from the adoption of a new principle. The inter-class parochial structure enabled the grounding of group identity and social diversification in religious and community values: the identification with various saints and mystery values like Christological and Marian motifs, the Eucharist, or the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the mundane reasons, possibly even more important at the time; namely the formation of the material infrastructure of the Christian society. In 1255, the Synod of Bordeaux directs the “energy of lay people to live in communities” mainly toward economic goals: confraternities were to repair roads and bridges, regulate rivers, erect bridges (*fratres pontifices*), cathedrals, hospices for pilgrims, and finally hospitals.⁴³¹ Therefore, the components of technical civilization appeared not that autonomous from spiritual motivation after all. Given what we said about the shaping of the profane world, we should understand this systematic approach to the establishment of its infrastructure. It bears no importance whether the construction of roads and hospices was intended to make the pilgrims’ lives easier the same way as the erection of churches. The foundation of hospices and hospitals may have also served to facilitate the exercise of moral control over pilgrims and paupers. The broader effect of civilization is obvious in both cases.

Similarly to other areas, the application of the cooperative model is also marked by a parallelism between the Church and the lay rulers. Indeed, there existed typical confraternities comprising vassals and serving as political instruments to control the latter in the interest of the prince and his dynasty, and territorially unify the vassal area (Reynolds 1993: 133). These typical confraternities used own emblems, enjoyed dedicated chapels, held annual meetings, celebrated own holidays, ordered masses on their patrons’ days, regulated the behavior of their members, performed prayers, and held masses for the deceased members (Reynolds 1993: 133). The image of Poland at that time was slightly different than Western Europe. The Kingdom of Poland was a nobles’ democracy with no strong central power. The mechanisms of the civilizing effect were generated and propelled by the system of customs (Bogucka 1994). In turn, the latter functioned thanks to horizontal communication, independent from the center.

431 The latter are “an achievement of Christian mercy, barely known to the ancient pagan or Jewish world” (Kumor 1972: 517).

4. We can demonstrate the necessity to acknowledge the religious factor even within the same phenomena that shape the essence of the mechanism defined by Elias. The secular state was not alone in developing its monopoly for violence; so did the Church, and with identical results: the suppression of instincts. Besides, Stephen C. Jaeger's study (1985) proves the important role of the clergy – the royal chaplains and cathedral schools⁴³² – in civilizing of the aristocratic customs and shaping of the system of court ethics. This was achieved by civilizing the knights, as Orderic Vitalis illustratively demonstrated: the clergy instructs the laity as a rider who guides a steed with reins and spurs (Jaeger 1985: 262). This is confirmed by both Latin literature of the tenth and eleventh centuries and early literature in national languages.⁴³³

Besides, state coercion, monopoly on physical violence, and the suppression of instincts are one side, while on the other we find symbolic coercion and the monopoly on the eschatological theory of man as a God's creation in search of salvation, eternal life. The latter became possible ever since Christianity achieved universal, undisputed acceptance and unification. However, each of these factors required constant effort from a well-organized central government. Along with the official apparatus and religious orders, the confraternities played an important role in this matter.

The creation and functioning of confraternities was associated with all forms of piety. Vincent considers monastic piety to be decisive for the beginnings of confraternities in Normandy (Vincent 1988: 89) and for mendicant orders at a later stage. In Poland, the Dominicans initiated the development of confraternities in the thirteenth century (Kumor 1969: 507); then, the Cisterians assumed the leading role in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; followed by the Jesuits in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Paul Trio even emphasizes the connection between the confraternities and folk piety in the title of his key monograph on the confraternities of Ghent,⁴³⁴ associating them with folk piety and urban life. However, the mass character of

432 "The Courtier Bishop in Vitae from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 58/1983, pp. 291–325; idem, *The Envy of Angels. Cathedral Schools and Social Ideas in Medieval Europe, 950–1200*, Philadelphia, 1994.

433 S. C. Jaeger, "Beauty of Manners and Discipline (schoene site, zuht): An Imperial Tradition of Courtliness in the German Romance," in: *Barocker Lustspiegel. Studien zur Literatur des Barock*, eds. M. Bircher et al., Amsterdam, 1984, pp. 27–45.

434 *Volksreligie als spiegel van een stedelijke samenleving. De broederschappen te Gent in de late middeleeuwen* (1993; Folk piety as a reflection of urban life. The confraternities of Ghent in the late Middle Ages).

confraternities often went hand in hand with parochial class indifference; that is, representatives of the elites belonged to the same organizations as ordinary parishioners. What distinguishes the confraternities from craft guilds is voluntary membership and, in larger groups, the fact that members could not even know each other.

However, in a historical perspective, Vincent (1988: 288) also situates the confraternities outside of monasticism, defining their role as a factor in the establishment of “parochial identity” (Van Engen 1986: 543), which – as Kumor noted earlier (1969: 513) – proved so stable that it could reciprocally serve as an organizational model. Within legal parishes, confraternities and guilds formed symbolic parishes with own oratory or chapel, altar, clergy, special cult, and benefice. The confraternities were diversified professionally and probably socially, too. However, despite his interest in folk piety, Trio does not consider it necessary to differentiate in his research between the “population” and the elites (1993: 16, ft. 5). Therefore, we may assume that sacramentalism constituted the theological norm and devotional ideal for the confraternities.

One indirect proof of the increasing role of the parish, which offered a full spectrum of forms of religious life, can be the relative vanishing of the monastic institution of *conversi* after 1330 (Swanson 1997: 108).⁴³⁵ Later, *conversi* only appear as independent priests in residence who receive shelter in monasteries in return for donations (Swanson 1997: 115). The guilds and confraternities contributed to this shift the most. The study of confraternities soon grew to become a separate discipline,⁴³⁶ operating mainly within historiography but increasingly expanding onto other areas.

435 At this point, one should also consider the effect of the thirteenth-century disappearance – with the reformulation of this sacrament – of one of the factors that previously bolstered the development of the institution of the *conversi*, namely the modification of penance, very severe in the early Christian Church; the burdensome expiatory experience could be avoided by monks and those who contributed to religious life as *conversi* (Nadolski 1992, v. 3: 96). Regarding an apparently more permanent role of the *conversi* in the Teutonic Order, especially at the Austrian seat in Melk, see Löser 1999.

436 With its own congresses, the quarterly *Confraternitas* founded in 1990 with an updated bibliography, the Society for Confraternity Studies, and an online mailing list since 1997. Key literature, see L. Remling, “Bruderschaften als Forschungsgegenstand,” *Jahrbuch für Volkskunde* 1980, NF 3, pp. 89–112; G. G. Meersemann, *Ordo fraternitatis. Confraternité e pietà dei laici nel Medioevo*, Vol. 3., Roma, 1977; G. Le Bras, “Les confréries chrétiennes,” *Etudes de sociologie religieuse*, Paris II/1956, pp. 423–462. In Polish scholarly literature, see S. Litak, “Bractwa religijne w Polsce przedrozbiorowej XIII–XVIII wiek. Rozwój i problematyka,” *Przegląd Historyczny* 88/1997, pp. 499–523;

5. The entirely original contribution of religion to the civilizing process are new factors of interiorization: mercy, love, and good will, sometimes also defined as the will to civilize (Bejczy 1995: 64–65). Therefore, this intentionalism in bettering customs occurs outside of the writings of court and didactic poets. Moreover, there also are the same elements of softening manners contained in the rhymed German guidebooks of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, abundantly quoted by Elias (1969: 75–89).⁴³⁷ The rules of conduct of young monks in the refectory stipulates: “When in refectory, do not wander around with your eyes.... Eat tidily, in silence, with respect; not driven by gluttony, as if you were unable to sate yourself. Do not lean over the food as a hungry dog would: do not try to sate your eyes earlier than your palate.”⁴³⁸

Hugh of Saint Victor initiates the genre of “good table manners” with three chapters contained in the manual for the novitiate, *De institutione novitiorum*.⁴³⁹ In a 1485 sermon, the preacher Ferrer instructs the audience not to eat “in a hurry, like pigs;” in another, Ferrer scolds the drunkards: “And you, beastly man (*bestialis homo*), you drink without necessity” (Dobrowolski 1996: 125, ft. 71). The craftsmen in Toruń had to pay a fine whenever, during a confraternity feast, someone happened to spill beer onto the table, and the stain was bigger than a hand (Tandecki 1995: 22; Czarcieński 1993: 104). The statute of the “literary” (literate people’s) confraternity in Nowy Sącz forbids interrupting the speaker at the meeting (“tryst”):

Interrupting whoever is speaking is dishonorable. One should wait for them to finish, and the one afterwards as well. Everyone will thus be allowed to speak their mind, as

“Confréries religieuses dans la Pologne médiévale,” *Quaestiones medii aevi novae* 2/1997, pp. 71–84; I. Czarcieński, “Les confréries en Pologne – état de la question,” *Quaestiones medii aevi novae* 2/1997, pp. 85–96; J. Kłoczowski, *Wspólnoty chrześcijańskie. Grupy życia wspólnego w chrześcijaństwie zachodnim do XV wieku*, Kraków, 1964; A. Borkowski, *De confraternitatibus ecclesiasticis*, Washington 1918; also see K. Kuźmak, “Bractwo kościelne,” EK 2, col. 1013–1020.

437 Published by A. Winkler in his dissertation *Selbständige deutsche Tischzuchten des Mittelalters. Texte und Studien*, Marburg, 1982.

438 VIII *De regula et moderatione in mensa servanda*: “In mensa non sint oculi tui gyrovagi.... Cum disciplina et silentio et timore comede; non autem cum impetu gulae, quasi non possis satiari. Non effundus te to – tum super cibum, sicut canis famelicus: nec antea quaereas satiari oculos quam palatum.” *David de Augusta, Ad quid venisti*, PL 184, col. 1192C–D.

439 PL 176, col. 949–952; this matter is discussed in chapter 1 of P. Alfonsi’s *Disciplina clericalis*, eds. A. Hilka, W. Söderhjelm, 1911; qtd. after D. Harmening, “Tischzuchten,” VL 9, pp. 941–947.

long as it will be *in charitate*, without stubbornness, with modesty and honesty, without taking insult or defaming another (Kumor 1960: 384).

It seems that the psychological automatism of transposing external coercion inwards, the pragmatic anticipation of external control with self-control, moral canniness, or even opportunism in the adjustment to complex mutual conditioning (figurations) may not suffice to explain the essence of the civilizing process. The adoption of two types of coexisting civilizations – Christian and secular – would probably constitute an excessive outcome, as *caritas* and control were not entirely separate and did not simply split between the two sides. But they were never the same thing either.

Besides, if we do not take into account the knowledge and initiative of the believers, both subjected to and co-creating the civilizing process, we might easily fall for the theory of “brutal acculturation.”

6. The qualitative specificity of the second phase of Christianization can be depicted with a comparison to agriculture: instead of an extensive economy typical to nomads who move on after depleting their resources, an intensive economy was required in order to more efficiently cultivate what was already available, as there were no more reserves outside. This breakthrough has obvious and inexorable consequences in every area of the social structure and must always constitute a civilizational breakthrough. An intensive economy requires more farmers, brings about the ideas of ownership, care for oneself, competition, accumulation, and also inspires inventions. The entire social life changes, from the most general structures to their smallest components.⁴⁴⁰

Therefore, there occurred a transition to the intensive phase in the areas regulated by the Church and lay rulers. The situation required the establishment of a functional social structure that covered the entirety of behaviors of everyday life. In both tasks, the religious confraternities have played a huge yet largely underestimated role. Their merits could never be achieved by the most powerful authorities or the largest number of officials. On the one hand, it was necessary to involve as many people as possible in the organization – whether parochial or hierarchical – and, on the other hand, to include them in the endeavor of co-administration (subsidiarity), self-control, and self-improvement, by means of regrouping them in social organizations. One example of confraternities taking

440 Noteworthy, this does not occur as long as current conditions allow further use of extensive economy. This would explain why a superpower that occupied one-sixth of the world and half of the Cosmos had not yet mastered the production of potatoes.

over “the role of guardians of holy places, organizers of religious processions, and teachers of religious truths” is presented by Terpstra (1995: 205).

The above opposition of obedience and predictability (chapter 13.2) appears in the form of duty and voluntariness combined in people’s attitudes toward centralized power. Not all participants in the state apparatus were merely paid officials. Among them were individuals who believed in a common goal. Scholars usually underestimate extent of voluntariness in the Middle Ages. The stimuli originating from the social environment – both vertically and horizontally – should not be confined to violence. There were also positive motivations: not only fear but also will, even if inspired by spiritual or material gain and expected or received from the central power or neighbors. To put it simply, there were not just those who had to pay taxes, but also those who mostly wished to achieve salvation.⁴⁴¹

7. The intentionality in the establishment of confraternities to fulfill the goals set by the religious system – usually by the Church – comes from their mass character combined with voluntary membership. Confraternity members were also encouraged with special indulgences and allowed to participate in the life of the church; they had their own liturgy, chaplain, liturgical equipment, altar, or chapel (Wiśniowski 1969: 74–75). The Church applied the same strategy in its third, post-Trent offensive, which we will discuss later. The voluntariness of joining non-craft confraternities has been confirmed on several occasions. The senior of the confraternity responsible for recruitment not only assessed the morality of the candidates⁴⁴² but also introduced them to the statute (Schaffer for fourteenth-century Racibórz, Kuraś for fifteenth-century Skaryszewo; Wiśniowski 1969: 64).

441 In a presentist tone, we could interpret the desire for Heaven as longing for the only place without taxation (a tax haven). Coercion into taxes by bureaucracy and the army is sometimes considered the *raison d'être* of state power, and perceived, alongside politics and warfare as a driving force of the history of nation states – much rather than economy! (C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States 990–1990*, Oxford, 1990; qtd. after Burke 1992: 146). If so, why not consider secular taxes the reason for the success of religious mendicant movements? The emergence of the Franciscans was already explained by Coulton as an objection to the predatory, capitalist nature of the older orders; qtd. after J. Romein, “Boeren en monniken in de middeleeuwen,” *Het onvoltooid verleden, Cultuurhistorische studies*, Amsterdam 1948, pp. 187–206.

442 The same is true of the Cisterian confraternities: “The candidates must enjoy a good reputation, not be usurers, looters, thieves, cardsharps, drunkards, witches, public sinners” (Kantak 1933, v. 1: 324).

A particular type of purpose is guidance or redirection of an initiative. The French Church, moved by fear of the flourishing Albigensian movement, wished to steer the religious confraternities toward deeds of mercy and construction works (cathedrals).

In 1585, the synod of the Diocese of Włocławek ordered the restoration of the old rural confraternities beside each church so that they operate “inter plebeios homines.” For a long time, craft guilds in Poland remained under the jurisdiction of bishops. It was the bishops who founded the guilds, established their order of service, granted them privileges, and controlled their possessions and their books during church inspections. The 1621 synod of Cracow dealt not only with the religious activity of guilds but also forbade monopolies and usury, demanded the improvement of the education of journeymen, and threatened with church sanctions in case of disobedience. Similar points were discussed at the 1738 synod of Poznań (Kumor 1969: 514). Was this a desacralization of time?

Naturally, on a social scale, intentionality is always a product of the interests of different parties, mutual pressure, and negotiations. Even relations based on obedience are partly symmetrical. Similarly, religious movements were not always banned, but instead given a rule to follow, which they obliged. Achieving a communion of intent is the crucial outcome of social interaction.

8. Despite the diversity of types and functions, today the continuity of existence and development of confraternities in general is beyond doubt. There was a tendency to consider the different kinds of guilds and prayer confraternities as one type of organization that fulfilled various devotional functions. Aertsen (1978: 73) associates this with the importance of the religious ideology of labor adopted by the guilds, which enabled to consider one’s profession as a vocation; therefore, occurring earlier than assumed by Max Weber who associated this approach with Protestantism. In his comparison of religious confraternities with craft guilds, Vincent (1988: 35–44) also examines them jointly and recognizes their dual character as a common feature: “d’union de prière et de société d’entraide mutuelle.” Trio brings forward several counterarguments (1993: 40). Joëlle Rollo-Koster (1998: 11) concentrates on the disappearance of devotional functions in a confraternity in Avignon consisting of Italian merchants which, thus, became more of a social club. This tendency is evidenced in the guild statutes; the later they are, the less space they devote to religious norms (Kumor 1969: 512–513). On the one hand, this reflects the omission of certain ideas due to their increasing obviousness and – on the other – the progress made in terms

of the professionalization of guilds (“industrialization”)⁴⁴³ and local administrative and religious institutions (parishes and orders), which assumed certain responsibilities of guilds and confraternities, also at their explicit request. Oliński (1996: 79–81) studies the agreement between Thorn/Toruń’s leatherworkers and the Franciscans (1366) who undertook to celebrate thirty masses for a deceased guild member, for a fixed fee, as well as regular confraternal Ember-day masses for the living and the deceased. The confraternities ordering professional pastoral service hardly makes for an instance of secularization. The “religious character of guild organization” was emphasized even more clearly by the erection of a special guild brotherhood; beside guild members, it was open to outsiders who could not become superiors; as in the Elbing/Elbląg Marian confraternity, founded in 1334 by the porters guild (Wiśniowski 1969: 61).

Save for one significant difference – the mandatory membership in professional associations versus the voluntary nature of religious confraternities – there is no real difference between them in terms of piety. The attendance at services, even weekly, is often higher in guilds. Some guild statutes promote religious orthodoxy by excluding infidels. The most tolerant in this respect are the guilds of south-eastern Poland, which allow mixed membership (Lwów/Lviv and Przemyśl; Kumor 1969: 512–513). For instance, membership fees and fines in some guilds in Silesia and Cracow could consist of both money and wax for liturgical purposes (Wiśniowski 1969: 60); an usual practice in devotional confraternities. Besides, the guilds sometimes founded their own religious confraternities (Wiśniowski 1969: 61).

The mandatory membership in the guild was probably justified from the very beginning by economic reasons like production quotas or monopolies. One example of a purely social application is the exclusion or obstruction of entry for “outsiders.” This is evidenced by the tax barriers for future master craftsmen: the sons of guild masters paid twenty times lower taxes than other apprentices from the county and thirty times lower than the candidates from other regions (Sosson 1984: 84; for the county of Holland). The second reason may be the usefulness of guilds for local administration and the state. Candidates to the guild had to own armament required by the local authorities and obligate themselves not to dispose of it later so that they be always ready for war (Tandecki 1995: 9). This was because riflemen confraternities were not present everywhere to ensure defense.

443 Tandecki explains the existence of a similar concept in the statutes of Prussian guilds with the late-fourteenth-century appearance of stronger competition from other centers and non-guild craftsmen (1995: 8).

However, we cannot overlook the principle of compulsory membership in guilds when discussing the non-economic areas of social life. The guild statutes regulate and subdue personal lives to the sacramental spirit: they oblige to canonical marriage, marital fidelity, avoidance of cursing and blasphemy, Sunday rest, celebration of Sunday mass, visiting the sick by young masters, ensuring ministerial service, accompanying the priest with candles to the sick or dying. Furthermore, the guild statutes command the collective manifestation of piety through participation in Corpus Christi processions and the Resurrection Mass; with candles, a guild flag, a scepter, a mace, and other symbols of each guild. Moreover, the guild statutes strengthen the collective concern for the salvation of souls. This last point somewhat gathers the essence of sacramental piety. The entire journey of life, marked by the stations of the successive sacraments, was concluded by the “administration of last rites,” which constituted both a proof of devotion and an indispensable blessing for the soul. Thus, the deceased became for the Church the best witness – because silent – who confirmed the “aura of actuality” of this system of symbols. No wonder that the Christian funeral is an almost irremovable component of all statutes (Wiśniowski 1969: 70), even in confraternities with the most elementary of programs. A system of penalties and rewards served as incentive for the participation in the funerals of fellow members.

We pondered a moment longer on the identity of the guilds to prove their identity as religious craftsmen brotherhoods. A similar set of civilizing functions is even more evident in the statutes of devotional and charitable brotherhoods.

Needless to say, the assurance of Christian funerals for the homeless, performing hospital services, visiting the sick, caring for the poor, mutual assistance “in temporal deprivation,”⁴⁴⁴ and perpetuating the memory of the deceased⁴⁴⁵ – beside religious merit – all these activities constituted a celebration of the dignity of the human being, thus guaranteeing an individualizing and humanizing effect.

444 A list of examples by E. Wiśniowski (1969: 71–72).

445 “In order to preserve the memory of the deceased members of the guild, a special book was kept, entitled the Commemorial Register, or *Regestrum defunctorum in fraternitate*.” Devoted to the memory of the deceased were, above all, the quarterly Ember-day masses, often found in guild statutes; in that of the Cracow bookbinders (1627) for instance: “Four times a year, on the occasion of the Ember days, all members are to appear with their spouses and companions for the requiem ... to pray to our Lord for the souls of our deceased brothers” (Kumor 1972: 513). The death-related customs of confraternity members have been discussed, based on sources from Bologna, by N. Terpstra in “Death and Dying in Renaissance Confraternities,” ed. Eisenbichler 1991: 179–200.

9. Although the functioning of confraternities is best visible and documented in cities, they are not uncommon in the countryside, which scholars proved beyond any doubt for France,⁴⁴⁶ Flanders,⁴⁴⁷ Italy,⁴⁴⁸ and Poland (though very few).⁴⁴⁹ Both urban and rural confraternities operate under strict authorizations and regulations.

It is possible that it was easier for municipalities to achieve a clear ideal of the sacral community (*Sakralgemeinschaft*), characterized by common concern for religious salvation, legal order, and the city's honor.⁴⁵⁰ Besides, this common concern sometimes resulted in piety so intense that it caused dissatisfaction with the incompetence of the local clergy and led to attempts of subordinating the latter, manifested in the conclusion of complex agreements with priests, bringing them to court, or even refusing to pay tithing (Swanson 1997: 244–249).

10. The social range of confraternities was universal. It encompassed the entirety of adult believers, without prejudice to gender and class.⁴⁵¹ In the

446 In this case, it turned out that rural confraternities only appear in later sources (for Normandy, see Vincent 1988), but there are no significant differences in terms of programs.

447 First testimony in 1334, Gistel; 150 years later, each rural parish has its own confraternity (Trio 1993: 68, ft. 37).

448 In the region of Florence alone, 130 rural confraternities appeared before 1400 (Ch. M. de la Roncière; qtd. after Eisenbichler 1998: 12).

449 The abovementioned case of the Diocese of Włocławek/Vladislavia, 1585: “fraternitates communes seu generales” for peasants (Kumor 1972: 510); also cf. Bochnak for German-Polish Silesia, Matern for Warmia, “Die Elendbruderschaften,” pp. 17–18; qtd. after Wiśniowski 1969: 58. I do not quote examples from other countries, but this does not mean lack of evidence.

450 “Einheit von religiösem Heil, Recht und Ehre einer Stadt,” Ringshausen (1977: 217) with reference to H. Schmidt, “Die deutschen Städtechroniken als Spiegel des bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses im Spätmittelalter,” *Schriften der Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 3/1968, p. 34. R. N. Swanson (1997: 247) too states that the local church acted as the representative of the community and its self-identity. In the cult of Corpus Christi, M. James (1983: 4) notices the manifestation of a creative ideological role in an urban setting, “in which the alternative symbols and ties of lordship, lineage and serfdom, available in the countryside, were lacking.”

451 Cf. the membership of the princely family in the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Assumption in Racibórz (fourteenth century); the statute of the Confraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Cracow from 1481 confirms the membership of king Casimir IV Jagiellon with his family and servants (Wiśniowski 1969: 65); noble-only confraternities are relatively rare (Wiśniowski 1969: 67); “nobiles ac providi laboriosique viri, tam clerici, quam laici diversarum condicionum et statuum homines,

post-Trent period, the range extended to the male youth (sodalities) while, in Italy, several male youth confraternities are known to have already existed since the late Middle Ages; for instance, in Genoa⁴⁵² and Florence (Eisenbichler 1998).

The confraternities gathered mainly lay people and, thus, were defined lay confraternities, but one should not ignore either the membership of clergymen⁴⁵³ or their foundational, administrative, and protective inspirations not only in bodies of the church and secular clergy but also in religious orders. The 0.2 % rate in Poland is well below the average for England, which amounted to 10 % (Hanawalt 1984: 24), but even Polish confraternities could have much greater participation of the clergy. The clergy formed their own bodies (*confraternitas plebanorum*),⁴⁵⁴ but these were usually open to outsiders. Only few confraternities would restrict access according to some criteria like nationality (*fraternitas Polonorum*)⁴⁵⁵ or extreme poverty – as in the case of mendicant confraternities⁴⁵⁶ – which nonetheless differed from the brotherhoods of the

utriusque sexus Cristifideles,” so declared the Skaryszew confraternity, founded in 1435 by Zbigniew, the Bishop of Cracow; E. Wiśniowski 1969: 65, 61, with reference to S. Kuraś, *Dokument bractwa w Skaryszewie* (orig. at the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, No. 2531) and *Statuty i przywileje*, No. 7, 273.

452 E. Grendi, “Le società... dei giovani a Genova fra il 1460 e la riforma del 1528,” *Quaderni storici* 80/1992, pp. 509–528; qtd. after Eisenbichler 1998: 22.

453 B. Kumor (1972: 510) quotes the following figures: 52,826 people in the scapular confraternity in 1600–1650; 88,185 people in 1650–1700 (200 clergymen, so only 0.2%; 40,780 men and 47,200 women). See also E. Wiśniowski, “Parish Clergy in Medieval Poland,” *The Christian Community of Medieval Poland. Anthologies*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Wrocław, 1981.

454 Author unknown, “Die Priesterbruderschaften im Ermland,” *Pastoralblatt für die Diözese Ermland* 14/1882, pp. 91–95, 97–101; W. Raczkowski, “Konfraternie duchownych w wielkopolskiej części diecezji poznańskiej w okresie przedtrydenckim (XV i XVI wiek),” typescript of the Department of History of the Catholic University of Lublin; S. Kuraś, “Statuty i przywileje bractwa kapłanów dekanatu Zatorskiego 1378–1526,” *Polonia Sacra* 7.4/1955; statute of the priestly confraternity in Łańcut granted by Piotr, the Bishop of Przemyśl, in 1450: B. Ulanowski, *Scr. rer. Pol.*, Vol. 13, p. 432; also cf. p. 297; No. 43, p. 312, No. 71.

455 Document from 1423, regarding a confraternity in Kazimierz: *Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Katedry Krakowskiej św. Wacława*, ed. by F. Piekosiński, Kraków 1883, II, No. 613, p. 487; qtd. after E. Wiśniowski 1969: 67. W. Bochnak calculates that 38 % of the confraternities of the diocese of Wrocław operated in Polish-language dominated areas, while 62 % in the German-dominated ones (1983: 215).

456 *Fraternitas mendicantium vel pauperum*, Kraków 1433, restored in the sixteenth century as the Saint Lazarus Confraternity (Kumor 1972: 523); for a monograph on

poor, whose main goal was to provide care for people suffering from temporary problems (Wiśniowski 1969: 58). One practical limitation was the belonging to a certain parish, but there were confraternities that allowed candidates from other cities, meaning that fellow members could not know each other (Bochnak 1983).

11. The universality of reach, the class indifference of the social structure,⁴⁵⁷ operating within parishes under strict rules and authority of ecclesiastical jurisdiction – all these aspects justify the inclusion of confraternities and guilds in the domain of sacramental religiosity that stemmed from parishes and their codified rules (canonical law). Both can be perceived as instruments of gentle control over popular piety – a redefinition of the cult of saints in connection with labor – and of the implementation of sacramental models.

Even though this strengthened the centralist Church, it is more appropriate to speak of “parishioning” than “clericalization” (C. Bynum),⁴⁵⁸ as this central power was not based on coercion into obedience by clergy, but rather on the development of the widest possible front of participants and conscious co-creators of this system. Admittedly, there declined the communal character of the liturgy – shared liturgical functions and a diversity of sacred texts – that prevailed until the eleventh century (Nadolski 1992: 51). However, since the mid-twelfth century and along with the growing importance of the sacrament of priesthood and the role of the parson, the administration of ecclesiastical property was increasingly entrusted to secular vitrici;⁴⁵⁹ by the end of the fourteenth century, it was a widely accepted solution throughout the Church.⁴⁶⁰ The vitrici were not confraternities but legal Church institutions with officeholders elected for fixed terms, whose task was to administer the Church as a real estate or a foundation.⁴⁶¹ We may see

mendicant confraternities of Warmia, see G. Matern, “Die Elendenbruderschaften im Ermland,” *Pastoralblatt für die Diözese Ermland* 38/1906, pp. 17–21.

457 K. Kantak (1933, v. 1: 157) defines the confraternities established under the auspices of the Cistercians as “all-class-inclusive.” The “social heterogeneity” of the Italian Renaissance confraternities is discussed by R. Weissman (1991: 209).

458 We mentioned this earlier (chapter 10.1) while presenting the transcendentalization of the sacred as a civilizational transformation.

459 Description after B. Kumor (1972: 517); W. Wójcik, “Instytucja wityryków w świetle śląskich protokołów wizytacyjnych z XVII wieku,” *Prawo kanoniczne* 6/1963, p. 60; E. Wiśniowski, “Udział świeckich w zarządzie parafią w średniowiecznej Polsce,” *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 18.2/1970, pp. 54–66.

460 Next to the peculiarly “Polish” name of *vitrici*, R. N. Swanson (1997: 245) offers several variants from other countries.

461 Tasks of the vitrici as listed by B. Kumor (1972: 516): maintenance and conservation of the church building, collection of donations for *fabrica ecclesiae*, care over Church

the vitrici as the first step in the development of “democratic” confraternities, in opposition to previous elitist monastic customs (*receptio in confraternitatem, philadelphia*).

The evolution of Italian confraternities from organizations almost entirely independent from the clergy toward parochial institutions under complete control of the Church, elite and hierarchical, is presented by Ronald Weissman (1991: 212),⁴⁶² who explains the difference between many forms of piety during the Renaissance and Baroque. I believe that his observation simply confirms the consolidation of the sacramental model and its victory over the spontaneous popular piety that occurred in the late Middle Ages. Cantor (1993: 564) even considers the latter a crucial mistake of the Church at that time, which had thus wasted “a great potential of piety.”⁴⁶³ Victory was also achieved at the cost of blood: in one Portuguese community, the parishioners murdered their priest, whom they accused of “depriving them of their religion,” just because he

property, provision of supplies, participation in the inventorying of Church property, filing annual reports to the Church’s hierarch and parish superiors. In return, the synod laws granted them the following privileges: the right of the first seat in the church, assisting the parson in the setting of the pews, free of charge Catholic funeral, possession of the keys to the church’s treasury, storage of the keys to the temple, and appointment of the sexton and bell-ringer. Other examples of secular control over the clergy by R. N. Swanson (1997: 244–249); S. Sołtyszewski, “Dochody kościelne pod zarządem wtrykusów w polskim ustawodawstwie synodalnym,” *Prawo Kanoniczne* 3/1960, Bk. 3–4.

462 In her studies on confraternities, H. Manikowska (1996: 37, ft. 10) emphasizes the recognition of the role of “urban parishes in building social communities.” After the initial phase, this role was no longer exclusive; strong religious confraternities would usually rise to prominence wherever they emerged; in Italy “they were beyond the clergy’s control until the sixteenth century” (R. Weissman 1991: 206) The omission of rural parishes results from poor documentation and, admittedly, greater attractiveness of cities like Florence as the subject and area of research in comparison to small villages.

463 A similar position is taken by M. Miller in *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950–1150*, Ithaca, 1993; Miller objects to the determinism of political factors (“history from the top down,” p. 5). Contrary to the “tendency to associate institutions with the repression of popular piety” (p. 6; qtd. after P. Diehlaw, TMR, 94.2.9) noticed in the works of several historians of religion. Miller emphasizes the influence of local initiatives on the circumstances of the Investiture controversy and its consequences, such as numerous episcopal nominations among the local clergy of Verona, after 1122, concurrently to the successive removal of “imperial bishops” who had ruled in the capitals since the times of Charlemagne (p. 163).

condemned their traditional celebrations in the name of the post-Trent reform (the seventeenth century; Weissman 1991: 215).

Thus, a regular confraternity is often a miniparish, with its own liturgy and real estate,⁴⁶⁴ often a branch of a parish for a given street. In addition to professional confraternities, there were also those that occasionally⁴⁶⁵ or permanently brought together the neighboring communities and their families.⁴⁶⁶ Often people of a certain profession lived in the same area. The confraternity also determines and reflects the model of family and kinship, i.e. it fuses these two levels and serves as intermediary in the transfer and tradition of values and the resolution of conflicts between values. This in turn means negotiating opinions and setting standards, which can be regarded as the mainstream of the civilizing process. People do not participate in it as isolated individuals, but as members of an organization; generally speaking, as participants in the figuration. Everything in this activity which was associated with signaling, manifesting, improving, and regulating standards of behavior – is a media function.

12. We understand the media broadly,⁴⁶⁷ as means of social communication potentially used in the processes of mutual orientation of organisms in their domains of operation. These means include all conventional forms of behavior as well as all material, social, economic, and symbolic factors like objects and processes.

While oral, written and pictorial communication has become the basis for differentiating between the main types of media, organized human behavior has long seemed imperceptible. However, since we now know the extent of communication taking place in that area, we can no longer ignore it.

13. Earlier, we have added the religious factor to Elias' theory and further expanded the mechanism of civilization. This actually is a clarification and emphasis of a concept defined by Elias as *Langsicht*: a deliberate behavior of individuals that anticipates and forecasts the consequences of their actions. In the social dimension and in addition to reproducing the implied external standards in

464 In Poland called "niwki brackie;" B. Kumor 1960: 357. The possessions of the Florentine confraternities are discussed by L. Sebgondi in "Religious Furnishings and Devotional Objects in Renaissance Florentine Confraternities," ed. Eisenbichler 1991: 141–160.

465 For instance, the Florentine *brigata*, that is district delegations selected on the occasion of the carnival on Saint John's Eve or the May festivities (Manikowska 1996: 40).

466 Cf. the street unions in Veliky Novgorod (Krupa 1996: 54).

467 I adopt the definition developed and applied by S. J. Schmidt (1987) and G. Rusch (1987) in their research on contemporary media.

the individual psyche, this means that we must also consider the direct instillation of explicit standards. This may not always be an easy way of internalization, but it still exists. Between the pedagogical mode of execution of didactic tasks, and the involuntary shaping of attitudes under the influence of social circumstances, there exists an entire spectrum of behaviors, figurations, and institutions to which we may assign the accomplishment of certain functions and even tasks in the process of civilization. Religious confraternities have played an important role in the process of intentional instillation, training, and learning of standards.

We refer to the basic assertions of cognitive constructivism. Cognitive processes and structures are activities and factors that create or execute – instead of faithfully representing or passively reflecting – elements, relationships, and features of reality (Rusch 1987: 435). Cognitive structures and processes can be considered the causes or determinants of individual behavior. Concepts, schemes, frameworks, scenarios, and plans on different levels of cognition embody, shape, structure, and organize the image of the internal and external world, the intellectual tools for action and interaction, such as plans and strategies, language, logic, or emotions (Rusch 1987: 436).

The difference between the diverse levels of cognition is best illustrated by a juxtaposition of the two main paths of learning a foreign language. Children learn languages mimetically, by thoughtlessly following other people who already speak said language, thus unconsciously developing a system of rules; adults learn it conceptually, by consciously discovering the existing rules. The same is true about the process of learning standards. It consists in the imitation of examples without knowing the rules, or relies on the knowledge of the rules and their application based on decisions of an active individual. The first path leads to behaviors based on obedience, the second – on sovereignty. The existence and functioning of objectivized rules is at the core of the predictability of behavior. The media are indispensable in the process of replacing obedience with sovereign and intentional behaviors. However, the media must be free, otherwise they will force and intensify obedience, as happens in totalitarian systems.

14. We have stated that mutual pressure does not exclude intentionality. This also applies to confraternities, in which social pressure is placed on the individual. At least some of this pressure is horizontal. Society and individuals are not completely separable entities. The exertion of pressure is possible by means of attitudes – favorable or hostile – of the members of the community. The main vector of pressure is mutual reaffirmation and strengthening of common standards; positive feedback, rather than exercising power or using force against someone. The latter usually applies to an organized enemy of the community; political conflicts, heresy, or satanic conspiracy. But here, too, exist various

degrees of disagreement, aversion, condemnation, exclusion, and physical violence. Between the poles of “freedom and determinism,” history knows an actual third path⁴⁶⁸ between physical coercion, total determination, pragmatic opportunism, cognitive coordination – the positive adaptation to gain recognition for one’s credibility – negotiation of one’s position, and the various forms of refusal and degrees of opposition. Possibly, it is the multitude of these “third paths” that makes social life so full of surprises, which does please some yet tires and dismays others.

Therefore, the Middle Ages did not reserve free will for heretics⁴⁶⁹ and goliards; that is, those who rejected and consequently refused to join the existing order. Fleeing toward the peripheries of the system does not constitute the sole option in conflict situations; neither does opposition. Besides what is probably the most widespread option – conformism – there is also the return to negotiations, especially in the realm of social movements. Time enables compromise in matters previously unfathomable, despite the lack of solution to or agreement in the conflict.⁴⁷⁰ Compromise does not exclude free will. The act of defending one’s personal opinions is a regular and universal occurrence, and really does not require eavesdropping on heretics discussing ontological complexities while mowing a meadow.⁴⁷¹ Early political parties comprised not only people directly involved in a conflict, clients of a nobleman, or people subject to someone’s jurisdiction, but also genuine supporters or opponents of a certain position, idea, or person.⁴⁷²

Even strong determination is not always the object of hate. Sometimes people desire dependency systems which have value in the eyes of the weak, who seek privileges or a taste of stability in difficult times, which today is ensured by a

468 The most recent debates on culture take place in the spirit of the search for a “middle ground between freedom and determinism,” overtly opposed to deterministic functionalism, Marxism, quantitative methods, and scientism in social sciences (P. Burke 1992: 118).

469 Those who defend this claim are pleased with the etymology of the Greek word *hairesis*.

470 P. Burke forgets about this possibility when presenting the typology of alternatives in conflict situations (1992: 83) developed by A. Hirschman in *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Cambridge Mass. 1970.

471 E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, village occitan de 1294 à 1324*, Paris 1975. Cf. L. Boyle, “Montaillou revisited: ‘Mentalité and Methodology,’” *Pathways to Medieval Peasants*, ed. J. A. Raftis, Toronto 1981, pp. 119–140.

472 Literature conveys the story of a burgher woman who committed suicide out of anger, when the faction she emotionally supported lost in a political conflict. *The True and Very Strange Story of Mary of Nijmegen*, Brabant miracle play, ca. 1500.

full-time job. After all, the interrelation of labor and freedom is not free from tension and quite a few people, having fulfilled certain onerous requirements, dream of leaving the reins in some matters to the power of systemic coercion.

15. We have already discussed the mechanism of behavioral predictability or the attitude of predictability as a qualitative novelty in the historical process, in opposition to obedience. By considering predictability as the distinguishing feature of civilization, we extend Elias' classic approach. The confraternity fulfills about the same role as any other social institution; as in the sociology of marriage: to establish a common opinion and create an accessible flow of information, which enables the adoption of a theory that explains the functioning of society and the world as a whole. As a matter of fact, this is no different than the dissemination of the belief in the actuality of "the concept of a universal order of existence," which constitutes the foundation of the religious system in Geertz's theory. The cognitive mechanism of this negotiation has been discussed by Lavine and Lathané: each attitude within a cognitive structure is jointly determined by strength, immediacy, and a number of related attitudes, given that individuals seek harmony, balance, or consistency between the two (1996: 49).

The coexistence of all communities is possible only with a certain degree of consensus. The theory of self-generating systems (*autopoiesis*) initiated by Maturana⁴⁷³ formulates it as follows: for co-operation to be possible, different organisms must have at least one state in common – one component of their worlds or realities – and their operations within their own cognitive domains must be at least partly "co-designative."⁴⁷⁴

Consensus as the requirement for the continuation of society⁴⁷⁵ may seem to be the consequence of obedience and predictability alike, as only the final "common place" is observable. But the path to consensus is different in each case and supported by entirely different mechanisms. However, we know that the process preceding a certain result is that which decides of its identity (chapter 2.7).

473 *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*, Boston 1980; see Maturana, Varela 1998: 12.

474 "[S]yn-referential" (Rusch 1987: 439).

475 Cf. the manifestation of consensus as the content of the city festivity according to Ch. Phythian-Adams, "Ceremony and the Citizen, the Communal Year at Coventry 1450–1550," *Crisis and Order in English Towns*, ed. P. Clark, 1972, pp. 69ff; qtd. after Lindenbaum 1990: 20. It does not have to be a consensus of everyone with everyone but rather within communication communities.

In its simplest form, this negotiation takes place at the level of cooperation, which can be described as repetitive or continuous participation,⁴⁷⁶ as exemplified by various associations in the area of devotion like the Beguines congregations, which organize the entire life of lay women around devotional purposes, or in the Confraternities of the Common Life and the “third order.” As for the tertiaries, they constitute a link between life-regulating movements and guilds or confraternities, whose organizational principle is mostly secular. In the latter case, the scope of religious obligations is defined by the statute and limited to mutual fulfillment of these obligations in relation to fellow members. On the other hand, while also expected to exemplify pious life by acting in their own environment,⁴⁷⁷ the tertiaries received freedom in performing charitable services (Swanson 1997: 114).

However, consensus is not the only acceptable option; conflicts are also part of the civilizing process. As Lindenbaum rightly concludes (1990), urban rituals are not effective when they allow differences to be forgotten completely. The only way to guarantee consensus is to convincingly depict these differences as a natural element of the entire picture.⁴⁷⁸ All socialization of ideas, their introduction into circulation (transfer and tradition) – therefore the creation of culture – occurs through a clash of opposite stances and conflict. The latter is usually introduced by opinion-forming entities, which for this purpose require their own media.

16. The similarity of confraternities and contemporary media results from the comparison of the rules of use of the latter and membership requirements of the former. Both may be created intentionally or incidentally, and then continued, intensified, but also weakened or terminated for several reasons, which Rusch lists in five categories.⁴⁷⁹ They include:

476 The term “recurrent participation” is used by H.R. Maturana and F.J. Varela (1998: 222) as they outline the “biology of co-operation.” However, the linguistic coordination of activities plays an important role in co-operation, ultimately also including linguistic behavior: when “lingual” communication crosses the border of self-reflexivity – it applies to itself – a language is born (Maturana, Varela 1998: 222); what follows is that there is no language, if there is no meta-language. Regarding literary awareness about the role of language in the works of Gottfried von Strassburg, cf. Classen 1994.

477 Thus, similarly to later Jesuits, who did not live together but were united by ideas and goals.

478 The idea of the body as symbol of society played an important cognitive and argumentative role in this case; it constitutes the foundation of the idea of recapitulation and the cult of Corpus Christi; cf. M. James (1983) in chapter 18.6., who devotes a lot of attention to conflict management.

479 This is a radically abridged passage of my Kalamazoo presentation, in which I quoted a vast array of concepts developed by G. Rusch (1987: 443) to describe the circumstances

- 1) the particular conditions of each individual, which influence one's choice of the confraternity; this includes general knowledge about oneself and the world, the level of socialization, the economic and professional situation of said individual, or one's political preferences;
- 2) the way that one intends "to consume" membership, that is only passively by praying in a group as everyone else, actively by using outstanding skills – such as singing or knowledge of Latin, shooting skills, nursing, pedagogy, leadership – or just in hope of achieving other goals (educational, political, economic);
- 3) the available set of choices which, upon selection, still function as options for a possible change of membership; here again, many factors determine the availability and attractiveness of each confraternity. Organizational factors include the frequency of mandatory confraternity meetings, and, above all, the number of confraternities operating in the vicinity of the candidate.⁴⁸⁰ The choice could be influenced by several other determinants. Administrative factors included such questions as who was allowed to become a superior – as not all confraternities were fully democratic – or under whose jurisdiction was the confraternity placed, the bishop's or the city's. Other factors could be of an economic nature, as wealthier confraternities obviously attracted more members, or political, as in the case of vassal confraternities, the so-called *confréries blanches* – founded in 1209 to fight heretics and five thousand strong merely two years later – or Academia Amoris founded by the Jesuit Vitus Scheffer and supported by the Habsburg family with the aim of recatholizing Silesia.⁴⁸¹ Limited access for social reasons occurred by

of use of various media. I limit myself to a few examples, hoping that the historians of confraternities (to whom I do not belong) will attempt to supplement it and treat it as a research questionnaire, the completion of which would result in a structured information sheet for each confraternity.

480 For instance, medieval Hamburg hosted over 100 of these; after 1604, the rulers limited the number to one confraternity of one type per village. In Florence, there were fifty-two around 1400, then 156 around 1500, and over 300 around 1750 (Eisenbichler 1998: 12). The number of confraternities registered in the 760 parishes of Normandy in the previous 200 years has already been assessed in mid-eighteenth century and found to number about 1220 (Eisenbichler 1998: 14); in the near 700 parishes of the Diocese of Poznań, around fifty confraternities can be traced in various sources after the year 1400 (Wiśniowski 1969: 55; qtd. after J. Nowacki, *Dzieje archidiecezji poznańskiej* II, p. 737).

481 H. Hoffmann, "Vitus Scheffer und seine Academia Amoris," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu* 5/1936, pp. 177–202.

definition in craft guilds (*fraternitates mechanicae*), and class-based, youth, or national confraternities, but also literary ones, which required Latin education. It is well known that all-class inclusiveness and democracy, relatively extensive for that period, were an important factor of the popularity of confraternities (Kumor 1969: 508); Knippenberg (1986: 17) even argues that, long before the French Revolution, the confraternities had already been employing its slogans of liberty, equality, and fraternity. The ensemble of guilds performing the English mystery cycles for Corpus Christi was called “the community of equals” (James 1983: 20–21);

- 4) the wider social and political context, in which the choice is made and later pursued (or not); joining a confraternity before the Reformation meant something different than doing so afterwards; different moods or even fashions prevailed in relation to major political and cultural events;
- 5) possible benefits expected for joining and remaining in a chosen confraternity. The most common expectations were to obtain a proper Christian funeral (and for free!), followed by prayers for salvation and indulgences, sickness benefits, a more advantageous spot at the church, and the prestige of participating in the same confraternity as, for instance, a bishop or king.

17. What is the use of describing confraternities in terms of media? Actually, not only “stories have their social functions.” So does behavior. The confraternities go beyond the traditional margin of religious and economic life (guilds) and should be placed closer to the mainstream of cultural life, among the factors determining the entire historical process. The very placing of the confraternities within the theoretical framework of the description of contemporary media makes it possible to discover new aspects of these organizations, so far invisible when analyzed from an outdated viewpoint. On the other hand, modern media can benefit from being placed in a longer, continuous development process. There must have been something earlier, in the pre-printing press phase of culture dominated by oral communication.

If media are to be essentially defined as systems consisting of organisms, activities, and objects connected with a certain means of communication (Rusch 1987: 440), then taking only print, radio, or television into consideration is not enough. Behavior in direct, face-to-face communication must also be acknowledged. Social oral communication either (1) makes a specific use of media or (2) uses other media.

- 1) In general, this specificity consists in reversing the path of transmission of the message (“emission”). In modern mass-media the sender attempts to reach as many recipients as possible, while in the oral media of yesteryear

the recipients made an effort to reach the sender. The main differentiating and linking aspect is that the joint exploration of texts in a congregation is replaced by mass printing. The messages are also mass-distributed in many copies, albeit by the participants of the communication themselves via their attendance at meetings and gatherings around the preachers. In the case of a sermon at the church, the differences in comparison with radio or television are less significant than the similarities. One characteristic feature of this group is the clear delimitation between senders and recipients, as well as the marginal role of the latter in the communication.

- 2) However, most communications take place in small groups – a typical situation in confraternities – in which the roles of senders and recipients are interchangeable, which gives this type of transmission a transeiving character.

Theater has been mentioned many times in this context. When mentioning the audience of French religious plays in the Middle Ages, Kindermann (1980: 100) uses the term “mass theatre” (*Massentheater*). Another literary historian speaks of another “kind of ‘half-mass’ media that was Elizabethan theater.”⁴⁸² In relation to a certain narrative genre – we return the Middle Ages – this term is also used by Geremek (1978: 74): the exempla “played the role of mass media for the truths of the faith and the principles of Christian behavior.”⁴⁸³

482 P. Mroczkowski, *Historia literatury angielskiej*, Wrocław 1986, p. 153; E. M. Szarota expressed herself in these words about Jesuit theater in “Das Jesuitendrama als Vorläufer der modernen Massenmedien,” *Daphnis* 1/1975, p. 129; R. H. Schmid, *Raum, Zeit und Publikum des geistlichen Spiels, Aussage und Absicht eines Massenmediums*, München 1975. Among the benefits of the mobile stages used by English medieval pageants, P. Happé (1998: 80) cites the “coverage” of a significant area of the city with their activities. “The image is both means and source for mass media” (Jaritz 1990: 219). The mass character of reception of the coronation festival in an urban environment is discussed by Gieysztor (1978: 20), who cites the report by Długosz of how the Polish king presented the people of Cracow in 1434 with an impressive demonstration of his splendor: “magnum de se spectaculo populo praebens” (*Historia*, Vol. 4: 547).

483 Apart from factual doubts regarding the context (“testimony of mass culture”), we should clarify this matter, as the message has effectively been recognized here as the medium. This would constitute another example of a paradoxical combination of these two concepts, this time in opposite to M. McLuhan’s law. However, we may at least agree with McLuhan that when the medium becomes the message, it fills the time of transmission with messages about its operation. U. Eco (1996: 184) confirms this observation with a certain enthusiasm and distinctive inventiveness: “It is becoming decreasingly important whether television is telling the truth; what is important is

This circumstance makes it all the more reasonable to perceive the confraternities as media. Since they constituted such a common form of communication, there is no reason to treat them as anything other than media institutions or to confine them – when considered as media or means of social communication – to the mere role of distributors in the era of mass printing. All things considered, the main motivation of media or even the mass media is not a large circulation that maximizes the publisher's profit; the dissemination of messages does not have to be their only task either.

Each instance of information transfer with no specific recipient (like one of a personal letter) is considered a dissemination, an open transmission whose “mass” character is only a matter of standards determined by the size of the market and the efficiency of distribution. Mass participation of random people in pilgrimages and processions, mass attendance in services (not always in one's own parish), collective listening to the sermons of wandering soul hunters: all these can be considered cases of duplicated transmission of one information. However, direction is not the most important element here; it is irrelevant whether the recipient seeks the information, or the information reaches the recipient. Besides, the wandering preachers already constituted an intermediate link. They were the ones to travel as if oral newspapers, while their audience only had to gather at the local square as under a loudspeaker or a public address system.

The primary criterion to recognize an organization as a medium that disseminates messages is its institutionality, that is the stability and longevity of a given channel, which makes it known to a wider community. Another requirement is accessibility; even if a medium requires membership, it is not secret. The mass character of participation in confraternities is confirmed by all possible

that the television itself is the truth.” On the other hand, this reversal is more difficult to understand; one could only argue that, regardless of the variety of methods of conveying the message, the exemplary content is the only thing that fills the message, or that the exemplum as a genre serves to convey various contents; which is closer to the essence of the media that we observe, for instance, in certain forms of theatrical activity, such as the tradition of Shrovetide performances (see chapter 20.6). In addition to his famous law “the medium is the message,” M. McLuhan performed significant research into the importance of the printing press. P. Burke (1992: 101) asserts that his “provocative ideas” have been translated “into a decent academic language” by E. Eisenstein (*The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Cambridge, 1979); they remain influential for historians, even if we assume that the medium (oral, written, pictorial) is only a part of the message.

statistics. About 10–20 % of adult residents were members of confraternities; the best documented are the cities of Silesia (Wiśniowski 1969: 79–80).

18. If the confraternities are to be considered media to some extent, what is the message? Contemporary media are dominated by non-fictional content and quotations from all forms of cultural expression, including literature. In terms of functionality, two currents can be distinguished: (1) opening and maintaining informational and instructional channels, providing entertainment, forums for expressing opinions; and (2) broadcasting creative works to a wide audience; the selection of these works is often subordinate to the first current; if otherwise, this might be, for instance, a specialized periodical, which familiarizes its recipients with a professional literary, artistic, or scientific domain. In our case, the professional contribution contains a lot of official doctrinal content from the domain of religion like liturgy or catechism.

We momentarily omit here all forms of text communication, which have always attracted the most attention but are not characteristic of the activity of confraternities. Admittedly, there are special confraternity books, statutes combining documentary and didactic functions, even certain forms of applied literature like catechisms or songbooks, but it is harder to identify as such the literary works conceived within the confraternities. Nevertheless, a separate look at the latter would certainly revolutionize the image of many a history of literature. Regardless of the degree of acknowledgment of the needs or wishes of the recipient, written forms of communication are usually one-way, thus giving the sender the advantage and opportunity to influence the recipient. In oral communication, the sender can use a larger arsenal of means of paratheatrical expression and, thus, establish closer contact with the audience, and maintain it more effectively by observing their reactions. Besides, the number of recipients in oral communication is usually lower than in printed circulation (but not manuscripts!), which also provides competence assistance (editing). One distinctive feature of text communication is the possible disembodiment of the sender, who may as well already be dead, but will still exert influence via written word.

19. The situation is slightly different for two non-textual, interactive levels of communication. On the cooperative level, communication occurs through joint activity; this category includes even the simplest cases of coordination of behavior like walking together.⁴⁸⁴ At the same time, however, the transactional level is based on exchange between participants, like the exchange of gifts or a

484 In U. Neisser's cognitive psychology (1999, 187), this is the sphere of the "interpersonal self:" "If someone maintains eye contact and systematically reciprocates my gestures, a social interaction is surely taking place. I may be mistaken about my partner's

game of forfeits.⁴⁸⁵ Communication mainly happens in the existential dimension⁴⁸⁶ – limited in time and space – much less absorbing than the written word, which is timeless, supra-local, and therefore considered more important for culture.

It is impossible to do anything together, if both sides do not understand the common goal. Especially the particularity of the transaction level requires clarification. The minimal structure of requesting and receiving, making demands and obtaining their fulfillment, practically encompasses the entirety of human relations. Behaviors regulate themselves best and most easily if they are harmonized in time, space, and rhythm. Nowhere does a quicker or more effective verification of intentions occur, nowhere does a word become flesh more quickly.

To be sure, all three levels have much in common and may be designated to some extent with a common term, especially if “the whole of culture is an unending conversation” (K. Burke 1941: 110). If so, let us find a proper designation in conversation theory: “a statement becomes an act of communication by entering a structure of exchange;” “there is no interaction if there is no exchange, each meeting features at least one exchange” (Edmondson 1981: 86).

The notion of exchange as the minimum unit of social interaction seems particularly useful. It clearly reflects the reciprocity of the ties between the two sides of communication and stresses the role of the recipient, which does not have to be passive; it is even equal, if not more important. The exchange must indeed yield a result – to avoid failure or disgrace, to eliminate difficulties in interaction – and end in a signal of satisfaction. It is the listener’s reaction that defines the interaction’s efficiency (the hearer-knows-best principle), as it is their interpretation of the sender’s behavior that determines its meaning at every given point during the conversation (Edmondson 1981: 50). Without the listener’s reaction, the sender is deprived of the “social efficiency of their actions”, which is painfully experienced even by infants, when, instead of their mother – right after she has been reacting to their gestures – they are shown her recorded behavior on a screen. “[I]n the live exchange” the children were happy, “now showed clear

inner thoughts and purposes, but not about the existence of the ongoing exchange between us.”

485 This rationale was convincingly applied to the typology of the encounters of visionaries with the residents of afterlife by P. Dinzelbacher (1981).

486 Let us recall here, as a macabre example, that one of the earliest letters in medieval literature was a severed and bitten emissary’s head; it was an “exchange of objects” more meaningful than many an oration or text (*Of Reynaert the Fox*; chapter 2.4).

signs of distress” (Neisser 1999: 188, in reference to an experiment by L. Murray and C. Trevarthen, 1985).

The same mechanism ensures continuation to language regimes that are always changing and yet remain “the same.” In the case of cultural processes, too, this determines the nature of the compromise, between innovation and stability (diachrony), and between active senders and passive recipients (synchrony). If an exchange is to happen, the speaker must adapt to the hearer. In this context, the advantage of the sender, even in text communication, is altered by the activity of the recipient who, according to Rusch (1987: 438), does not simply receive something but “generates information within his or her cognitive domain on the basis of the disturbances within his or her sensory surfaces” and does not receive from the sender any feedback confirming the correctness of the adopted interpretation. The only proof of the correct understanding in this situation is the adaptation to the sender’s expectations. This explains, among other things, the surprisingly wide extent of consensus in the early stages of Christianization.

However, just as communication was characterized by the possible disembodiment of the sender, the interaction here takes place directly. Even if the meeting is organized around a previously written text, its content does not constitute the sole object of exchange. What is even more important is the aspect of the reciprocity or symmetry of behavioral means of communication: in each segment of behavior, everyone is both the sender and the recipient. Since there happens communication, appropriate forms of organization of the transmission must also exist. However, we will not undertake systematic examination of what is coded and decoded in these particular acts. Our goal is to understand the activities of the religious confraternities as acts of interactive communication: linguistic and non-linguistic, transactional and cooperative – all serving certain civilizational functions (documenting, didactic, socializing, compensating, instructive, critical, anticipating⁴⁸⁷).

In addition to the content – important for the participants of the communicative act – the very functioning of the interaction channels contains a twofold message: an inward demonstration of belonging and confirmation of a common identity; and a second outward demonstration of a full-fledged belonging to society, to people worthy of trust (*bona fide*). Both act as positive feedback, increasing the aura of actuality of the system of symbols.

487 As we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the typology of civilizational functions was adopted with minor adjustments after R. Wild (1982).

It is difficult to determine the contribution of intentional action to these amplifying effects, but it has always been present. This should be taken into account when evaluating the observations of the behavior of confraternities in terms of their source value as defined by Droysen, that is by including some to non-intentional remnants (*Überrest*) and perceiving others as intentional transmissions, whether they are intended for “internal use” of a given community (*Quelle*) or the preservation of social memory and self-presentation (*Denkmal*).⁴⁸⁸ In this context, we also believe that the confraternities were not just as posts supporting lamps but also the lamps themselves, as well as partly the lamplighters.⁴⁸⁹

20. According to the theory of contemporary media, media activity serves to achieve consensual constructions of reality, directing the whole activity toward these constructions and developing ways of talking about them (Schmidt 1987: 393).⁴⁹⁰

When stating earlier that the achievement of consensus takes place on a cooperational level, we have used the following simplification: the cooperating group would never form without a preliminary consensus with regard to the overall objective. Therefore, the processes of maintaining the consensus are always complex and recursive. We must underline in this process the phatic aspect of linguistic communication, namely the exchange of messages with an irrelevant content that lacks new information but maintains contact within the communicational community. Apparently, too rarely do we consider this role of various cooperative behaviors, in which rather than achieving something new, we consume the consensus and display it, thus bonding the group from within and demonstrating its cohesion to the outside. Although no new value appears, the belief in the existence and continuation of the community is maintained. Hence, we should not consider the existence of this channel a secondary matter, nor should we assume that its functioning requires no effort from the participants.

488 J. G. Droysen, *Historik. Vorlesungen über Enzyklopädie und Methodologie der Geschichte*, ed. by R. Hübner, München, 1977; also other editions, qtd. after: Topolski 1996: 17–37; definition of the three types of sources on p. 29.

489 I am referring here to the illustrative designation of confraternities as “keepers of the lights” by B. Hanawalt (1984).

490 “[A]gents in media-systems use different affective-cognitive schemata (relation systems) to achieve consensual constructions of realities, to orient all their activities toward these constructions, and to specify consensually modes of referring to these constructions”.

On the contrary, its appearance is a great achievement, and the ability to use it evidences the socialization.

At the beginning (chapter 2.8), we mentioned the role of trivial creativity in the confirmation of semantic prototypes and moral standards (clarificationism). Naturally, we add cooperative behaviors here, especially certain types of recreation; and this civilizational function will be attributed to the ludic element in culture. In technical terms, the ludic function concentrates on maintaining the complex apparatus of mutual understanding. When the apparatus does not work, there is no communication, no culture, and no civilization.

**Part IV. The Aesthetics of Recapitulation: To
Inscribe into the Living Hearts**

15. Theatrica

The emergence of the European theater involves activities and institutions related to public recreation. What served recreation were city festivals, both religious and secular, the former connected with parish church fairs or with the liturgical calendar, and the latter accompanying a ceremonial entrance of the ruler on the occasion of his enthronement or shooting competitions of riflemen confraternities. Such ceremonies abounded in the display of living pictures (*tableaux vivants*) – static or circulated along a route – which later transformed into theatrical performances. We have previously talked about the theory of extra-ecclesial measures against eschatological despair (chapter 12), in other times called melancholy. Recreational activities were part of these measures. So as to include the recreational activities into *artes* and subscribe to *theatrica*, a revision and clarification of previous most severe condemnations of professions related to entertainment was necessary.

1. THE DEMAND FOR FUN. Without looking at earlier texts,⁴⁹¹ we will recall the opinion of one of the creators of the Gregorian Reform. Saint Peter Damian (ca. 1007–1072) dedicates one chapter of his treatise on the education of monks⁴⁹² to those who desire to learn grammar and the liberal arts so much that they justify this indecency – to Peter Damian’s indignation – by recalling fragments of the Holy Scripture, which even allow a situation when a barren wife in want of offspring with her husband sends a servant to his bed.⁴⁹³ Peter Damian’s reservation concerns the education inside orders.

According to one of the main ideologists of folk piety, Honorius of Autun (Augustodunensis, ca. 1080–1150), eternal damnation awaits professional actors.⁴⁹⁴ In his most famous and influential work, *Elucidarium sive dialogus de summa totius Christianae theologiae* (before 1108), we read, “Can jugglers have some hope for salvation? – None: they all wholeheartedly serve Satan.”⁴⁹⁵ In

491 J. Fijatek describes them in Polish medieval studies (1997: 51–65).

492 *De perfectione monachorum*, PL 145, col. 291–328.

493 XI. *De monachis qui grammaticam discere gestiunt*. “Quod si his artibus operam dare monachum sacra Scriptura permittit, dicatur jam quia uxor viro ancillam in usum sobolis tradit” (PL 145, col. 306D).

494 In a strange twist of fate, it was in Autun where the citizens built the largest known open-air theater audience in 1516 “at the expense of the church and the city,” whose builders claimed it could accommodate 80,000 people (Meredith, Tailby 1983: 63).

495 “Habent spem joculatores? – Nullam: tota namque intentione sunt ministri Satanae” (PL, 172, col. 1148). The authorship of Honorius of Autun is not entirely certain, but

the analysis of a treatise by Honorius of Autun, *Gemma animae*,⁴⁹⁶ Hardison (1965: 38–44) points out that Honorius wanted to reserve the sphere of theatricality for Mass: there, the celebrant becomes “our tragedian” and the church a theater, in which the dramatic duel (*duellum*) of Christ and Satan is being performed.⁴⁹⁷

“However, we should know that those who played tragedies in the theater presented the actions of fighting parties by means of gestures. Likewise, our tragedian presents Christ’s struggle to the Christian people gathered in the theater of the church through gestures, and thus preserves in their memory the victory of their own redemption. And so, when the priest says “Pray,” he represents Christ, when he instructed the apostles to pray while dying for us. Through hidden silence, the priest suggests the image of Christ who was sacrificed like a lamb. By spreading his hands, the priest represents Christ spread on the cross.”

The matter of overcoming the Church’s reluctance of professional actors was not only about defining the conditions for justifying the consciences of jugglers but also about a clear theological motivation of entertainment activities as a social need that would operate in a new doctrinal framework. Władysław Tatarkiewicz (1965) remarked on this trend of reflection that was later extensively studied by Glending Olson (1982).

In his bold treatise, *Eruditionis didascalicae libri septem* (ca. 1130),⁴⁹⁸ Hugh of Saint Victor (ca. 1096–1141) recognized play as a separate human need and applied to it a separate discipline among the mechanical arts that satisfy people.

his *Elucidarium* (The Lamp) “inspired people’s piety for several centuries” (EK 4, Szpital 904, *ibid.*; see 905 for previous literature). A. Gurevich wrote much about the significance of this work (1988). See chapter 12 for the opinion of Thomas of Aquinas about the actors (*officium histrionum*); a comparison of the two authors also confirms the reach of scholastic revisionism in this area.

496 Ca. 1100, PL 172, col. 570ff.

497 Honorius of Autun, *Gemma animae, De animae exilio et patria*, ch. 2, qtd. after Kruczyński 1998: 52.

498 PL 176, col. 739–838, the quotation usually as *Didascalicon* or *Didascalion*; ed. by Ch. H. Buttimer, Washington 1939; J. Taylor, *The Didascalion of Hugh of St. Victor*, New York 1961. A new edition of the works by Hugh of Saint Victor was started by Brepols: *Œuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor*, Vol. 1, ed. P. Sicard et al., Turnhout 1997. Latin text ed. by Ch.H Buttimer (1939), with some adjustments and corrections is now available with parallel Polish translation in: Hugon ze Świętego Wiktora, *Didascalicon czyli co i jak czytać / Hugo de Sancto Victore, Didascalicon. De studio legendi*, transl. Paulina Pludra-Żuk, Bibliotheca Litterarum Medii Aevi. Artes – Opera. Opera, No. 4, Warszawa 2017.

Hugh of Saint Victor divided mechanics into seven “teachings:”⁴⁹⁹ *armatura* was to secure our shelter, *lanificium* – clothing, *agricultura* and *venatio* – food, *medicina* – health, *navigatio* – travel, whereas *theatrica* enabled play.

Hugh of Saint Victor described the latter as *scientia ludorum*, the art of organizing theater plays or spectacles for the people; he does not only mean theatrical performances – *ludi in theatris*, (whatever these words mean) – but also parties games arranged in various places.⁵⁰⁰

Chapter XXVIII. “On the Art of Theatre”

Knowledge about spectacles is called *theatrica* from the theater that the people used to visit for fun – not that it was arranged in the theater itself, but that it was a place more important than the others. Thus, they organized different games in theaters, different in the courtyards, different in wrestling schools, different in stadiums, different in arenas, different in banquet rooms, different in temples. In the theater, they recited stories about deeds, be it with singing, be it with masks on their heads, be it in costumes or masks on their faces.⁵⁰¹ They performed dances and dance pantomimes in the courtyards. They wrestled in gymnastic halls. They organized races at the stadiums, be it runners, be it with horses, be it with horse-drawn carts. They watched boxing matches at the arenas. In the banquet halls, the people played rhythms and musical instruments to accompany odes and dice games. In the temples, they sang the glory of the gods during a solemn time. The people considered games an honest profession because moderate movement fuels the inborn vitality of the body and renews its grace. As it seems, it turned out to be necessary for the people to sometimes gather for games in specific places, otherwise, they meet in taverns and commits crimes.

499 “Mechanica septem scientias continet: lanificium, armaturam, navigationem, agriculturam, venationem, medicinam, theatricam” (lib. II cap. XXI; PL 176, col. 760A).

500 Lib. II, cap. XXVIII. *De theatrica scientia*: “Theatrica dicitur scientia ludorum a teatro quo populus ad ludendum convenire solebat, non quia in teatro tantum ludus fieret, sed quia celebrior locus fuerat caeteris. Fiebant autem ludi alii in theatris, alii in atris, alii in gymnasiis, alii in amphicircis, alii in arenis, alii in conviviis, alii in fanis. In theatro gesta recitabantur, vel carminibus, vel larvis, vel personis, vel oscillis. In atris choreas ducebant et saltabant. In gymnasiis luctabantur. In amphicircis cursu certabant vel pedum, vel equorum, eel curruum. In arenis pugiles exercebantur. In conviviis, rhythmis et musicis instrumentis, et odis psallebant, et alea ludebant. In fanis tempore solemnium deorum laudes canebant. Ludos vero idcirco inter legitimas actiones connumerabant, quod temperato motu naturalis calor nutritur in corpore; et laetitia ejus reparatur. Vel quod magis videtur, quia necesse fuit populum aliquando ad ludum convenire, voluerunt determinata esse loca ludendi, ne in diversoris conventicula facientes, probrosa aliqua aut facinorose perpetrarent” (II 28, PL 176, col. 762D–763AB).

501 This part may suggest three types of theatrical masks.

Although the name “theatrica” itself did not enter the language, the views of Hugh of Saint Victor were known even until the sixteenth century.⁵⁰² The concepts of entertainment and recreation and the awareness of their importance have since accompanied the reflection on social life and actual activities of the organizers of local life (parishes, local governments). The Franciscans continue the hostile attitude to jugglers. However, they have their reasons to isolate minstrels, for the Franciscans themselves use theatrical tricks in their sermons. Roger Bacon (ca. 1210–1294) wrote about the need for bodily communication in his new theory of preaching, while the more realistic views of Thomas Aquinas, who wrote about the necessity of play,⁵⁰³ reached textbooks only in the fourteenth century, mainly disseminated by the Dominicans (Casagrande 1979). Scholastics recognized intent as the key to morality (Brundage 1987: 345) so it only condemned work performed from base motivation. Already around 1200, people began accepting jugglers who brought comfort, and tolerating producers entertaining games: “ad recreationem vel remedium tristitiae vel noxiarum cogitationum” (Le Goff 1980: 64). Moreover, that time saw the acceptance of actions serving the common good and struggle to survive; this approach accepted prostitution if it was forced by the necessity to provide for basic needs.

502 It appears in conventual florilegia, which very strictly selected matter from among indubitable classics of incontestable authority; K. Emery studies one such early-sixteenth-century series from the Limbourg Benedictines of the Leodium diocese in his text “Monastic “Collectaria” from the Abbey of St. Trudo (Limburg) and the Reception of Writings by Denys the Carthusian,” *Literature and Religion In the Later Middle Ages. Philological Studies in Honor of Siegfried Wenzel*, ed. R. G. Newhauser, J. A. Alford, 1995: 237–261; especially 246; we provide more proof in chapter 19.2. On the reception of the works of Hugh of Saint Victor, see R. Goy, *Die Überlieferung der Werke Hugos von St. Viktor*, Stuttgart 1976. The inclusion of theater into entertainment or educational activities stems from the ancient times (Poseidonios), while the medieval writers used the codification of the fifth-sixth century Martianus Capella *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* and Cassiodorus *Institutiones divinarum et saecularium litterarum* (Pochat 1986: 54, 98).

503 In *Summa Theologica* II.2, Q. 168.3: “Sicut dictum est, ludus est necessarius ad conversationem humanae vitae.... Et ideo etiam officium histrionum, quod ordinatur ad solatium hominum exhibendum, non est secundum se illicitum nec sunt in statu peccati: dummodo modeste ludo utantur, id est, non utendo aliquibus illicitis verbis vel factis ad ludum;” qtd. after Sticca 1980: 300 (ft. 8); Ch. Reutemann, *The Thomistic Concept of Pleasure*, Washington 1953.

In the thirteenth-century preaching guide by John of Wales, *Summa Collationum*,⁵⁰⁴ one may find a “permissive and human” approach to games (*ludi*), which was not an isolated approach. The most comprehensive commentary on the drama in the late Middle Ages next to the Wycliffite disciplining dissertation *A Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, the dialogic treaty *Dives et Pauper*,⁵⁰⁵ in which “we may read that there is a crucial religious value in dramas that ‘*arn done principally for devocioun and honest merthe to teche men to love Gode the more*’. In contrast to the Wycliffite or Lollard work, it provides a strong defense of playing as an expression of devotion, mirth, and recreation.”⁵⁰⁶ Most of the Church bans concerned the personal participation of the clergy as performers, and only the scandalous repertoire was definitely condemned: even at the Council of Constance (1417), the British bishops performed the play *Stella* for their continental colleagues.⁵⁰⁷ However, *A Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge* repeats the patristic dislike of the theater as a lie that beguiles the souls of viewers.⁵⁰⁸

The very name of the most famous French theater group, Enfants Sans Souci (“carefree children”)⁵⁰⁹ leaves no doubt; celebration is the key feature of early Italian confraternities, as proved by Weissman (1991: 210) who recognizes “festive life” as the great achievement of contemporary historians of early modern Europe (why not medievalists?). A clear confirmation of understanding the importance of play emerges from the statute of the literary confraternity *De Fontaine*, founded in Ghent in 1448 on the assumption that there is a “need to

504 John of Wales, p. I, ch. 7, 27, published by W. Zainer, Ulm 1481; a work also known as *Communiloquium*. The author uses the notion *theatrica* in a different meaning (Briscoe 1991: 216, 219).

505 *Dives et Pauper*, ca. 1405–1410, published by P. H. Barnum, London 1976.

506 Davidson (1993: 28) in the introduction to his critical edition of *A Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*.

507 The Star of Bethlehem (Chambers 1903: 101).

508 Augustine of Hippo, *De ordine* II, 14, PL 32; G. Pochat links this reluctance to the fall of theaters in late antiquity and the bloody nature of the performances (1986: 100). However, Origen was not afraid to consider the *Song of Songs* a “stage play” (*Komentarz*, 7). Orygenes, *Komentarz do Pieśni nad pieśniami. Homilie o Pieśni nad pieśniami*, transl. Stanisław Kalinkowski, Wydawnictwo: WAM Księża Jezuici, Kraków 1994, C. Davidson (1997) gathers more opinions on the matter from the entire medieval period.

509 This confraternity was supra-state, unlike the legal confraternities called *basoche*; and almost exclusively played farces, often as during intermedia in mystery play cycles performed by confraternities of the Passion (dated from around 1380).

counteract melancholy because there is no greater enemy to the people,⁵¹⁰ and we also need to “chase off idleness, the mother of all evil.”⁵¹¹ In the accounting books of the Flemish city of Dendermonde from 1413, we read about young people who “played entertaining games on carts to entertain the citizens.”⁵¹² The recreational motivation appears here twice, so it is not accidental. Its importance is even greater because it appears in the account books, which usually do not offer an excess of detail. What is significant in this motivation is the emphasis that these were no “minstrels” who performed for profit, but the youth – to cheer up others. Others, that is, the stable members of the community (*goede lieden*). This distinction in the background imperceptibly introduces us to the disputes about the media and media rivalry, which involved all the significant social forces.

2. TAMING THE JUGGLER. In the invitation for a theatrical festival, planned for the year 1496 in Antwerp, its organizers, the local Rederijkers, list those who cannot apply for prizes in the competition. I italicize the keywords:

we exclude from the competition all (professional) *actors* who play *historical plays* or *heraldic chronicles in chambers*,⁵¹³ as well as those who played *comedy in the same chambers for money*, even after the festival in Leuven, where the organizers of the current joyous gathering received the last award in the country, which happened in 1478; we simultaneously exclude all *wandering poets*, *songwriters*, and others like them, not to offend them, but to show all the good souls *the way to the better* and to a kind communion with others – unless they have since made a proper and constant [moral] improvement.⁵¹⁴

510 “[B]ehoeft van tegen te gaan melancolye, daer de mensche gheen en meerderen viant heeft” (van Duyse 1990: 20); it was a brave statement because the euphemist synonymy of “the enemy – the Devil” was already obvious at the time.

511 “[L]edicheit, moedere van alle quatheden te verdrivene” (van Duyse 1990: 20).

512 “[J]onghelieden ... speelden up waghene goede solaselike speele omme de goede lieden te verblidene” (“Vaderlandsch Museum” V, 5).

513 Literally, “about the coats of arms that they usually hang out.” I translate the word “banieren” here as “coats of arms,” but it does raise some doubt; indeed, later messages bifurcate: E. Vander Straeten, *Le théâtre villageois en Flandre*, Vol. 1, Brussels 1882, 148, reported about his collections of theatrical banners, while there also is a metaphorical use, which means a summary of an act of play. In turn, here one may think of a form of a text banner, which could have been a part of scenography like *banderoles* we see on mansions in the illustrations that depict theatrical scenes; then this *banier* would not mean a coat of arms, but rather (*pars pro toto*) a mansion.

514 “Item dat alle *camer speelders* hier uijt zijn gesecht die op *cameren* gespelt hebben ofte noch doen te weten historien ofte *cronijcken vanden banieren* die sij costumelijck uithangen, oock de *gene die op de selve cameren esbattermenten om winninghe* gespelt

The invitation also contains many hints about the repertoire, the place of performances, and their organizers (Dąbrówka 1994). Hummelen (1984) points out that this document confirms – what many previously received with disbelief as a sign of wishful thinking – Badius’ remark⁵¹⁵ from the introduction to the second edition of his collection of comedies by Terence (1504),⁵¹⁶ which even allows concluding something about the content of the plays but, first of all, read about “those who perform for money in chambers plays about kings and princes, as we see it everywhere in Flanders and the surrounding area.” This was the first confirmation in the Netherlands of regular commercial acting performances inside a building; that is, of professional theater activities.⁵¹⁷

The second important signal that has so far not received adequate interpretation is the explicit and not the first call for “chamber actors” (*camerspelders*), to abandon their professional status. This discriminatory step was not isolated and requires a broader context, which we figuratively called “media struggle” (Dąbrówka 1994). In France, the literary confraternities were called *confréries de puy* (stage confraternities), then *rhétoriciens*, in the Netherlands Rederijkers,⁵¹⁸

hebben ende dat nochtans naer de feeste van Lovene daer ons instelders van deser tegenwoordiger genuueghelijcker vergaderingen toegevoeght was den jonghsten lantprijs d’welck was int jaer M.CCCC ende LXXVIII [1478] lestleden ende insgelijcx oock alle *spraeck sprekers, rolleschrijvers* ende diergelijcken sijn hier uijtgesteken niet tot haer versmaetheden maer om te laetene allen herten ende goetwilligen *den wegh te badt* ende genuuegelijcxste besoigneren ten ware dat die selve tsjindert behoorelijcke ende ghewonelijke *beteringe* gedaen hadden” (van Autenboer 1978; also see Dąbrówka 1994).

- 515 Judocus Badius Ascensius of Brabant, a Parisian printer, originally from the small town of Assche, west of Brussels, on the borderland of Brabant and Flanders (*Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek* III, 120), not far away from the mentioned towns of Dendermonde and Ghent.
- 516 Jodocus Badius Ascensius – *P. Terentii... Comedie*, Parrhisiis 1504: “(Itemque) qui historias regum principiumque in cameris pretio ludunt, ut nunc vulgo est in flandria et regionibus vicinis variis, personas accipiunt, ut unus actor seu lusor varios posset presentare” (a6r; qtd. after Herrmann 1914: 308). Researchers remain skeptical about the use of masks and strongly suspect a humanistic mystification.
- 517 For a review of the idea of a temporary or permanent performance place, see A. Dąbrówka, “The Playhouses of the Middle Ages,” in: *Oggetti materiali e pratiche della rappresentazione nel teatro medievale*, eds. T. Pacchiarotti, L. Kovacs, Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2014, pp. 171–191.
- 518 Rederijkers combated vagants, the traveling minstrels, which is documented, among others, in a collection of twenty-four texts written before and after 1500, presented in

in Germany Meistersingers. Why did these official confraternities combat traveling jugglers?

The initial appraisal, partly presumable, reveals the following reasons for discrimination: the lack of religious plays in the repertoire (not mentioned in the invitation), they were not organized so they were uncontrollable, which their (very relative) financial independence made even more difficult. Their exclusion from competition seems obvious because – as “professionals” – they were certainly better actors than amateurs; but the main reason for their exclusion from the festival was their subjection to secular power, which was a norm at the time: Shakespeare also had to have a master. The quoted testimony reveals their relationship with the courts as it indicates that they played historical and heraldic plays. We should attach less importance to their relative freedom, confirmed in the Dutch sources by sporadic notes in the bills for the performances of independent minstrels: *spreker sonder wapen* (1393; Jonckbloet 1855: 609). This last factor was decisive in the overall assessment of the vagants, which prevailed in the canonical doctrine and the preaching practice, as we reveal below.

The justification for this discrimination – the will to show the way of improvement – begs the question: in what did the organizers see their superiority? With the exception of the festival rivalry for prizes, it could not have been a mere fight against competition masked by moral concern. Our doubt emerges from the fact that we encounter similarly motivated and yet oppositional solution: the admission of professional jugglers (*homines seculares, arti jocularie deditos*) to the Confrérie Saint-Martin-aux-Jongleurs in the French Fécamp⁵¹⁹ or even

several non-identical printed collections from the early seventeenth century, called *Veelderhande geneuchlijcke dichten, tafelspelen ende refreynen*.

519 “[L]es jongleurs sont associés »etsi ludicra et lubrica sit vita« (Vincent 1988: 85). Cf. the passage in the confraternity’s statute, as renewed in 1402: “Ea propter infirmitati compatientes et devotionem accedentes inter caritatis nostre sinum in unitate fraternitatis quosdam homines seculares, arti jocularie deditos, volenter et diligenter admissimus. Quorum etsi ludicra et lubrica sit vita, fundamentum tamen fidei quod in Christo fundatum est, facit optimo capiti membra coherere debilia; que videlicet res non quidem nova nec recenter inventa, sed tempore beate memorie Ricardi primi Normanorum ducis inchoata, tempore secundi Ricardi dominique Willemi abbatis primi perfecta plenius et consummata, ad nostram usque perseveravit [280] etatem. “Charte de la Confrérie de Saint-Martin de Frères Jongleurs, Etablie à Fécamp,” in: Antoine Le Roux de Lincy, *Essai historique et littéraire sur l’abbaye de Fécamp*, Rouen 1840: 278–292 (with thanks to Dr Dorota Gacka). The obligatory yearly procession of this conventual confraternity was to be a marvellous spectacle (Vincent 1988: 256; Peters 1983: 216ff).

the Church organization of acting confraternities like the *Confrérie de Saint Julien des frères jongleurs* in Paris (Wolny 1969: 74, ft. 3).⁵²⁰ What we should perceive as the linking element between the earlier and later formations is that both solutions express the same care for public morality. If there is no cause for concern, there is openness,⁵²¹ but if something raises doubts, one does not immediately exclude the defiant “brothers,” but first will forgive them on the condition that they abandon the wrong path. The exclusion in the Invitation of 1496 is also conditional: “unless they have since made a proper and constant improvement.”

We do not have to explain this approach any longer as pardons functioned even toward heretics on the condition that they revoked their views. The goal of such leeway was the universalization of social norms into the new sacramental order that did not provide for white spots. The wholly unified behavior in the key areas of life introduced by the second phase of Christianization does not contradict with the pretense of no exceptions, which centers the Christian revelation from the onset; the development of the Church institutions and the doctrine of sacramentalism only strengthened this worldview. No wonder, then, that the Church emphasized the exclusion “from Christianity” of all those who did not want or could not adapt to the norm. What additionally supported the pretense of no exceptions was the theological (ecclesiological) interpretation of Christian society as the Body of Christ (chapter 18).

3. THE THEATER OF CONFRATERNITIES. When considering the role of confraternities as media (chapter 14), we framed their aims by the context of the second offensive of Christianization. Below (chapter 16.3) we sum up the essence and results of this civilizational offensive (introduced above, in chapter 13).

520 There existed in Arras a *Confrérie des Jongleurs et de Bourgeois*; U. Peters (1983: 219) considered it untypical and doubted about the possibility of linking it to later smaller confraternities. However, the author of the first monograph of a broader area, C. Vincent (1988), writes more about the subject of Normandy’s theatrical confraternities (see 85–87, 253–257) and remarks on their similarity to those from Arras. Also see R. Berger, *Le Nécrologe de la confrérie des Jongleurs et de Bourgeois d’Arras (1194–1361)*, Arras 1963–1970.

521 For the best documented publication about the competitions of French theatrical confraternities (*puy*), in which the simple form of participation was individual performance, see Coigneau (1993: 127), with a reference in the French section to the study of the Marian confraternities of northern France in the fourteenth century: G. Gros, *Le poète, la vierge et le prince du puy. Etude sur les Puys mariais de la France du Nord du XIV^e siècle à la Renaissance*, Paris 1992. In Flemish contests, even an individual poet considers himself a representative of his confraternity.

Before we address drama, we will narrow the field of inquiry and shed some light on the role of confraternities as a literary, and more specifically theatrical, milieu.

When discussing this, we are entering a field that is nonexistent in Poland. What in the Polish (much later) tradition bore the name of a literary confraternity was merely an association of people who could write – which, at the time, additionally meant that they knew Latin – and the only sphere that brought them closer to the confraternities in western Europe was musical culture. The Nowy Sącz confraternity from 1608 promises in its statute to employ the choir Kapellmeister and to have a paid organist among its members; singing in the choir is the duty of all brothers and sisters.⁵²² At the same time, Stanisław Grochowski (1524–1612), a Jesuit, writes a cycle of songs and prayers for the processions of the confraternities of the Redeemer's Compassion.⁵²³ Obviously, that does not mean that there were no people in Poland who made their living by entertaining others with music or song.⁵²⁴ Among the signs of mourning after the death of King Bolesław I the Brave (d. June 17, 1025), the chronicler Gallus Anonymus mentions, among others, the fact that “neither clapping nor the sound of the zither could be heard in the taverns” (*Kronika polska* 1982: 36). Non-parish associations of intellectuals known already in the sixteenth century are of different character.⁵²⁵

In Southern and Western Europe matters are entirely different. Beside the old – perhaps even ancient – juggler, there appear groups within religious

522 B. Kumor 1960, 365–366; E. Wiśniowski 1969: 57. Other sources: A. Mańkowski, “Bractwa literackie w diecezji chełmińskiej,” *Zapiski Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu* 5, p. 188–197. Cf. also the unpublished monograph by J. Alberski, *Średniowieczne bractwo literackie NMP w Pilźnie na tle bractw literackich w Polsce*, Tarnów 1961, Arch. KUL, sygn. Teol. mgr 74. Thus, the word “literacki” (literary) retains its medieval meaning “litteratus,” that for a long time (in the West until the twelfth century) meant the knowledge of Latin. H. Grundmann, “Litteratus-Illiteratus. Der Wandel einer Bildungsnorm vom Altertum zum Mittelalter,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 40/1958, pp. 1–65, qtd. after de Jong 1993: 9.

523 *Hierozolimaska Processia w Kościele Chwalebego Grobu Pana Jezusowego zwyczajna. Przy obchodzeniu kaplic, ołtarzów y inszych mieysc świętych, na których Zbawiciel trudząc się y krew Ś. przelewając Zbawienie ludzkie odprawował*, Kraków 1607.

524 Legal sources typically use the term *ioculatores* in reference to this social estate, but other terms have been used as well, more or less interchangeably, such as *mimi*, *histriones*, *goliardi*, as well as many Polish ones (Fijałek 1997: 53–58). In the same sources, one may find scattered oldest references to entertainments and spectacles (Długosz, Stanisław from Skarbimierz, or the synod statutes)

525 See SLS, multiple author entry, “Towarzystwa literackie i naukowe,” 1998, pp. 977–82.

confraternities whose aim it is to organize entertainment. Their members are volunteers among whom it is easier to find people of artistic talent or at least with fondness for the arts. P. Burke (1992: 132–2, 144) writes about specialized organizations of volunteers who become agents of modernization. Only such groups – the professions, churches, associations, and parties – remain spaces of personal contact in the anonymous society that replaced the old traditional structures based on the community principle.⁵²⁶ The voluntary nature of those organizations does not mean that they were always the fruit of spontaneous initiative of people of good will, but that those people gathered around specific centers. The most important of those were religious institutions, secular rulers, and local governments.

With respect to performances, each of those centers had its own needs, but it is not always possible to ascribe specific actions to any one of them. After all, even in contemporary cultural life, where the database is so much richer, it is difficult to detangle the intentions of specific principals, beneficiaries, and executors. Thus, we need to be satisfied with a general model and work with examples to determine characteristic qualities that point to the participation of a specific center.

The most visible and often the main area of entertainment activity were the cities. That is where the influence of all social forces meets and intersects. In order to secure a professional supply of entertainment services – be it for its own use or at the request of an owner – the city either employed minstrels⁵²⁷ or signed contracts with new groups, such as the Rederijkers.⁵²⁸ Most importantly the cities allowed for the existence or even inspired the creation of such associations. Within those associations, skills were passed by experienced members on to those

526 A good illustration is provided by direct exchange and custom production on the one hand and money exchange and market production on the other; others are the replacement of the ruler who aimed to know as many of his subjects as possible by impersonal bureaucracy. Often such conceptual pairs are quoted as: *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (Tönnies); universalism and particularism (T. Parsons).

527 “Betaelt den viere menestrelen vander stede van haerlieder pensioene van eenen jare xxiiiij lb gr.” (Four city minstrels were paid their annual salaries). L. Gilliodts van Severen 1912, p. 44. Brugge 1457 and later (1467, 1475, 1478, 1480).

528 Eclco: “De selve supplianten zouden hemlieden daer voren ... verbinden dat zij zullen doen vertooghen acht waghenspele sjaers omme tvolc lüde insetenen deser stede te verblydene.” (Those same applicants [Rederijkers from Ghent] agreed to organize performances on wagons eight times in a year, for the enjoyment of the city dwellers.) E. Gailliard, *Glossaire flamand de l'Inventaire des archives de Bruges*, 1879, p. 414 s.v. *Tafelspel*.

newly admitted. Indeed, confraternities offered a form of art education, modeled on the guild apprentice system (Christiansen 1972), preceded by education in the form of training offered to novices by traveling minstrels, for example during periodical meetings. Thanks to the steady cooperation with artistic associations, the cities could manage their responsibilities, both permanent (holidays) and occasional (war mobilization).⁵²⁹ Such occasions were given innocent yet suggestive descriptions: a holiday was organized apparently only to entertain the citizens (*om de goede lieden te verblidene*); the ceremony of welcoming the prince by the city in the Netherlands was a “joyous entry” (*blijde inkomst*). Yet when we look at those from a broader perspective, such events obviously contributed to the creation of the city identity as the new political body.

4. MEDIA STRUGGLE. The nobles were the main founders of cities (Ennen 1991: 119) and patrons of semi-military riflemen confraternities. Distinct ties connected the Church as patron of religious confraternities and the cities, especially after the founding of the typically urban-based mendicant orders. Artists without affiliation with any of the mentioned formations⁵³⁰ could find individual employment even at bishop’s courts, however there repeatedly appeared prohibitions for the clergy to keep jugglers on the Church budget: *mimis, ioculatoribus et histrionibus non intendant*.⁵³¹ An echo of this ban, appears in the text by Stanislaus from Skarbimierz: “Did you provide the oppressed and poor with what they need, or did you give away the garments to the comedians, leaving only leftovers for the poor like crumbs for dogs?”⁵³²

People organized riflemen confraternities as a reserve military formation and civil guard. However, they appear in the Netherlands in relation to entertainment and theater quite early. Already the year 1404 saw a theatrical competition recorded as part of the confraternal festivity: a shooting competition (van Autenboer 1962: 85). Even the year 1348 memorized such contest (*scutterie*) in the East-Flandrian Oudenaarde, which comprised some beautiful games (*scone*

529 In 1477, in relation to some war of Maximilian, a wagon pageant was organized because the city council of Bruges believed that such performance will be the right measure to persuade the populace to pay a voluntary tax (*Die excellente Chronijke van Brabant*, p. 198).

530 The accounting books of the counts of Holland note, among others, wandering jugglers without lord; 3 *sprekers die genen here en hadden* (1395; Jonckbloet 1855: 609).

531 At least since Lateran IV in 1215 (canon 16) – Fijałek 1997: 57, ft. 90.

532 *Mowa o umiłowaniu światła mądrości i o tym, że niezbędne jest przełożonym duchowym do kierowania innymi i naprawiania ich*, w: *Mowy wybrane o mądrości*, oprac. M. Korolko, Kraków 1997: 75.

spelen) aside with something called *bamentene*; probably a farce, in contrast to the previous serious plays. It is certainly no coincidence that the first performance of a specific title recorded in the sources – most probably with secular play in 1373 – refers us to Oudenaarde: *spel van Stragengys*. The piece resurfaces in the nearby Dendermonde in 1447 as *Tspel van Tresignis*, only to be listed in the inventory of texts of a certain Ghent confraternity from 1532 as *Het spel van den heer van Trasengijs*.

The name in the title refers to the family of Trazegnies from the Walloon province of Hainaut (Henegouwen in Dutch). Its representative, Otto (Oston) VI, signed the statutes of the guild of Saint George in Mons (Bergen in Dutch) in 1380. In 1371, Otto VII participated in the Battle of Bäsweiler, an important event in the history of Brabant and Gelderland. Whereas in Trazegnies died the Count of Flanders, Wilhelm of Dampierre, during the tournament in 1251.⁵³³

We may guess the connection between the performance characterized by dynastic propaganda in honor of the family patronizing the confraternity and some shooting competitions which – apart from shooting to a parrot (Dąbrowka 1994) – comprised performances by *gesellen van den spele*. The 1447 performance in Dendermonde may be connected to the prose romance *Histoire de Gillion de Trasignyes et de dame Marie sa femme* (published by Wolff in 1839), commissioned by the Duke of Burgundy, Philip III the Good, around 1450.⁵³⁴ With this court, it is difficult to imagine a different function of this text than the apotheosis of aristocratic customs. We interpret here on the example of a relatively new genre, hand-written prose romance, but similar intentions are not uncommon and also apply to the Middle English lyrical romances, partly even to Chaucer (see S. Knight 1986a: 163; 1986b).

5. THEATER AND THE CHURCH. The discussion about the relationship between the theater and the Church would seem to have ended. Meanwhile, it remains quite lively. In terms of elementary facts, the Church's associations with theater activity keep with the liturgical calendar, in the authorship of the clergy – also as directors of plays – and in Church funding and control of amateur performances, usually jointly with the city (Erzgräber 1977: 60). The notion of control covers not only bans but also incentives, both properly targeted. However, the assessment of

533 E. Poncelet in *Biographie Nationale de Belgique*, Vol. 25: 594. For the 1373 performance see Puyvelde (1922: 936): “Willikin Frans bastaerd van der Straten, () slouch met de vuust eenen Hannekine van der Wostine int spel van Stragengys”.

534 Noteworthy, he was the one to renew the privileges of both guilds in the Flemish city of Thielt (1429); the founding documents supposedly burned in 1381 (A. de Vlaeminck in *Vaderlandsch Museum* 1863: 25, ft. 3).

the scope of these relationships in time and space determine not only constantly new theories but also sources.

The fruitful cooperation with the clergy led to the creation of a specific form of literary practice that combined religious and secular performances (Peters 1983: 208). The practice obviously was nothing exceptional,⁵³⁵ short-lived, or limited to the parish clergy. Gibson's recent research in the area of southern England strongly confirms the cooperation between the Benedictines and parish confraternities as late as in the fifteenth century.⁵³⁶ The context of the famous mystery cycles emerges from the clear presence of monasteries, and even a "hybrid blend of monastic and lay spirituality."⁵³⁷ Even if city councils and confraternities took responsibility for the organization of Christmas performances, there were changes in the elements like the duration of the performance or the route of the procession – not from church to church but through important streets – but this does not undermine the Church initiative (Clopper 1989: 105–106). Instead, this only proves the further integration of secular structures into the realization of a godly goal.

The local conditions for the performances matter not: each area shows a different arrangement of forces between the links of the Church structure, devotional confraternities, guilds, and local government. Although there is little evidence of a direct participation of clergymen in other performances than those related to the liturgical year or for the Church funding of the plays – as laboriously established by Clopper (1989), completely lacking in England – this was exactly what subsidiarity meant: the delegation of tasks to the faithful. This also applies to the case of urban jurisdiction, which Clopper argues (1989: 126) was the reason for some religious processions and performances to be supervised by

535 A series publishing medieval sources, *Records of Early English Drama*, "reveals a variety of evidence for the participation of parish churches and clergy in the preparation of theatrical performances" (Briscoe 1991: 219). The elementary parts of the French cycle from Lille were prepared "rather in the parishes than guilds" (Happé 1997: 84; with reference to A. Knight, "Professional Theatre in Lille in the Fifteenth Century," *Le Théâtre et la Cité dans l'Europe Médiévale*, ed. E. E. DuBruck, *Fifteenth Century Studies* 13/1988: 347–358).

536 "The guild of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist met regularly in the abbey church and was a guild of great antiquity" (already in 1389). H. F. Westlake, *The Parish Guilds of Medieval England*, Londyn 1919: 227; qtd. after Gibson 1989: 117.

537 "[A] strong monastic presence – or, more accurately, that hybrid blend of monastic and lay spirituality ... is a crucial context of the N-Town cycle and indeed of much of the religious drama of East Anglia, whatever the town of provenance" (Gibson 1989: 127).

the local government. Finally, canonical bans must have had some effect (see the results of Briscoe's research).

Therefore, the Church gains power and maintains its position in various areas of the city life. Dieter Berg states that the fourteenth century saw the persistence of the religious orientation of education as a part of the unity of the medieval world, not threatened by an independent burgher idea of education (1986: 425). As Herman Pleij (1988: 41) declares in his thorough study of Brussels cultural life about 1500, the clergy influenced current politics,⁵³⁸ its participation in the first chambers of *Rederijkers* was considerable (1988: 184), the Church offered the best chances for social advancement, while the townsmen considered their situation temporary (1988: 340). The set of values appreciated by the urban population was harmonized theologically (1988: 232).

The calendar of city holidays itself largely reflects the course of the liturgical year. Until the Protestant breakthrough, the calendar counts over one hundred Sundays and holidays (Cantor 1993: 480), and even the dating of working days is mostly non-numerical before 1400; for example, work was to be done "on Saint Matthew the Evangelist."⁵³⁹

The celebration of the carnival – even the most appalling – did not change the fact that it happened during the period indicated or admitted – by the suspension of prohibitions – by the Church.⁵⁴⁰ Some say that the Church allowed for the celebration of the carnival to relieve anticlerical moods in the community (Gash 1986: 90). Nevertheless, we should consider two more elements. The criticism of the so-called anticlerical texts usually targeted not the whole clergy but the

538 Moreover, Pleij does not treat the city as a coherent group. The research in High German cities reveals that, for instance, bishops sometimes supported guilds against the city patricians (Basel, ca. 1340); K. Schulz, "Stadtadel und Bürgertum vornehmlich in oberdeutschen Städten im 15. Jh.," *Stadtadel und Bürgertum in den italienischen und deutschen Städten des Spätmittelalters*, ed. R. Elze, G. Fasoli, Berlin 1991: 161ff, 166. It is not necessary to give examples of the opposite support for each of the sides jointly or separately.

539 "Sinte Matheus dach Ewangelist;" M. Hogenhout-Mulder 1987, with reference to her own research of the region of Netherlands and a work by E. I. Strubbe, L. Voet, *De chronologie van de middeleeuwen en de moderne tijden in de Nederlanden*, Antwerp 1960. Van Engen offers the year 1200 as the point of reference for this system of dating legal and administrative acts (in the context of the rejection of theories that delay Christianization; 1986: 543).

540 J. van Hollaar, E. W. F. van den Elzen 1980: 312. Also see D. R. Moser, *Fastnacht, Fasching, Karneval. Das Fest der verkehrten Welt*, Wien 1986; A.-M. Lecoq, "La 'Citta festeggiante': Les Fêtes publiques au XVe et XVIe siècles," *La Revue de l'art* 33/1976.

clerics who broke Church's own norms, namely priests who did not observe celibacy. This kind of "anti-clerical" satire may have expressed rebellion, but more often manifested the opposite: serious regard of sacramental piety.⁵⁴¹ Were most carnival texts not written by faithful clerics (Sprandel 1982: 75)? Besides, even rebellion does not presuppose a conflict between separate classes. According to an interesting suggestion by Norman Cantor (1993: 536), after the expulsion of the Jews to the Slavonic countries, Western Europeans tended to frame in the role of the scapegoat the Roman Catholic clergy.

541 The case of the actual and supposed anticlericalism is thoroughly discussed by R. N. Swanson (1997: 249–252) who recalls, among others, the collection of articles *Anticlericalism in late medieval and early modern Europe*, ed. by P. A. Dykema, H. A. Oberman, Leiden 1993.

16. Spectator, Participant, Co-Author

1. URBAN LITERATURE. Let us conclude our explanation of the question of the cultural independence of cities and bourgeoisie as a class conscious of its distinctiveness. It is easy to attribute a comprehensive sense of distinctiveness to diverse urban circles, which have long been, and still are, a collectivity of social groups of different cohesion. As a whole, cities remain only a category without any internal ties that would make them coherent. This easy attribution is a result of the myriad of signals of contradictions, conflicts,⁵⁴² and protests that occur in cities; together, these signals form the appearance of a choir of “burghers.” Any criticism of the clergy or aristocracy, any trace of the author or patron’s urban origin – all were treated as a manifestation of the growth of a distinct ideology. There appeared a myth of “bourgeois literature,”⁵⁴³ with its beginnings reaching back as early as the thirteenth century. Herman Pleij promotes the theory of the “bourgeois civilizational offensive.”

Meanwhile, everything that we may consider as the earliest urban literature – in the Netherlands dated as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century⁵⁴⁴ – concerns mainly certain motifs of everyday life. They served as an ordinary means of updating the circulating themes, including religious ones. The turn “to realism” in fourteenth-century fine arts should not be ascribed

542 As N. Gonthier proved, the manifestations of violence in the cities of the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries were mostly related to people of the same social status: *Cris de haine et les rites d'unité: La violence dans les villes, XIII–XVIe siècles*, Turnhout 1992; *The Medieval Theater of Cruelty. Rhetoric, Memory, Violence*, Ithaca 1998.

543 In Poland, K. Badecki first introduced the term in his *Literatura mieszczańska w Polsce XVII wieku. Monografia bibliograficzna*, Lviv 1925; according to C. Backvis (1975: 400), this was very unfortunate. See S. Grzeszczuk’s entry “Literatura mieszczańska” in SLS: 474–481. Witold Wojtowicz, *Studien zur “bürgerlichen Literatur” um die Wende vom 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert* (übersetzt von K. Ritthaler, Peter Lang Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2015).

544 H. Pleij (1988: 155–160) discusses them in detail; a few years later, the only legitimate position on his list is a satirical fragment from around 1325 (Pleij 1991: 23 ff.), undeniably from Brussels. It tells the story of the immoral behavior and laziness of workers who play in pubs and game houses. In order to explain the appearance of this motif, it is not necessary to assume the awareness of class differences, e.g. between owners and mercenaries – a moral interpretation is sufficient. The profession of female textile workers was often referred to as a reserve army of prostitution (Cf. Le Goff 1977: 60–61).

to “the development of a mythical ‘bourgeois spirit’” (Duby 1995: 35). Biblical illustrations are full of medieval themes, but no one speaks of a social reinterpretation of the sacred history (Hindman 1977: 76). To be sure, Pleij (1991: 24) is inclined to explain the urban atmosphere of paintings and miniatures of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, often set in typically bourgeois interiors, on the basis of a typological aesthetics that aims to “emphasize timelessness and make visible the universal presence of divine mysteries,” but he wonders whether this was the case also in literature. Until the contrary is proved, we should assume that the answer is positive.⁵⁴⁵ The Dutch miracle play *Mariken van Nieumeghen* – a valuable piece for the history of theatre, as it stages the situation of the audience watching a street performance – is undoubtedly set in the city and one may easily assume that it was meant for the city audience. Perhaps, one may dismiss the question of what a girl from a village is doing there, but it is hard to ignore the fact that Mariken is the main protagonist: a young peasant woman, additionally an orphan, exposed to corruption. One would like to say: the corruption comes from the city. However, we should tackle this stereotype. The Devil seduced a girl outside of the city, and she was driven there by her evil aunt, who violated several important directives, such as the commandment to love her neighbor and the ban on slander (false testimony). Thus, the constructive message of the piece is not related to the city inhabitants, peasants or depraved girls, but it is related to corrupted people or the faithful on the verge of collapse.

The same applies to the “orientation on the bourgeois audience” which, according to Pleij (1988: 340), “clearly manifests itself” in the ethical treatise of *Der leken spiegel* (Secular Mirror, 1330) by John Boendale, intended by the author for everyone except the clergy. Apart from this detail, it is easy to overlook the significant indication of the generalizing image of the social world in this bourgeois author or, worse still, to interpret it as the opposite: a suggestion of the class distinction. Perhaps, however, the city plays an important role here precisely because the majority of lay readers lived in cities. Still, illustrated

545 R. L. Falkenburg (1991) exhibits a similar uncertainty: when commenting on the “realistic depiction of the bourgeois setting” (in the so-called Mérode Altarpiece from around 1427), Falkenburg asserts the identity between the system of values applied in the social life and the one which has shaped personal devotion (“in the private circulation between God and the burgher,” p. 260). It is only in the last sentence that he shyly admits that the image “might” – and the matter concerns the Annunciation! – also carry a religious message (p. 261), which is why it cannot be a self-presentation of the system of “bourgeois values.”

Bibles and biblical picture books also found their readers mostly among urban audiences, but this did not make them bourgeois literature. Art was shown in cities because of the simple pragmatics of the media, which target the largest population centers, where the message can reach more people (and where it is possible to earn more money). Cities provided a setting for countless acts of medieval history, but they were neither special subjects nor even deliberately selected objects of these events. Leaving aside the relativity of the concept of urbanity or citiness, processional spectacles and performances took place even in small villages.⁵⁴⁶

In cases of this kind, one can see at best an anticipation of a sense of distinctness,⁵⁴⁷ but until specific artistic traditions appear, that is, new or clearly adapted genres,⁵⁴⁸ it is impossible to speak of an explicit sense of identity. For some, such a new sub-genre of prose romance was the elaboration of the material that grew around the figure of ingenious Till Eulenspiegel. Besides, folklore is full of anecdotes about peasants who outsmarted the lord, priest, merchant, or king. Therefore, one should consider whether this “bourgeois rationalism and cynicism” of a fellow such as Eulenspiegel (who was actually of peasant, not bourgeois descent) or a similar kind of people from social margins can be indeed considered as a way of underscoring their own value; and not the other way round, e.g. as a stigmatization of a drastic abuse of human reason by a parvenu or an outcast. According to Sandra Billington (1986: 24), until the sixteenth century only the Church and lay moralists could present their point of view; the jesters were neither sufficiently organized nor educated to do so.

546 Croxton in the Norfolk County, the miracle play written ca. 1460, *Play of the Sacrament*, Gibson 1989: 34. “Twenty-seven villages [located nearby Cambridge] combined their resources on a federal basis to finance and present this play [a play about St. James from 1511], and there are other East Anglian examples of this practice” (Wickham 1974: 103).

547 The fifteenth-century English poem *Piers Plowman*, written from a peasant’s point of view, does not condemn the exploitation of peasants and has full confidence in the teachings of the Church (Cantor 1993: 472). P. Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant*, Stanford 1999.

548 M. Bakhtin wrote about genres as forms of social interaction; they model the mediation between social history and the history of language; see J. Flamend, “Le concept de genre de Bakhtine repris,” *Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich* 29.1/1986, pp. 5–13. Cf. also P. Vandebroek, *Jheronimus Bosch. Tussen volksleven en stadscultuur*, Berchem 1987, p. 90.

Another hero of this genre was not a burgher, but a caricature of the priest: the provost of Kahlenberg.⁵⁴⁹ Rather, together with Robert Resoort (1991: 299), we will doubt the presence of bourgeois traditions in narrative literature before 1500⁵⁵⁰ as well as the presence of the general bourgeois morality in drama, as Annelies van Gijzen (1991: 332) proved when studying the play of *Jupiter en Io* by an outstanding bourgeois author.⁵⁵¹ The growing list of discoveries concerning the city's patronage – which included courtly works, untouched by the blast of the bourgeois ideology – gives rise to doubts in this regard (Cieřlik 1992). The bourgeoisie craved to participate in the knightly culture. *Morte Arthur*,⁵⁵² a novel about the death of King Arthur, was the most widely read work in fifteenth-century England and became one of the first texts that appeared in print.⁵⁵³ Without the widespread and complete acceptance of knightly ideals, the devastating Hundred Years War⁵⁵⁴ would not have been possible and no state coercion would have helped in mobilizing the troops (Cantor 1993: 538). Knightly

549 In the first part of the *Romance of the Rose*, the theme of knighthood is treated in a romantic fashion, while the second part, written by the bourgeois author, John of Meun, is characterized by RATIONALISM and CYNICISM; the romantic view of the world was inaccessible to the thirteenth-century burgher, who fell subject to an uncertain fate (Cantor 1993: 470).

550 “Rond 1500 was er zeker binnen de verhalende literatuur nog geen sprake van een eigen traditie op dit punt voor de burgerij.”

551 “Of het stuk daarmee automatisch een burgermoraal weerspiegelt, is een open vraag. Het stuk richt zich tot de Brusselse elite.... dit publiek wil zich onderscheiden van de ongeletterde en onbeschaafde massa. Het streven naar het Hogere in de vorm van Kunst is daarvoor het aangewezen middel. Dit lijkt het ideaal van een culturele bovenlaag, die weliswaar deel uitmaakt van een burgerbevolking, maar daar niet mee samenvalt ... dit compliceert de kwestie of de huwelijksmoraal van het stuk als burgermoraal beschouwd kan worden.”

552 Both versions – the rhymed one from a manuscript written at the end of the fifteenth century, the so-called *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, and the so-called *Alliterative Morte Arthure* from ca. 1440 – have recently been published in a critical edition. See L. D. Benson, *King Arthur's Death. The Middle English "Stanzaic Morte Arthur" and "Alliterative Morte Arthure"*, Kalamazoo 1994.

553 A synthesis of knowledge about the Arthurian tradition can be found in: *The Arthurian Handbook*, eds. N. J. Lacy et al., New York 1997; *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia*, New York 1991; and *King Arthur in Legend and History*, ed. R. White, New York 1998 (the reach of the legend of Arthur in texts from the sixth to sixteenth centuries).

554 The collection of sources concerning this war has a significant title. See Ch. Allmand, *Society at War*, Woodbridge 1999.

confraternities were recruited mainly from the bourgeois,⁵⁵⁵ while tournament games, before they became folklore, had long played an important role as a tool for the political legitimization of the princes' power.⁵⁵⁶ There was no lack of entertainment in manifesting peoples' attachment to their rulers, as evidenced by the play of making snow figures as a manifestation of support for the French Dauphin in the Flemish town of Doornik (today Tournai) besieged by his enemies (winter 1422/1423).⁵⁵⁷ Ceremonial trips – which, like church processions, could include a great variety of artistic activities – can be considered as a typically urban tradition. The medieval *adventus domini* provides means for mutual communication between the ruler and his subjects much more clearly than any other act of collective manifestation.⁵⁵⁸

The ostentatious consumption reserved for the aristocracy is spreading among wealthy merchants and is subject to penalization; it is known mainly in medium-sized and large cities; the nobility has often been exempted en bloc from these laws. The bans are not directed against the townspeople but are intended to make their lives easier by limiting the useless or ruinous competition in the field of costumes (mainly between wives and daughters) at parties, weddings, banquets, and so forth (Brundage 1987: 351–352).⁵⁵⁹

According to Cantor, the inability of merchants to turn their intellectual and economic potential into political power is one of the fundamental facts of the

555 Cf. the significant Arthurian patronage in Artus Courts, which were the name of knightly confraternities (marksman's society) or their seats in Prussian Hanseatic cities (Tandecki 1999: 317).

556 "Tournaments were part of the machinery of power, not an enviable feature of a lost traditional culture" (Lindenbaum 1990: 20). For a synthetic outline of the history of tournaments, see H. Nickel, "The Tournament: A Historical Sketch," in: Chickering, Seiler 1988: 213–262.

557 P. M. Kendall, *Louis XI. The Universal Spider*, New York 1971, p. 31; for H. Pleij (1988), the annual festival of snow figures held in February 1511 became the starting point of his theory of the "bourgeois civilizational offensive": *De sneeuwpoppen van 1511*.

558 For a detailed analysis of the messages sent to rulers, see Kipling 1998. Sometimes they were bold in making conditions, demands, and even threats.

559 Cf. Casimir the Great's decree of 1336 which both limited the permissible number of musicians playing at the wedding (to eight) and prohibited inviting singers and jugglers because of their frequently indecent repertoire; L. Lepszy, *Lud wesółków w dawnej Polsce*, Kraków 1899, p. 54; qtd. after T. Michałowska 1998: 123. An admirer of the political system in the *Utopia* sees its great advantage in the uniformization of clothing which makes it possible to avoid unnecessary expenses.

thirteenth century.⁵⁶⁰ Another factor we should add here is the sixteenth-century “bankruptcy of the bourgeoisie” in the Mediterranean area: merchants abandon their profession, acquire land property, behave like noblemen, and buy titles.⁵⁶¹ In the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries, the same was noted in Austria: leading Viennese bourgeois families belonged to the knightly estate, they could possess fiefs and buy castles or villages (Joest 1976: 160). The cities usually embraced the old legal order and “acted like feudal lords” (Heer 1949: 563). In all Polish lands colonized by Germany except of Silesia, knights held the greatest influence on establishing settlements (Jurek 1998: 189). By all accounts, the place of residence does not determine one’s belonging to an abstract social class, but it conditions

560 Around 1300, “it was still kings, lords, churchmen and scholars who were the leaders of European society. The economic importance of the bourgeois was not translated into political and social leadership until the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (Cantor 1993: 471–472). Hanseatic cities are the relative exception. That is why German and Dutch studies have the greatest chances when looking for the sources of bourgeois morality. For general accounts of the development of the medieval city, see D. Nicholas, *The Growth of the Medieval City*, London 1997 and *Urban and Rural communities in Medieval France: Provence and Languedoc, 1000–1500. The Medieval Mediterranean*, eds. K. Reyerson, J. Drendel, Leiden 1998.

561 P. Burke 1992: p. 152; qtd. after F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, London 1972 (1949). Historical and literary aspects of knighthood are illuminated by an extensive collection of studies edited by Chickering and Seiler (1988); for a monograph concerning a particular field, see W. Iwańczak, *Tropem rycerskiej przygody. Wzorzec rycerski w piśmiennictwa czeskim XIV wieku*, Warszawa 1985. In a review of a monograph by G. Allaire, *Andrea de Barberino and the Language of Chivalry*, Gainesville 1997 – the book is about an Italian writer from the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries – G. Psaka discusses M. Keen and J. Larner’s findings which correct the false image of early Italian capitalism as a work of the “triumphant bourgeoisie” and emphasize the importance of knightly culture (TMR 99.01.05). In *Chivalry* (New Haven 1984, p. 16), M. Keen noted the stability of the knightly ethos in the period between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries. J. Larner confirms this view in his “Chivalric Culture in the Age of Dante,” *Renaissance Studies* 2.2/1988. According to Larner, “the reality is that the first age of commercial capitalism was never created by ... ‘bourgeois’ virtues. ... It was rather chivalric ideas which lay behind the growth of long-distance commerce: reckless courage balanced by intelligence, a contempt for wealth as such which was willing to put all to the touch in search of greatness” (p. 129). “Indeed,” he writes, “chivalric culture, however neglected, is a major and essential element of this age” (p. 126). G. Labuda (1999: 314) calls attention to the combination of the functions of “the merchant, warrior, and raider” among the Vikings and Varangians.

the behavior of real groups: “In the social life of the lowest strata, neighborly solidarity was more important” – than class bonds (Manikowska 1996: 41).⁵⁶² At any rate, it is difficult to reconcile such circumstances with the concept of the “bourgeois civilizational offensive.” Rather, it seems that merchants dabbled in economic activity in order to become part of the noble elite, and only those who failed to achieve this goal continued to work and with time turned this necessity into the virtue of a separate identity.

The repeatedly invoked political balance between the Church and the empire is another good turn for us because it helps clarify the origins of the capitalist economy. According to J. A. Hall, it is the mutual wrestling of the two great powers that can be attributed to the “rise of the West,” one of the greatest puzzles in the history of the world. It was this balance that enabled the emergence of nation states which started to compete with each other.⁵⁶³ At the same time, economic intermediation between different centers became a source of income for merchants; which is still the case today.⁵⁶⁴ Their contact with cultural values had a passive character based on the cultural circulation of the two powers: the church and the rulers; it remained mainly in the realm of interactive communication, which was merely the basis of artistic creation. The bourgeois consciousness is earlier expressed by non-literary (or less literary) genres such as urban historiography.⁵⁶⁵

2. AT THE BEGINNING THERE WAS OBSERVATION. Before it becomes possible to define identity on the basis of motives, materials, and forms, we find a new and not an initial individual phenomenon in the realm of social conduct, cultural

562 In connection with more recent interpretations of the Florentine Revolt of the Ciompi, who were a kind of professional group, but raised an armed force “as if they were residents of the same district.”

563 One of the important forms of this competition were wars. According to social historians, it was not so much the economy as politics, the organized coercion (for instance, tax collection), and preparations for war that constituted the driving force behind the history of nation states (P. Burke 1992: 146; with a reference to: C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States 990–1990*, Oxford 1990). Another form is “defensive modernization,” observed for the first time in the history of Prussia, reformed around 1800 for fear of the French Revolution and Napoleon; H.-U. Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte I*, 1987; for other uses, see P. Burke 1992: 135.

564 J. A. Hall, “States and Societies: The Miracle in Comparative Perspective,” in: J. Baechler et al., *Europe and the Rise of Capitalism*, Oxford 1988, pp. 20–38.

565 E. Ennen (1991: 124); see especially her “Geschichtsbewußtsein und Geschichtsschreibung des städtischen Bürgertums in seinen historischen Wandlungen bis zur Gegenwart,” in: *Gesammelte Abhandlungen II*, 1977.

practice, and the early media system: the organizations which do not create their own repertoire but begin with a reworking of a ready-made – “foreign” or old – material. In terms of cognitivism,⁵⁶⁶ this can be described as a phase of active observation. In its initial phase, it consists in a unilateral “non-communicative interaction” (Scheffer 1989), which comes down to imitating. If one wanted to find a new message, it would be precisely that, in the existential dimension, we repeat actions we observed in others. We do something and – if there are more of us and we keep doing it for a longer time – it turns out to be some sort of mentality. It resembles Elias’ mechanism of civilization – the increase in self-control as an unwitting consequence of the monopolization of violence in a centralized state.

Among the factors influencing the changes in mentality are also the media (Gumbrecht 1985) as the new forms of cultural practice without which social and cultural change would be impossible (Scheffer 1989). In his theory of the “bourgeois civilizational offensive,” Pleij uses the term “annexation and adaptation technique”⁵⁶⁷ that defines the early forms in which a new class takes possession of an existing culture. However, the term is of indefinite theoretical status and would win if compared to a set of concepts of the theory of active observation. For it means many different things now: “the re-use, development, and transformation of the existing material” (Pleij 1988: 333); the use of old conventions to promote new views (Lie 1991: 215); and even the “devising of life models that correspond to the needs of the city” (Pleij 1991: 30) – already ca. 1350!

The aspect of observation is easy to show on the example of dance, an activity which is essentially non-communicative. When the townspeople of Arnhem, out of concern for entertainment, arrange a place for parties, they do not use the old name such as *speelhuus* (game house), but associate it with dance: *danshuus*. A dance house shares certain functions with a game house without being held in disrepute.⁵⁶⁸

566 And especially in terms of Maturana and Varela’s biological theory of cognition. See chapter 14.15 and Maturana, Varela 1998.

567 For instance, in *Sneeuwpoppen* (1988: 331 ff.). See also chapters 2.7, 3 and 9.7.

568 How bad it was can be deduced from Josse Badius’ image of a theatre in which “fornices” peep out from cellar windows. According to Herrmann, this was an architectural fantasy which combined a Roman amphitheater, a Dutch street stage, and Gothic vaults (Herrmann 1914: 304, 312, 320). Equally ambiguous is the function of this building; perhaps, due to an influence of the encyclopedic tradition, it is described as *domus deliciae et iocunditatis*. See the illustrations with the Brussels tableaux vivants from the times of Badius in Herrmann (1914: 397).

The concern of the citizens of Arnhem for a dance house in the town can be considered as a sign of the emergence of their new identity. Game house has become something bad, not only as a word but also as a place where people give in to unbridled fun, which does not always boil down to drinking. There were game houses where people did not drink;⁵⁶⁹ a text written in Brussels in 1325 condemns specifically the behavior of young women in game houses and wine bars (Pleij 1991: 23–24).⁵⁷⁰ Even if people do the same thing in city dance houses (we know from the bills about multi-day drinking bouts), they are meant for another purpose, namely – to officially fight melancholy! It was not an accident that women could count for special treatment there. On city holidays, dance houses were open for women at the city's expense (Alberts 1985: 271); in 1399, the Mayor of Arnhem paid for women's entrance to a dance party.⁵⁷¹ Perhaps, the place of birth of the nineteenth-century "bourgeois" ball – with its function of modelling and strengthening the official order, as distinct from the "folk" carnival (Żółkiewski 1985: 72) – was precisely the late medieval *danshuus*, the municipal dance house!

3. THE OBLIGATION TO DISPLAY STANDARDS. We have earlier discussed the transcendentalization of the sacred (chapter 10) as the cause of a significant civilizational transformation: the identification and constitution of the world of the profane. The very shift of status (its transfer beyond the ontological border) was only a direct result of the redefinition of the sacred. It was only this redistribution of the sacred that has brought numerous consequences.

The historical circumstances of this process have been repeatedly discussed: a specific struggle for cultural investiture, preceded by the breakdown of the early medieval sacro-political unity. In fact, the emperor Charles the Great

569 Cf. the illustration in K. Renger, *Lockere Gesellschaft, zur Ikonographie des Verlorenen Sohnes und von Wirtshausszenen in der niederländischen Malerei*, Berlin 1970, p. 71.

570 For a collection of studies on young women in the Middle Ages, see K. M. Phillips et al. (eds.), *Young Medieval Women*, New York 1999. For studies on women in literature, see: E. van Houts, "The state of research. Women in medieval history and literature," *JMH* 1994, 20, pp. 277–292; *Sovereign Lady: Essays on Women in Middle English Literature*, ed. M. Whitaker, New York 1995; *Woman Defamed and Woman Defended: An Anthology of Medieval Texts*, eds. A. Blamires, K. Pratt and C.W. Marx, Oxford 1992; S. L. Smith, *The Power of Women: A Topos in Medieval Art and Literature*, Philadelphia 1995. An example of a writer who wrote about the condition of women is given in *Chistine de Pizan and the Categories of Difference*, ed. M. Desmond, Minneapolis 1998.

571 Or spectacle; the word *spel* is ambiguous (Albert II, p. 350).

was a head both of the state and the Church; as early as in the middle of ninth century, the bishops of Franconia replaced the world with the concept of Church, understood as a corpus of the clergy and laity (*ordo clericalis* and *ordo laicalis*). It embraced the whole Christian community, and the king was also included in the Church (Leupen 1989). The post-Carolingian emperors also tried to make the Church a kind of their sacred crown. Despite the twists and turns of the Investiture contest, Gregorian spiritualism “disturbed the oppressive state religion” (Heer 1949: 604). The desacralization of the empire was therefore of no less importance to the liberation of individuals than the transformation of the Church (Heer 1949: 336, 654). As we have already mentioned, Barbarossa introduced the term *sacrum imperium* precisely because there was a deficiency of sacredness which his court needed to compensate.⁵⁷² Perhaps, that is the reason why Heer describes Barbarossa’s policy as “reactionary,” which Wies cannot understand (p. 303), even though on the next page he announces that the lack of a real winner in the Investiture controversy was one of the sources of European freedom: “This struggle of power centers which both had universalist aspirations prevented the birth of caesaropapism in Europe. If any of the sides won this conflict, the whole western world would be suppressed under the leaden mantle of one omnipotent power.”

This was the case of Byzantium⁵⁷³ and the consequences were lamentable (Wies 1990: 304). In Europe, in turn, the “battle between the emperor and the pope prevented the formation of ... a despotic-destructive monolithic mentality.”⁵⁷⁴ It also undermined the absolutist theory of power and gradually replaced it with the contractual concepts: in the first version, the power of the monarch comes from God and is not influenced by his subjects, while in the second version, the

572 R. K. Emmerson, “Divine Judgment and Local Ideology in the Beauvais Ludus Danielis,” in: *The Play of Daniel: Critical Essays*, eds. D. H. Ogden et al., Kalamazoo 1997, pp. 33–61, noticed contemporary political allusions to the situation in twelfth-century Beauvais. The play supports the bishops’ case in their conflict with the Paris Court by insisting on the divine legitimacy of church power, of which its secular counterpart is deprived (qtd. after H. Holenweg, in: *TMR* 98.02.02).

573 An important step in this direction was the liquidation of the Constantinopolitan Academy in 730 and the development of monasteries with their crawling feudalism, which Emperor Leo III conducted under the slogan of defending the veneration and honor of the images of saints, which the monks opposed (Pochat 1986: 115).

574 Interestingly enough, in the next sentence Wies writes that “Frederick was open to all spiritual currents of his century” (1990: 305). It is as if Frederick entered the struggle against the Pope for intellectual reasons, in order to prevent the emergence of a Byzantine-like mentality in Europe.

political authority is limited by the law and the subjects can renounce their allegiance if the ruler breaks the law (van Caenegem 1990: 102).

The contractual nature of feudal relations also contributed to the fact that the subordination to the state authority in Europe gained a purely earthly form and became demandable under the law, which justified the state monopoly on violence. According to Elias, this position of the state has shaped the civilizational process understood as the internalization of external coercion. Thus, after discussing the transcendentalization of the sacred, we arrive at the second factor which conditioned the desacralization and autonomization of human fate. A characteristic mechanism that marked the entry into the realm of the profane – which should not be equated with secularization – was the necessity to display standards in both secular and religious areas (chapters 13, 14, 15). Local governments felt (clerical) responsibility for the morality and education of their citizens, which found expression in the emergence of complex cycles of mystery plays; they were characteristic especially for English cities with strong local governments based on guilds (Clopper 1989: 128), which would be the first to abandon religious performances if the limiting of church jurisdiction indeed translated into the secularization of other spheres of life. The authors of the *Valenciennes Passion* (1547), one of the latest productions staged legally in Paris before the ban of 1548, did not hesitate to include feeding the multitude – in this case a thousand spectators – with bread among their “special effects” (Hess 1977a: 662).

The compulsion to display standards forces people to constantly affirm, advocate, or oppose certain values in order to determine who is who and whose behavior is calculable, that is to say, honest. In general, the aim is to confirm the truth, whose validity, in the world of the profane, expires quickly and needs to be constantly renewed. This coercion was decisively strengthened by what can be described as the systemic factor. The inevitable consequence of the disappearance of blind spots on the medieval map was that everyone became someone else's subject, a member of some parish. The citizen came to be defined, and confined, by a variety of roles which he or she did not choose, although the number of choices was constantly increasing. It is possible that this circumstance, when it was recognized, was becoming a kind of breakthrough in the field of self-definition of the individual in relation to the perceived conditions (coercions, compulsions, requirements, possibilities) and other individuals. As a result, identity was defined to a decreasing – but still decisive – extent by hierarchical relations (serfdom, jurisdiction), and to an increasing extent by systems of coordinates (distance from the center, horizontal relations with other people, cultural factors, language). At some point, we can feel the internal compulsions of

coherence which we find in the field of intellectual reflection,⁵⁷⁵ also in theology (chapter 17). The increased awareness of one's specific features, knowledge about the feelings of others, the ability to look at oneself from outside (empathy) – we acquire all this by virtue of interaction and literature, and ultimately by virtue of the intensity of contacts (real and imagined). The creative work of the self on its own coherence consisted in rejecting (marginalizing) all those motives (revelations, epiphanies) that carried the potential of changing the balance (the stabilizing sacred as an auxiliary foundation of identity).

I have already mentioned interaction while discussing confraternities; it will persist as a fundamental component of the theatrical activity, which we usually explore through the texts that accompanied interactions. It is these texts that have been the most visible field of the negotiation of standards which has been the driving force in the process of the formation and harmonization of cultures.

575 Since it is certainly (in addition to the abovementioned political factor) one of the aspects of the mysterious phenomenon called the “rise of the West,” let us quote here a statement whose validity M. L. Colish proves in her “intellectual history of the West,” *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400*, New Haven 1997, pp. x-xi: “the foundations of western intellectual history were laid in the Middle Ages and not in classical Greece and Rome or the Judeo-Christian tradition ... despite its apparently lackluster start.... Western medieval thinkers developed the means and methods that enabled them to outpace the Byzantines and Muslims decisively in the high Middle Ages” (qtd. after Ch. Radding’s review in TMR 98.10.14).

17. The Incarnational Aesthetics of the Theatrical Performance

Among social conditions which explain the presented theory and practice of entertainment, we should also point to motivations related to devotion in a positive manner. Theatrical activity was not only about breaching the influence of Satan but also about experiencing, promoting, and manifesting human bonds with God.

For convenience, I shall employ the term aesthetics to designate all implied or explicit views on the nature (construction, roles, and destiny) of works of art and literature, even though the term itself appeared much later and usually had a narrower scope of reference. The point here is not to discuss aesthetics as a theory of beauty, or literary aesthetics as a theory of literary work,⁵⁷⁶ but it is only to critically use the two recent conceptions: Gail McMurray Gibson's incarnational aesthetics (1989) and Alan Knight's genological theory (1983).⁵⁷⁷ I shall address the latter in part five.

576 Here, I shall make only a few necessary remarks in the margins of W. Haug's paper (1992b).

577 Because of the character of this book, I do not refer to any general genological positions, although I propose another such position. Medieval genology is systematized, to varying extents, by larger textbooks on the history of national literature. For specialist works in the field, see M. Waltz, "Zum Problem der Gattungsgeschichte im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie* 90/1970, pp. 22–39; W. Haug et al., in: *Kleinere Erzählformen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, Tübingen 1993; R. Jauss, *Alterität und Modernität der mittelalterlichen Literatur*, München 1977, especially the title essay and "Theorie der Gattungen und Literatur des Mittelalters," E. Köhler, "Gattungssystem und Gesellschaftssystem," in: *Zum mittelalterlichen Literaturbegriff*, ed. B. Haupt, Darmstadt 1985, pp. 111–129; H. Kuhn, *Entwürfe zu einer Literatursystematik des Spätmittelalters*, Tübingen 1980, especially: "Gattungsprobleme der mittelhochdeutschen Literatur;" in Poland: T. Michałowska, *Staropolska teoria genologiczna*, Wrocław 1974; for a brief outline of the history of the discipline, see T. Michałowska, "Rodzaje czy rodzaj? Problemy taksonomii literackiej," *Mediaevalia* 1998, pp. 308–328, with an extensive bibliography. In Poland, S. Skwarczyńska and I. Sławińska have given the most attention to theatrical genology. J. Lewański presented several genological monographs (1966, 1968, 1969); he applied practical solutions in the editions included in the collection *Dramat staropolski*. J. Degler's anthology (1988) contains a number of interesting papers concerning this field.

1. IMAGES OF VISIBLE GOD. For Gibson (1989: 11 ff.), visualization is the foundation of medieval aesthetics. Emphasizing the conservatism of the didactic motives of Christian art, associated with the slogan of art as a book for the illiterate, Gibson notes that even the famous *Biblia Pauperum*⁵⁷⁸ might have been intended for scholarly reception; in fact, iconographic programs were not populist, but – on the contrary – very sophisticated, even “bookish,”⁵⁷⁹ in terms of their theological contents, and comprehensible only for a narrow group of specialists. This was also noticed by contemporaries: “Rightly so, the shape and artistry of this work is available to less educated people by means of writing, since many of its components appear to have mysterious meanings and come from divine inspiration rather than the master’s experience.”⁵⁸⁰

Therefore, the new imperative was not so much to popularize as to illustrate, imagine, which was meant to provide deeper knowledge of the object of worship in order to stimulate it.⁵⁸¹ This conception finds its

578 The notion of Gregory I the Great, from his Letter to the bishop of Marseille (600), *Registrum Epistolarium*, published by P. Ewald, L. M. Hartmann 1887–1899, in: *MGH*, Epist. II, p. 195: “The image is exhibited in the church so that those who cannot read may at least look at the walls and see what they cannot read in books.” Walafrid Strabo: “In many ways, it is clear how many benefits come from painting. And the first of them is that painting is literature for the uneducated.” *De rebus ecclesiasticis*, PL 114, p. 929, Tatarkiewicz 1988: 99. For a new bibliography on Gregory, see: R. Austin Markus, *Gregory the Great and His World*, Cambridge 1997.

579 Compare the identical function of dramatic cycles: “Even if the projected audience was the common people, the content of the cycles at times is theologically sophisticated” (Happé 1998: 83).

580 *Chronicon S. Benigni Divionensis* (between 1001–1031, about the church in Dijon): Tatarkiewicz 1988: 158. This mysterious sense can be found in various studies of the spiritual meaning, e.g. Peter of Roissy, *Manuale de mysteriis ecclesiae* (Tatarkiewicz 1988: 159); we shall return to this text when discussing mystery plays as a theatrical genre.

581 In Gregory’s earliest formulations, the cognitive function comes first; but the fear of idolatry remains alive for a long time: “If anyone would like to produce images, do not prevent them, but avoid worshipping their works” (Gregory, *Registrum Epistolarium*); for other formulations, see, for instance, Walafrid Strabo (ca. 808–849): “People should not worship various images and paintings in an exaggerated manner, as some fools think. Nor should they condemn beauty with disregard, as some empty heads think” (*De rebus ecclesiasticis*, PL 114, p. 927; Tatarkiewicz 1988: 99). Carruthers (1998) writes about the simultaneous necessity and far-reaching arbitrariness of imaging in rhetorical memorization (see her commentary on Albertus Magnus in my chapter 25.2).

theological justification in the New Testament suspension of the ban on making images.⁵⁸²

It is worth recognizing this aspect of the Incarnation: when we think about the act of sending the Son to earth in the form of a man, so that he could speak to people, we usually remember St. John's "the Word, which became flesh" (John 1:14). What we tend to forget, however, is that the great breakthrough of incarnation also lies in the visibility and corporeality of God in this Man, as John makes clear when contrasting the Old and the New Law: "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (John 1:17–18). "He [the Son] is the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). These quotations could serve as the ultimate basis for the doctrine of Iconodulism⁵⁸³ set against the opponents of "idolatry;" they could also become the main inspiration for Christian artists, including writers.

In the script of his Latin Divine Office for the Feast of the Presentation of Mary,⁵⁸⁴ Philippe de Mézières included a number of indications which Gibson describes as the implied poetics of religious drama. As de Mézières announced:

Certain people ... have ordained a celebration with certain dramatic representations (*representationibus*) containing most devout speeches, new actions, and devices (*signis*); through which they might make known to all those believing in Christ that through this Presentation of a most humble virgin in the Temple the whole universal foundation was laid; by which also the mind stirred by the flesh as if through visible things and actions,

582 This right was not obvious to everyone from the beginning; after many discussions, the Council of Constantinople (381) recognized the co-existence of Christ's nature with God, opening the way for a neo-Platonic position which allowed the representation of supernatural values in a form accessible to the senses as well as their worship in a visible form (Pochat 1986: 106). The debate did not cease until the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 and were gradually suppressed in local synods for several decades; they ended with the idolatry controversy, which was raised from time to time by various dissident movements to come back powerfully after 730 years.

583 Cf. Rahner, the entry *Hyperdulia*: a stronger cult for Mary compared to other saints. See chapter 17.4 on John of Damascus.

584 *Representatio Figurata in Festo Praesentationis Beatae Virginis Mariae in Templo* (Bibliothèque Nationale MSS. lat. 173330). It was celebrated on November 21, 1372, in the papal Avignon. The official ceremony also included the proper Marian mystery, which included the ceremony of "presentation," namely – of a girl to priests in the temple. See Meredith, Tailby 1983: 207–225.

according to the teaching of the apostle, shall be enabled to come to a knowledge of the invisible and visible mysteries of God.⁵⁸⁵

This understanding strikes at the very essence of the Middle Ages' contribution to literary art: the discovery of means to express the spiritual content, preceded by the Christian adaptation of the heritage of Antiquity (Glunz⁵⁸⁶ 1963: 572). This adaptation should also be understood as a competition between different media and the substitution of classical motifs with Christian ones. The art of antiquity maintained its influence: its daring persistence forced people to make something that would be (at least partly) new and their own. In the fourth century, older stylistic patterns were used to counteract the fashion of paganism (Pochat 1986: 91).

However, the model for expressing spiritual content – “through the actions and signs of the body” – was the Incarnation:

What has too often been confused with the naive and the childlike, or has been dismissed as crudely popular because it had an afterlife in succeeding centuries in the cultural residue left to peasant culture, was in fact a deliberate and conscious effort to objectify the spiritual even as the Incarnation itself had given spirit a concrete form (Gibson 1989: 8).

It was therefore a specific *imitatio incarnationis*. The two become related with each other when new Christology starts making use of the permission to physically represent the sacred. This was possible only because it was Christ who became the visible God. “It is the truth of imagination, of imaging, which is the fundamental truth behind late medieval lay spirituality and is the shaping aesthetic for the religious drama and lyric” (Gibson 1989: 10). Well perhaps, but how can we demonstrate the connection of incarnational aesthetics with the Christocentrism based precisely on the Passion (not on the earlier Royalty)? Already Carolingian and Romance iconography presented Christ as the central figure, which also required a permission to make images, while the position of Iconodulism was perhaps even more explicit due to its authoritative approach

585 “Presentation of Mary in the Temple,” in: Meredith, Tailby 1983: 207. For a critical English edition, see R. S. Haller, *Figurative Representation of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple*, Lincoln 1971.

586 I accept here the general conclusion of H. H. Glunz's work without going into a detailed argumentation. From a philological point of view, E. R. Curtius challenged this approach in an extensive discussion published in *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie* 58/1938, pp. 1–50. A settlement of this dispute could form an introduction to a separate work devoted to medieval literary aesthetics in general. In what follows, I only take up a certain theme raised by W. Haug (1990c), who supported Curtius' position.

to the problem. This means that, already in this period, incarnational aesthetics emerged as a creative principle.

Noting the fifteenth-century “particularization of religious experience” (a statue of the Mother of God in every parish – see chapter 9.1), Gibson is right not to attribute this to the alleged progress of secularization. Rather, she prefers to speak of a “growing tendency to see the world saturated with sacramental possibility and meaning and to celebrate it” (Gibson 1989: 6). That is why iconography, devotion, and religious drama of the fifteenth century reveal a concretization of the abstract God in the incarnate Son and of the mysteries of faith in the mysteries of the body martyred on the cross.

The ever-growing tendency to transform the abstract and theological to the personal and concrete was not only the general characteristic of mind in the late Middle Ages, it was the center of raging controversy [over the doctrines of Incarnation and Transubstantiation] (Gibson 1989: 7).

We have already explained this mysterious tendency while discussing the evolution of the mode of being of the sacred from ubiquity to transcendentalization: the emphasis on the bodily presentation, that is to say, visualization of the sacred is still a mystery or in some way mythical feature (see chapter 9). The miraculous or legendary presence does not necessarily manifest itself in a physical manner; a miraculous interference in the physical world is sufficient. Only some extreme spiritualistic schools go as far as to utterly reject the existence of a physical element; usually, it appears in a strongly reduced form (like the voice of Jehovah in Judaism) or a strictly ritualized framework (sacraments and sacramentals).

In theological terms, the transcendentalization of the sacred is a process of limiting the supernatural effects which people wish to bring about with their actions: now, the only legitimate effect is the salvation of every Christian soul. Generations of clergy have strived for this to be the only a sense of devotional behavior. To be sure, efforts for earthly rewards were allowed, but they were not praised and could never obscure the main purpose. Since they were still desired – which is human – and obtaining them after the sacramentalist rationing exemplified by the removal of the institution of the judgment of God, took on an even more unusual character. In the end, it had to take the form of a miracle, which came to designate every favorable course of events.

The moving away of the sacred beyond the ontological boundary will be accompanied by evidences of contact, which, for some, remain an indispensable element of faith, while for others they are irritating as a sign of a small amount of faith, or even a superstition that should be debunked in God’s name. Wycliffe and Protestants are not responsible for this, but they are preachers of spiritualistic

ideas. Their activity was not necessary for the essence of the process, although it could have intensified the opposite aspiration to confirm the physicality of the sacred (e.g. in the doctrine of transubstantiation), Gibson argues, mistakenly combining the genesis of the whole process with the Franciscan “emphasis on piety and preaching upon the human nature of Christ, the Virgin and the saints” (1989: 8). In fact, Franciscans merely embraced a pre-determined task;⁵⁸⁷ but this was not their only task and they were not the only ones to perform it. As Giles Constable notes:

For other writers of the twelfth century, and especially the Cistercians, the imitation of Christ’s humanity, while not identical with salvation, was an essential part of a full Christian life. Pope Eugene III wrote in 1149 to Suger of St Denis that “Our Lord Jesus Christ came down not to the joys of the world but to the sufferings and death which He had to bear for us. We should therefore imitate our head Himself because by suffering persecutions for Him, relying on His promise, we shall be blessed in the eternal reward” (Constable 1995: 190–191).

What we should note here is the role of the earthly life of Christ as a model for monks, then imitated also by the faithful. In accordance with the custom of unlimited multiplication of models and paths of imitation, Christ was already a role model for the apostles and later for the saints, who, in turn, were imitated by monks. Just as the Rule of Benedict was a program of building the personality of a monk by following Christ – which Seebohm (1996: 75ff) analyzes in detail, explaining the iconographic program of producing images which depict a crucified monk that were a brief exposition of how to perfect the body and spirit – the Gregorian reform provides clerics with the “apostolic ideal” and requires them to pursue it in their pastoral ministry.⁵⁸⁸

587 A. Derbes presented the work of Italian Franciscans in terms of the “change in the cast of the Passion scenes” in *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy: Narrative Painting, Franciscan Ideologies, and the Levant* (New York 1996; reviewed by M. A. Lavin, TMR 98.02.01). A similar range of phenomena is discussed in T. Obiedzińska’s thesis, “*Topography of cult images of the Crucified in medieval and renaissance Polish culture*,” in: Nieznanowski, Pelc 1994: 83–141. U. Köpf (1993: 34) warns against considering the rapid growth of interest in the Passion in the thirteenth century as a peculiarity of Franciscan theology and spirituality: “all religious communities” have contributed to this; for a study on the contribution of Dominicans, see e.g. H. M. Barth, “Liebe verwundet durch Liebe. Das Kreuzigungsbild des Regensburger Lektionars als Zeugnis dominikanischer Passionsfrömmigkeit,” *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg* 17/1983, pp. 229–268.

588 M. H. Vicaire, *The Apostolic Life*, Chicago 1966, pp. 82–83; qtd. after Aumann 1993: 139.

2. THE PASCHAL ASPECT. In order to properly assess the importance of the paschal motif as a new element in theological and ecclesiological reflection, it is not enough to take into consideration the usual processes of adapting certain approaches to the changing reality. This is the only way to explain the emergence of variants. In the case of the motif of the kingdom of Christ as the beneficial effect of His Passion, which does not stem from humility and degradation – as in the French mystery of the fourteenth century *Passion du Palatinus* – the evidence would be the deference of the coronation with thorns until the crucifixion and the removal of the scene of washing feet.⁵⁸⁹ Remaining on the surface of phenomena, one could think of a certain appreciation of the suffering brought by the defeats of the Crusaders. In fact, it is a certain militarization of torment that begins to set at least a minimal standard for combat valor.⁵⁹⁰ In the next step, we may consider the urban syndrome: the matters of mercy and care for the poor, which Franciscans emphasized so strongly. To be sure, this phenomenon is linked to a kind of personalization, defeudalization, but then again it does explain the former example: for the aristocracy, humiliation might have been a sacrifice and a source of merit, but was it for the people? Still, what remains problematic is the turbulent development of religious theater after the twelfth century. Since incarnational aesthetics reflects not only the Carolingian period but also, and equally well, the later periods, then it cannot account for the appearance of religious drama, let alone its functioning.

589 J. P. Bordier, “Lecture du Palatinus,” *Le Moyen Age* 1974, 80, p. 429–482. In her critical edition, *Passion du Palatinus* (Paris 1922), G. Frank dates the creation of this short play (about two thousand lines) for the thirteenth century, linking its source with the narrative *Passion des jongleurs* known since around 1200, “widely circulated by the jongleurs in France and England,” and praised as something better than knightly romances (Frank 1954: 125).

590 We shall here distinguish between a defeat and a glorious death, which has always belonged to the warrior’s profession. This distinction is important, because it is drawn against the background of the flourishing knightly culture, which – as J. Kleiner noted – included the “value of death” in its repository. J. Kleiner, “Tragizm,” in: *Studia z zakresu teorii literatury*, 1961: 69. The diagnosis of Fr. Smoleń (1987: 275) is similarly imprecise: “Gothic art, as a product of the mentality of northern Europe, emphasized the reality and humanity of suffering in the representations of crucified Christ. European nations, going through the stages of cruel wars, famine, pestilence, and sudden deaths, wanted to see Christ suffering with people and enduring his torment beyond human measure. It was easier to suffer and die at the time.” There is no reason for giving priority to northern Europe in terms of the scale of suffering.

The new Christology creates an image of God-man and teaches us that everyone can achieve salvation precisely by imitating this Man, not by blind obedience to the King of Heavens. Therefore, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux,⁵⁹¹ through the lips of the Church as the Bride of Christ, would describe him as “formerly the king, now the beloved.”⁵⁹² Here we may find the key to explaining the relationship between the theme of Christ’s humanity – already the Fathers of the Church noticed its theological significance – and the ecstatic cult of his body, earthly life, and torment linked to this theme in the twelfth century.⁵⁹³ Thus, on the one hand, it is a question of drawing a distinction between the incarnational, behavioral, and paschal motif, and on the other hand, it is a question of demonstrating why the traditional theological recognition of the necessity of Incarnation as a compensation of the original sin was not sufficient, and why it became necessary to commonly and emotionally dwell on the body, life, and death of Christ.

The earliest among the works which inaugurated the contemplation of suffering⁵⁹⁴ were the letters, sermons and speeches of Peter Damian.⁵⁹⁵ Of special

591 For a new bibliography, see P. Dinzelbacher, *Bernhard von Clairvaux. Leben und Werk des berühmten Zisterziensers*, Darmstadt 1998.

592 “Ante rex, modo dilectus,” *Sermones in Cantica Cantorum LXIII*, PL 183, p. 993C; for a critical edition, see J. Leclercq et al., “Sermo super Cantica Cantorum,” in: S. Bernardi Opera, Vol. 2, Rome 1958. According to this interpretation of the Song, the Church is the Beloved of Christ (*sponsa id est Ecclesia*, cap. XXV).

593 Discussing the history of the ideal of *imitatio Christi*, G. Constable deals with earlier manifestations of the cult of the humanity of Jesus, as well as objections to the identification of its various aspects (1995: 170–73 and fn. 157): here especially C. L. Chase, *Romantic Piety in the Heroic Church* (an unpublished dissertation, Harvard 1978), E. M. Ross, *The Grief of God: Images of the Suffering Jesus in Late Medieval England* (New York 1997); in the performances of The Passion, Ross notices a balance between the divinity and the humanity of Christ, and infers the intention “to evoke a response in the audience that not only moves an individual to attend, through contrition and penance, to their own salvation, but also to extend their spiritual transformation into their society by performing acts of mercy” (K. Gould, a review in TMR 98.02.07).

594 Tubach, no. 1010: The monk explains why Christ is seen more often in the moment of torment than in the moment of resurrection, Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, Rev. 8, chapter 35, Lib. Ex. No. 3.

595 “Whoever embraces Christ with a constant love in the recess of the heart, whoever continually meditates on the mystery of His passion in order to imitate, for this person Christ will surely become “a bundle of myrrh ... and shall abide between the breasts” [Song of Songs 1.12]” (*Institutio monialis*, 3 in: PL 145, p. 735CD; qtd. after Constable 1995: 102). For a wider discussion and more quotations, see Constable 1995: 201–203.

importance were *Dialogus Mariae et Anselmi de Passione Domini*⁵⁹⁶ and *Liber de Passione Christi et doloribus et planctibus Matris ejus*.⁵⁹⁷ They consolidated the Christocentric mysticism which permanently entered the canon of piety and theology: in the mid-thirteenth century, both these works were known “in almost every monastery” (Sticca 1973: 80). Perhaps, that is why they were attributed to the two eminent figures: Anselm was the Primate of England and the “father of Scholasticism,” while Bernard was the actual leader of the Christian world for almost half a century. Since the fifteenth century, Pseudo-Bonaventure’s *Meditationes* has become the most popular text. The universality of these works had wide consequences. They influenced the shape of many genres and literary texts, including the Passion play⁵⁹⁸ (see chapter 18.5).

3. BODILY SIMILARITY TO GOD. We wonder how it came about that God had to show Himself to man, that having decided to recapitulate His work, He did not repeat the revelation mainly through hearing and through writing inspiration. In his treatise on the Incarnation of the Word, St. Athanasius of Alexandria, in addition to an understandable moral discontent, lists the ineffectiveness of expelling people from Paradise as one of the reasons behind the Incarnation:

He saw that corruption held us all the closer, because it was the penalty for the Transgression; He saw, too, how unthinkable it would be for the law to be repealed before it was fulfilled. He saw how unseemly it was that the very things of which He Himself was the Artificer should be disappearing. ... All this He saw and, pitying our race, moved with compassion for our limitation.⁵⁹⁹

Regardless of its causes, the Incarnation granted importance to the human being as a whole, because all human senses were used in the revelation, the same senses which were engaged in relations between common living beings. The body was ennobled again, for the death sentence that man brought upon himself by sin had already been executed in “the Lord’s body,” and therefore had lost “its power for men.”⁶⁰⁰ It could not be otherwise, since his human figure was the Incarnation

596 PL 159, p. 271–290; a traditional title associated with the interpretation that has been rejected today, attributing the authorship to Anselm.

597 PL 182, p. 1133–1142; attributed to St. Bernard; the real author was Oger de Locedio (d. 1214). This short narrative sermon is also known as *Liber de Passione Domini*.

598 For more studies on this genre, see T. H. Bestul, *Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society*, Philadelphia 1996.

599 St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation: The Treatise De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*, trans. A Religious of C.S.M.V., intr. C.S. Lewis, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press Crestwood, New York 1996, p. 34.

600 Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, p. 49.

of God. This explains the enormity and drama of the efforts made to ensure that the body does not get out of control and does not get into the power of the Enemy. A whole arsenal of means was used, all the arguments filling the space between request and threat, worship and humiliation, to ensure the body's obedience or at least calculable cooperation within a laboriously coherent subjectivity. A systematic presentation of the contribution of the individual senses to the Christian civilization of man is one of the themes of the *Erfurt Morality Play*: Tactus recommends an active life; other senses provide more detailed recommendations: Odoratus indicates what needs to be done to "be surrounded by the smell of virtue;" Gustus – what one needs to say that would be "sweet and nourishing for the soul;" Auditus describes the way to self-improvement by avoiding harmful whispers and opening the ear to good teachings; Visus orders to close one's eyes to addictions and open to virtuous people in order to imitate them in one's own life (Linke 1995: 140–141). It is possible that such a characteristic interest in "the body and its basic functions, nourishment, reproduction, and transformation," which is so characteristic of the Shrovetide farce (Soule-Tholy 1995: 114) is not so much an "idolatry of the body" (Ibid.: 107) as the reflection of these struggles.

This will be one of the first real tasks faced by a free man left alone in his household. It was carried out as part of the civilizational process and, similarly, had at least a dual character, here expressed by the fact that the procedures of taming bodily instincts obtained a religious sanction (the holy sacred), supporting the moral and legal sanctions (lower tiers of sacrality), which, by themselves, might be insufficient. As we have seen, one of the methods of carrying out this task is to show publicly that it is being carried out, a practice we have earlier described as the demonstration of standards.

The new revelation was the revelation of God. Looking at the paintings, everyone could see the Genesian "image and likeness" for what it was. The relation of similarity has become (once again?) symmetrical. According to Nicholas of Cusa, "man is nothing more than a living image of God (*viva imago Dei*)."⁶⁰¹ What used to be blasphemy, could now become a desirable reproduction of the moral and aesthetic model:

601 Swieżawski 1998: 57, with a reference to: D. F. Duclow, "Gregory of Nyssa and Nicholas of Cusa: Infinity, Anthropology and the *via negativa*," *The Downside Review* 1974, 92.

Heaven lay so close to earth and the concepts of the *imitatio* and the *conformitas* Christi were so vivid that no sense of sacrilege attached to portraying either one's friends or oneself in the guise of Christ.⁶⁰²

Of course, it was necessary to properly “bring up” the human body. Speaking of the social dimensions of the miracular imagination, we should not forget about the most obvious one. Of great importance is the mnemonic function of information – the earlier the period, the more important it is. Its role is to help in the phase of active observation of the religious system, i.e. in memorizing the doctrinal content.⁶⁰³ If Christianity is a *Buchreligion* (a religion of the book), why can't it be a *Bildreligion* (religion of the image), too? Later, with sacramentalist individualism, due to the emergence of the obligation to gain individual knowledge about the system, this mnemonicity became important again: a private prayer book, “holy pictures,” a devout image (*imago pietatis*).

According to Gibson, this was the way in which hierarchy of the reasons for the existence of fine arts was defined in the fifteenth century. The model itself comes from the prose dialogue *Dives and Pauper*.⁶⁰⁴ (1) images direct minds to thinking about Christ's incarnation and torment, and the lives of saints; (2) visual stimuli affect more easily than listening or reading – according to Gibson, they are “the emotional equivalent of the intellectual *biblia pauperum* argument;” (3) images transmit knowledge so that it becomes available to the illiterate (the classical *Biblia pauperum* as a justification against the allegation of idolatry).

Here, we may notice the influence of the stereotype which Gibson herself has strongly opposed: iconography becomes burdened with a negative connotation of the *pauperum* and contrasted with the intellect. This scheme stems from the fact that, at some point in time, the visual channel seemed to be the only one

602 R. H. Bainton, “Dürer and Luther as the Man of Sorrows,” *Art Bulletin* 1947, 29, pp. 269–272. Qtd. after Constable 1995: 235. Not only Dürer and Luther but also Hus was portrayed as Christ. Constable devotes most of his dissertation *The ideal of the imitation of Christ* to the imitation of Christ-man as a model of life on earth: *The imitation of the humanity of Christ* (pp. 169–193), *The imitation of the body of Christ* (pp. 194–217), and *The late Middle Ages* (pp. 218–248).

603 Since at least the fourth century, images have been treated as an acceptable means of “commemorating saints and their deeds and directing the mind toward the work of salvation” (Pochat 1986: 98). St. Thomas Aquinas wrote about it in his defense of images, listing their three types: for teaching, remembering, and inspiring devout attitudes (*Scriptum super Libros Sententiarum*, III, ix, Solutio 2, p. 312; P. Mandonnet, M. F. Moos, vols. 1–4, Paris 1929–1947, quoted after: Riggio 1991: 262).

604 *Dives and Pauper* I: 82ff.; qtd. after Gibson 1989: 14ff.

available for the transmission of the doctrinal content to illiterate people. Thus, many made the association that this channel is something worthy of the illiterate.⁶⁰⁵ In turn, long after the times of Pope Gregory (who paid special attention to the illiterate), namely at the Second Council of Nicaea (787), proponents of Iconodulism had to defend the image making as salvation itself: an indispensable way of revealing the human nature of Christ, without which there would be no incarnation and hence no redemption; man can recognize the Lord in the image in order to adore Him spiritually in and through this image; the image itself is not something completely “human;” the undeniable likeness of Christ to man only confirms the account from Genesis, which sees the source of the human shape in the shape of God (Pochat 1986: 115).

More importantly, according to Ronald Langacker, one of the pioneers of cognitive linguistics, the mechanisms of visual perception play a doubly important role in communication: they are both a model (like an architectural plan of a future building) for an imaginary message and a basis of the whole conceptual structure which arises during the process of learning about reality and which finally determines the shape of linguistic structures (grammar, morphology, and lexicon). They are “the most conventional cognitive routines petrified in language, which we activate automatically when constructing an image.”⁶⁰⁶ However, in order for something to be “petrified in language,” millions of certain behaviors (i.e. the use of certain forms) must be repeated over a long period of time and effectively by many thousands of users. Repeating will last a long time

605 In defense of those who were not aware of the intellectual charge of images and petrified this simplified view, we should add that it was not until the twentieth century that scholars have become seriously interested in studying the meaningful content of fine arts, devoting to it separate disciplines of art history: iconography searching for (textual) sources of motifs and iconology reconstructing the ideological programs of paintings (Gombrich 1972: 388); Erwin Panofsky is regarded as the father of the latter. See especially Panofsky’s *Studies in Iconology. Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York 1939) and further works. Cf. also Brock, Preiß: 1990; Tolkemitt, Wohlfeil 1991; and Wohlfeil 1991.

606 Indyk 1996: 555; with a reference to R. W. Langacker’s theory of linguistic imaging systems presented in *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar, 1: Theoretical Prerequisites*, Stanford 1987. Among the fundamental cognitive areas organized by grammar are the categories of number, spatial orientation, determinacy, belonging (possessiveness), and comparison (See B. Heine, *Cognitive Foundations of Grammar*, New York 1997). The theory of M. Carruthers (1998) confirms the cognitive position represented here (especially in terms of the visuality and spatiality of memory) as well-rooted in medieval rhetorical practice.

and will be effective if the community survives. It is impossible to say that it has survived thanks to this “grammar” but apparently the tool has worked: “cognition is effective action” (Maturana, Varela 1998: 244). The grammar of any natural language is not ready or given once and for all, but it is a system of rules in a constant motion; the same applies to cultural phenomena. They will not exist as such without a long-lasting and efficient delivery.⁶⁰⁷ The delivery of behavioral patterns is a field of action which is almost non-existent in the linguistic system, relatively independent and very insensitive to human interference (which is painfully experienced by those who practice linguistics of “correctness”). Language only reacts to historical changes in the validity of cognitive domains, which remain its soil; if something disappears or becomes more important (e.g. a crisis, an outbreak of war), or if something new appears (e.g. occupation by a foreign power), language itself undergoes a certain change. This occurs slowly because the content of the term (and the meaning of the word, not to mention more complicated linguistic elements) is influenced by different cognitive domains (we have seen it on the example of the word “father” in chapter 2): each of them introduces something of their own. We may compare this to the process of printing a colored image: several monochromatic extracts are prepared, which show an image with unnatural colors, as if we looked at it through a color filter. In print, monochromatic layers are applied one after another and the result is a multicolor print with completely natural colors. This multilayeredness not only ensures the durability of the word (the disappearance of one layer does not necessarily lead to a distortion) but also gives a chance for gradual changes based on partial shifts. At the level of everyday use, it provides an opportunity to play a metaphorical game of meanings or simply allows the attention of the author and recipient to focus on this or another aspect of meaning (another domain). In general, there is never a need for all of them to enter the intended content of the message, just as black and white prints are sufficient for many purposes. The difference between what was included in the statement as a potential meaning, what the author intended to actualize, and what was actually realized in numerous acts of reception constitutes the field of interpretation (see chapter 2.3).

Outside the realm of language, however, we have a chance to contribute to the emergence of a cultural phenomenon only insofar as we ensure its long-term

607 “The whole kit bag of regularities proper to the coupling of a social group is its biologic and cultural tradition” (Maturana, Varela 1998: 242). Regularity is tantamount to constancy and invariability, which form the well-known common denominator of sacrality.

and effective transmission. Nothing of this kind is given to individuals (they can only seek to participate as a cog in the wheel), but there are various organizations which successfully take care of it.⁶⁰⁸

Setting aside all other reasons (or, in fact, thanks to everything that has formed the foundation of the common conceptual basis), one may contend that visuality is so irresistible precisely because it is an extremely efficient channel of communication: it allows to obtain the largest amounts of information in a relatively short time, and because there are no gaps characteristic of a linguistic description,⁶⁰⁹ it reduces a scope of misunderstanding and does not leave much space for guessing. It enables a simultaneous collective reception, as well as adoration and contemplation, both collective and individual, without the participation of the clergy.

The model of accessibility for the illiterate is useful here inasmuch as – in multinational Christianity based on texts revealed in different languages – they are all “illiterate” for each other: all non-linguistic channels must serve as a kind of *lingua franca*. The desired efficiency of non-linguistic communication is therefore profoundly linked to the essence of the new revelation, which, by its human character, was designed to go beyond the strict Jewish circle closed by the ritual rules of kinship, concerning even the hereditary priesthood reserved for the sons of Aaron (Exodus 28:40).⁶¹⁰

It is not accidental that the fundamental re-limitation of the revelation to the text (determined by a committee of philologists) occurs during the Reformation, which took place at the time of the closing of cultures within the borders of

608 We have repeatedly mentioned such organizations throughout this book.

609 R. Ingarden (1968: 43) described them systematically as an area of underdetermination. This difference between language and painting was pointed out by N. Goodman (*Languages of Art*, Indianapolis 1976). That is how E. B. Gilman (1989: 16) summarizes Goodman’s position: whereas a poet, who praises the beauty of his lady, can easily move from her eyes to her mouth without bothering with her nose, a painter cannot leave an empty spot in the place of the nose. The director of a theatrical performance (Kolve 1966: 199) has to conjure even more details. For an account of different aspects of the relationship between language and visual arts, see Ch. Maier, U. Ruberg (eds.), *Text und Bild. Aspekte des Zusammenwirkens zweier Künste im Mittelalter und früherer Neuzeit*, Wiesbaden 1980.

610 The latter can be considered as a prototype of the Church’s independence from the state won by the Gregorian revolution. M. Halbwachs describes the programmatic supranationalism of Christianity as “the triumph of a religion with spiritual content over a formalistic cult, and, at the same time, of a universalist religion with no reference to races and nations over a narrowly nationalist religion” (1992: 86).

national languages, and which might have been conditioned by the following relation: if the whole revelation is to be fulfilled through words, then the language itself must be more charged and comprehensive, internally coherent, and therefore more closed from the inside.

But why should we think that, if someone talks about making it easier to move souls visually, they only mean some affective tenderness and that such a message has less intellectual value than its textual counterpart? Aren't certain texts equally moving? Is it equally easy for every image to have such effects? Why were people elated by the sermons given in foreign languages they did not understand?⁶¹¹ Or why were they elated merely by watching gestures (sometimes even pantomime or monodrama⁶¹²) and not by listening to a speech, participating in a collective spectacle in which cooperation is an important part: listening and watching a charismatic stranger together?

Referring to the comparison with another cultural subsystem, namely science, let us recall the role of the model result,⁶¹³ which, according to Thomas S. Kuhn, serves in science as a complement of the system of rules: "shared examples can serve cognitive functions commonly attributed to shared rules." (Kuhn 1977: 319).

4. *VERHALTENSRELIGION: THE RELIGION OF BEHAVIORS*. It becomes evident that, in fact, the point is not so much about visibility as it is about the entirety of behaviors of man who acts more and more independently in a certain cultural system. The image's phases, or a perceived hierarchy of its functions, are not very important here; the point is to reveal the awareness that the intellectual content can be conveyed through other channels than texts. This is what John of Damascus (d. ca. 749), a proponent of Iconodulism, understands only too well when he appreciates corporeality as a phase on the path to God in his treatise *On the Orthodox Faith*:

611 The Polish early Renaissance poet Mikołaj Rej ridicules this in one of his epigrams: "When the priest sung the passion, a beldam was crying / Can you speak Latin, another kept asking: / 'You're crying, I see, not knowing whence it came / And this cry of yours sounds somewhat insane.'" ("Gdy ksiądz śpiewał pasyją, więc baba płakała / Umie-li po łacinie, druga jej pytała:/ 'Płaczesz, a to wiem pewnie nie rozumiesz czemu. / I ten twój płacz podobien barzo kształonemu.'"). See "Baba, co w pasję płakała," in: *Różne przypadki świata tego. Wybór utworów satyrycznych Mikołaja Reja*, Warszawa 1953, p. 138).

612 Szönyi 1991: 134.

613 See chapter 5.2.

We are double, made of soul and body. Our soul is not naked; it is wrapped up in a mantle; it is impossible to reach the spiritual without the bodily. Listening to sensible words with our bodily ears, we hear spiritual things; in a similar fashion, through bodily contemplation, we reach spiritual contemplation.⁶¹⁴

Białostocki (1988: 294) points to the similar position of Abbot Suger, who, despite the objection of Bernard of Clairvaux, understood “aesthetic experience as a way of rising oneself to the height of spiritual beauty and God.”⁶¹⁵ It goes without saying how important for aesthetic as a science was the moment of a full, and productive, recognition of sensual contemplation.

At the beginning of this book (chapter 2.6), I wrote that “we are ‘incarnated’ into our bodies” to express the necessity of recognizing that our bodily condition is not a curse but part of our existence. Rudolf zur Lippe (1987) addresses this theme as the starting point of his critique of the Aristotelian concept of humanity, most probably influenced by the abovementioned logicism; the essence of man is proclaimed as that which distinguishes him from other species (*differentia specifica*), namely his bodiless spirituality; what is common for all existing species – corporeality – is set aside, which is why zur Lippe (1987: 17) describes this anthropology as subtractional.⁶¹⁶ The lack of such a scientific initiation can be seen as the essence of the popular sense of closeness between the human and animal worlds. It is this sense that, according to Esther Cohen, accounts for the practice of bringing lawsuits against animals (the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries). There are many signs that it is only today the effects of the popularization of subtractional anthropology are being overcome. However, there is no shortage of conceptions supporting the subtractional position and finding the foundation of human subjectivity according to its framework, that is to say, by rejecting virtually everything that composes subjectivity and founding it on a single, thin pillar of difference:

614 Joannes Damascenus, *De fide orthodoxa* Book IV, Chapter 16, PG 94; qtd after *Envisioning Landscapes, Making Worlds. Geography and the Humanities*, eds. S. Daniels, D. DeLyser, J.N. Entrikin, D. Richardson, London: Routledge, 2011, p. 117.

615 See the quotation from Suger, which formed the basis of this opinion (chapter 22.2).

616 This term also well characterizes structural semantics built on oppositions. In contrast, the position of St. Thomas Aquinas should be described against this background as additive or cumulative: “The rational soul ... exercises the functions of inferior forms, itself performing in the case of man what the vegetative soul does in the case of plants and the sensitive soul in the case of irrational animals” (F. Copleston, *History of Philosophy: Augustin to Scotus*, New Jersey 1965, p. 376; cf. *Summa Theologica*, Ia, 76, I).

The birth of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline is permanently linked to the radical mutation the representation of the beautiful undergoes when the latter is thought in terms of *taste*,⁶¹⁷ and, therefore, using as starting point that which in the human being soon comes to seem the very essence of subjectivity, the most subjective within the subject (Ferry 1993: 19).

In the context of medieval meditation literature, Erich Auerbach speaks about “the pedagogical theater in which the stage and gesture not only teach certain things but also demonstrate the emotions that a given thing should evoke.”⁶¹⁸ They demonstrate (*vorspielen*), that is to say, they also suggest, as if they played a tone to follow and imitate.

The theatre of literary confraternities and craft guilds emerged as a necessary stage complement of the existential channels of transmission and consolidation of the spiritual content (pious behaviors in the field of interaction and exchange). We may consider the latter as a kind of “bodily contemplation” described by John of Damascus. But can we say the same about theater? At any rate, it may be superficially compared to thinking aloud or reading a written text out loud, or, in its more advanced forms, to the intergeneric or even interdisciplinary translation (like film adaptation). After all, theater developed precisely out of a concern for the spirituality – de-idolatrization! – of the realm occupied by jugglers, just like Christian iconography was a necessary response to the pagan art of Antiquity (cf. also the Christianization of the afterlife, chapter 11.4). Danckert (1963: 229) described medieval religious literature in its entirety as “an attempt to counteract the powerful influence of jugglers” (Spielmann).

That is why the etymological “universality” of Catholicism has also a communicative aspect: it employs the multiplicity of transmission channels (communication and exchange) and makes sure to maintain proper balance between these channels, that is, to provide the most efficient transmission which is not limited to a particular spectrum nor meant to appeal to a specific sensitivity or audience. This conditioned the use of visual arts in Christianity. The unquestionability of exchange, the simple syntax of interaction, and the sign language of iconography – all were necessary to stand up to the competition of the Hellenic-Roman tradition. If it was not for these developments, Christianity would have never

617 There is no room for initiating a new discussion on this subject. Let us only note the appearance of a monograph on Dutch woodcarved altars: L. Jacobs, *Early Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces, 1380–1550: Medieval Tastes and Mass Marketing*, New York 1998; here, “taste seems to resolve as an approximate name for the visible intersection of supply and demand” (W. Acres, a review in TMR 99.03.04).

618 Qtd. after Pochat 1986: 200. See chapter 22.5, “emotional experience” (Marshall 1951).

suppressed the important channel of transmission of paganism to fill it with its own content. It would remain a subculture.

We know that a subculture is born and persists through an imperfect, one-channel, group, and in this sense secret transmission, while the existence of a culture requires all channels of social communication, hence openness. We can transform this into a criterion, if we put it in the opposite way: a particular exchange or productivity may become a culture when they are open, public, that is, they occupy or at least use all existing channels of communication, including interaction and exchange. For the emergence and survival of culture, it is necessary to make sure that the young generation has a part in the inheritance of values. It has rightly been pointed out that traditions cannot go on by force of inertia: their transmission is the result of hard work by parents, teachers, priests, or employers (P. Burke 1992: 125). Hence the special role of children: a system of exchange turns into a cultural system only insofar as new generations become its participants.⁶¹⁹

And vice versa, every cultural system has to provide a place for each generation, that is, it must be able to fulfil the entire life of each person. As I have already noted, sacramentalism limits the time people devote to the contact with the sacred to turning points in their lives. The aim of the whole organization of the Church and its ethical program was to put everyone in their places; it also offered a rich choice of monasteries for all those who could not find their place on the social chessboard.

At this point, it is worth discussing the situation of women, who became a subject of separate treatises since the twelfth century.⁶²⁰ In fact, we have increased

619 After the Fourth Lateran Council, the obligation to attend Sunday mass together with children has been established; it became a widespread custom among the families that children, after returning from church, were asked questions about the sermon's content (Nadolski 1992: 51).

620 For a review of positions in Christian texts from late Antiquity, see Fr. M. Sarowiejski (1998). For Polish editions of selected Marian patristic texts, see: W. Kania, W. Eborowicz, *Teksty o Matce Bożej*, Vol. 1: *Ojcowie łacińscy*, Vol 2: *Ojcowie greccy i syryjscy*, Niepokalanów 1981; the activity of one of the "Desert Mothers" is studied by M. Schaffer, *The Life & Regimen of the Blessed & Holy Teacher Syncretica*, together with the translation of her life, Vol. 2, Toronto 1999; the life of women in late Antiquity and early Middle Ages is presented in *Frauen in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter. Lebensbedingungen – Lebensnormen – Lebensformen*, ed. W. Affeldt, Sigmaringen 1990. For extensive monographs, see G. Duby, *Dames du XIIe Siècle*, vols. 1–3, Paris 1995–1996; *Medieval Women in Their Communities*, ed. D. Watt, Toronto 1997; *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, eds. J. H. M. Taylor, L. J. Smith, Toronto 1997. A. Fijałkowski discussed the issue of women's education in the treaties by Vincent of

our knowledge of literary images of women. The current of religious reflection is important.⁶²¹ This also applies to children, allegedly unnoticed until the Enlightenment, when – according to Elias – a new path of socialization opened up for them; one which repeats the development of the writing concerned from simple commandments to a fully-fledged psychological literature, which results in an extension of the period of social adoption in recent centuries (Wild 1982: 77). It was only recently that scholars have begun finding evidence

Beauvais at 34th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, 1999: “The Education of Women in the Scholar Treatises by Vincent of Beauvais OP (ca. 1194–1264);” C. Muessig published a monograph on images of women in the sermons of Jacques de Vitry, *The Faces of Women in the Sermons of Jacques de Vitry*, Toronto 1999. The collection by *Women, Marriage, and Family in Medieval Christendom*, eds. C. M. Rousseau, J. T. Rosenthal, Kalamazoo 1998, is devoted to the issue of women in a family context. A collection of studies on the self-definition of independent women was published by J. M. Bennell, A. M. Froide, *Single women in the European Past, 1250–1800*, Philadelphia 1999; see also *Constructions of Widowhood and Virginitiy in the Middle Ages*, eds. C. L. Carlson, A. J. Weisl, New York 1999; C. Atkinson, *The Oldest Vocation: Christian Motherhood in the Middle Ages*, (Ithaca 1991) studies the issue of motherhood; see also the collection edited by J. C. Parsons, B. Wheeler, *Medieval Mothering*, New York 1996.

- 621 T. Ahldén, “Nonnenspiegel und Mönchsvorschriften,” *Göteborgs Högskolas Arsskrift* 58.2/1952, pp. 11–16. In Bernard of Clairvaux, see e.g. *Liber de modo vivendi, ad sororem*, PL 184, p. 1199. On women in monasteries, see S. Ringler, *Viten und Offenbarungsliteratur in Frauenklöstern des Mittelalters. Quellen und Schriften*, München 1980 (the writings of nuns focused more on regulations for monastic life than articulating mystical experiences); U. Peters, *Religiöse Erfahrung als literarisches Faktum. Zur Vorgeschichte und Genese frauenmystischer Texte des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*, Tübingen 1988 (the emphasis on purely literary, not historical and social conditions); P. Ranft, *Women and the Religious Life in Pre-modern Europe*, New York 1996; B. Venarde, *Women’s Monasticism and Medieval Society: Nunneries in France and England*, Ithaca 1997; in a wider social context: B. Newman, *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ. Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature*, Philadelphia 1995. F. Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages*, Suffolk 1992. For an example of the cult of a female saint, see J. Cannon, A. Vauchez, *Margherita of Cortona and the Lorenzetti: Sienese Art and the Cult of a Holy Woman in Medieval Tuscany*, University Park, PA 1999. For a more extensive discussion of the issue of “spiritual equality,” see P. Ranft, *Women and Spiritual Equality in Christian Tradition*, New York 1998. For a discussion of legal regulations regarding nuns in the Late Medieval Period, see E. Makowski, *Canon Law and Cloistered Women. Periculoso and Its Commentators 1298–1545*, Washington 1997.

of a concern for the specific identity of the child also in earlier literature.⁶²² It first appeared as an educational issue in monasteries, in connection with oblation. In 1170, the first hospitaller order was established in France and it treated homeless children as a separate category; its success prompted Innocent III to entrust the order with the task of managing a hospital in Rome; first secular foundations are established (Heers 1995: 79–80).⁶²³ The sacramental spirituality built around Christ as the Head of the Church makes it possible to put this issue in a broader perspective. The cult of the Infant was known earlier, but it developed dynamically in the twelfth century,⁶²⁴ became common in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries (Constable 1995: 232), and continued unabated throughout

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- 622 J. Heer's monograph on the Feast of Fools presents the documentation (1995: 77–97). Based on their studies of hagiography, D. Weinstein and R. M. Bell suggest that "medieval society knew childhood" (1982: 45). For a new synthesis, see: S. Shahar, *Childhood in the Middle Ages*, London 1990. On youth confraternities, see Eisenbichler 1998. G. Levi and J.-C. Schmitt present a wide collection of articles about young people's history: *A History of Young People in the West, Ancient and Medieval Rites of Passage*, Cambridge 1997. J. A. Schultz discusses the context of Germany in *The Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1100–1350*, Philadelphia 1995. For monographs on childhood in medieval England, see S. Crawford, *Childhood in Anglo-Saxon England*, Stroud 1999; B. Hanawalt, *The Ties That Bound: Peasant Families of Medieval England*, New York 1986; B. Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History*, New York 1993. Based on Florentine sources, L. Haas the fathers' attitudes toward children in *The Renaissance Man and His Children: Childbirth and Early Childhood in Florence, 1300–1600*, New York 1998. The role of children in the acculturation of Jews is discussed in I. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood: Jewish Acculturation in Medieval Europe*, New Haven 1998.
- 623 R. C. Finucane discusses miracles about the concern for children in *The Rescue of the Innocents: Endangered Children in Medieval Miracles*, New York 1997.
- 624 Around 1125, the first German text on the childhood of Jesus and John the Baptist was written: the poems of Ava (*ZfdPh* 19/1986, p. 195ff; cf. *The Poems of Ava*, Translation, Introduction and Notes by Andrew L. Thornton, Colledgeville 2003. U. Gray 1974: 5, in his monograph of Bartholomäus Metlinger's educational handbook *Regiment der jungen Kinder*, ca. 1475). Here, for instance, the treatise by Aelred of Rievaulx, *De Jesu Puero duodeni*, written in 1153–1157 as a commentary to Luke 2:42 (A. Hoste, Paris 1958; Pl 183 p. 849–870); G. Constable, who studied the popularity of twelfth-century writers in the late Middle Ages, cites more examples (1995: 206–208); the cult of the Infant in a manger, whose earliest testimony was *Vita* of Marie of Oignies (d. 1213), must have been quite well-known at the time, since Innocent III mentioned it in his decretal *Cum decorem*: "Non tamen hic prohibetur representare praesepe Domini, Herodem, magos et qualiter Rachel ploravit filios suos etc. sicut in pascha sepulchrum Domini et alia representantur ad devotionem excitandam" (c. 12 L. III,

the following centuries, as evidenced by Erasmus' homily *Concio de puero Iesu* from 1512.⁶²⁵

Even the somewhat carnivalesque Feast of the Holy Innocents, combined with the perverse power of the Boy-Bishop, has been interpreted in terms of the imitation of Jesus Boy (*pueri Christi imitatio*); it was a religious ceremony which "acknowledged the innocence of children and promoted such virtues as were commonly associated with the Child Jesus."⁶²⁶ The virtue emphasized in the reading for the Feast of the Holy Innocence – the beginning of Revelation 14 – is virginity as the way to find oneself among "the hundred and forty and four thousand ... redeemed from the earth" (that is, selected for salvation). "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins" (Revelation 14.4). The criteria of culture reveal their functioning in a negative form in the phenomenon of sects, which are unable to take over a multiplicity of communication channels and therefore seek to cut off their followers from all means of receiving or transmitting information (family contacts, watching television, or reading newspapers) in order to make all channels by which they communicate with the outside world "filled up" with the sect's message. Sects also fight for children and whole families, because this is the way to gain a full cultural reach.

Just as zero in mathematics, even a reduction of communication (eremitism and asceticism) is useful; it is also characteristic of the virtuosic forms of devotion. But the social life of ordinary people would not be possible if the most important values which they "possess" were not included in all areas of circulation: they must demonstrate them, share them with their loved ones, and strive for them; so that others see their actions, start repeating them, and a normal economy begins.

When we describe the cult of sacred images, the context of spiritualization requires us to remember that they are sacramentals (the second tier of sacrality on Becker's scale); the sacred needs a substitution, a visual channel (embodiment), and every believer wants to gain access to artefacts and has the same right to participate in their circulation; this is how people take part in exchange which is not only the holy communion but also the trade in devotional articles.

Vol. 1 extra; qtd. after Fijałek 1997: 53). See M. H. King et al., *Two Lives of Marie d'Oignies*, Toronto 1993.

625 See *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 29, Toronto 1989 (Constable 1995: 233).

626 That is how Constable (1995: 233) summarizes R. L. De Molen's "Pueri Christi Imitatio: The Festival of the Boy-Bishop in Tudor England" (*Moreana* 1975, 45, pp. 17–28). We shall return to this festival when discussing farce performances (see chapter 25).

The relevant artistic (iconographic and devotional) tradition had its own history. In Terpstra (1995: 206), changes in the system of having “miraculous” (spiritually powerful) paintings in the period of interest to us are presented as three shifts: (1) from stability to mobility: from monasteries to mendicant orders; (2) from priesthood to charism (clergy – free saintly people); (3) from the church circle to the tertiary or secular circle (from the church to confraternities). This resulted in a new dynamic of the relationship between the faithful, the image, and its patron, with a growing emphasis on the power and influence of the patron saint. The second step on the road to making humanity more comfortable, this time through the image and likeness to the saint, is repeated here after the incarnation. The patron saint appears as a more modest or more specific personal model than Christ – the *imitatio sancti*? Just like before, fine arts play a huge role.⁶²⁷ Obsessive visuality is not only about enjoying the idol or defending it against iconoclasts (Gibson); it is also about multiplying the evidence of reality, supporting the evidence of God’s existence – not necessarily in the sense that because He is painted, he exists and now sits on a chair somewhere – but if He is painted, it follows that there were people who believed in Him, who imagined Him that way, and for whom He existed and still exists.

It is therefore an extra-textual, and partly extra-ecclesial, proof of the truthfulness of faith (Tradition, i.e. unwritten transmission; cf. Pope Innocent’s “bodily truth”), a proof which is both pretextual and pre-ecclesial – in the final analysis, the truth of faith is nothing more or less than the sum of common beliefs expressed by ephemeral, yet repetitive behaviors and the movement of motives emerging from this system of symbols. The whole past of revelations had to be constituted as history – hence the compulsion of visuality. The point, however, was not to paint a million images of Christ, so that others could learn about and believe in Him, but they were painted to reach an agreement that he looked like that.

The iconographic component of tradition is sometimes wrongly ignored, even though iconoclasm has become the flagship slogan of the Reformation’s opposition to Tradition.

It is all the more wrong to ignore or dismiss as inferior (folk!) the whole behavioral realm,⁶²⁸ which turns out to be a more solid foundation of Tradition

627 In this context, it would be worth examining the appearance of a group portrait of saints surrounding Our Lady, known as *Sacra Conversazione*, in the thirteenth century in Venice; this type of painting flourished in the sixteenth century (LCI 4, p. 4–5).

628 It is partially described by research on gesture.

than the superstructure of the iconosphere. The whole network of figurations of devotion, in which the consolidation of behavior and oral transmission of religious content, as well as the creation, exchange, and preservation of works of religious art and all kinds of devotional items⁶²⁹ – all this reflects the number of individuals participating in the cult and the degree of their commitment, which, in turn, is a measure of its inveteracy, and hence its universality. And hence – its truthfulness. When we said that Christianity is a *Buchreligion*, we had to admit that it is also a *Bildreligion*. Now we are taking the next step: the more so is a *Verhaltensreligion*⁶³⁰ (a religion of behavior). In oral communities, attitudes are transmitted by imitating the master: orthodoxy is conditioned by “orthopraxis.”⁶³¹

One of the theories of the human mind presupposes the existence of a multiplicity of separate memory banks, between which there is no connection in the brain. “If this is true, then the only way for the organism to discover its total resources is to watch itself as it behaves.”⁶³² Blachowicz (1998: 329) justifies the purpose of “egocentric speaking to oneself” because “the externalization of thoughts in a perceptible form” makes it easier to extract them from memory and examine; this procedure “turns thinking into an activity” and is “an important tool in problem solving.” In this context, it will be all the easier to agree with Maturana and Varela’s bold thesis that the mind does not fit in the brain (see chapter 18.2).

What is hypothetical in the field of psychology, certainly takes place in society: there can be no common bank of memory here and the only way to learn about resources is their articulation and observation of behavior. This is confirmed by Mary Carruthers’ reflections on the necessity of imaging, the localizing

629 H. van Os, E. Honee, H. Nieuwdorp, and B. Ridderbos discuss the functions of such objects in the extensive study *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500*, Princeton 1994.

630 Cf. the characteristic emphasis on the narrative character of the image in Gregory’s words justifying the use of images together with writing: “Aliud est enim picturam adorare, aliud per picturae historiam, quid sit adorandum, addiscere.” Gregory takes into consideration not only the visibility but also the processual quality of the message. The same quote from Gregory appears in Durand’s *Rationale* (Lewański 1991a: 13).

631 P. Gehl’s concept used in “Competens Silentium: Varieties of Monastic Silence in the Medieval West,” *Viator* 18/1987, pp. 125–160; qtd. after Carruthers 1998: 1. Cf. the “model result” in science (Kuhn) and charismatic teaching in Jaeger.

632 M. Gazzaniga et al., *The Integrated Mind*, New York 1978, p. 134; qtd. after Blachowicz 1998: 361. Cf. the agendization of subjectivity in Plessner (see, my chapter 13.2).

of images, and patterned movement as the foundation and principle of memory; this mnemonic rule has been applied from the very beginning of Christianity, as evidenced (among other things) by the example of the processions to the martyr's grave, with which Christians sought to "forget" the pagan processions in honor of Apollo:

The principles governing these processions are mnemonically sound: they consist of images moving within locations, locations spaced distinctly apart and in a clear relationship to one another ... having the qualities that make them both strike and fix in the mind. Participant and audience together make up these processions, and remember them viscerally, the way we remember how to ride a bicycle, or how to dance. Such knowledge cannot really be obliterated (Carruthers 1998: 55).

The processions are not staged to impress some passive audience of townsfolk, but to establish for the participants (and those who cared to join them) the cognitive "way" through the sites, and thus "through" the memories they could evoke. It is not the event but the memory networks, their directions or "intentions," that are crucially contested (Carruthers 1998: 51).

It is only the continuity of the behavioral realm that can explain the inveteracy of this religion before the rise of the central church power and the canon of Scripture,⁶³³ and then its maintenance in the conditions of oppression, especially the persistence of the visual plane of cult propagation in spite of discussions and doctrinal breakthroughs, such as the relative independence of its functioning from the tensions of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, which Maureen Flynn (1989: 141)⁶³⁴ proved to be the case for Spain in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Probably, we may also add here the resistance of the Polish masses to the temptations of the Reformation, which, having been influenced by the narrow current, did not touch the illiterate layers, failed to enter the extra-linguistic realm of customs, and therefore the masses did not accept it. We have mentioned (chapter 17.3) the persistence of the knightly ethos.⁶³⁵

633 A great deal of work has been devoted to its formation, and there is no full agreement on this issue. As we know, the revealed books did not contain a table of contents.

634 For a wider context, see J. Dillenberger, *Images and Relics. Theological Perceptions and Visual Images in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, Oxford 1999.

635 According to A. Scaglione, the continuity of knightly culture resistant to political, economic, social, and ethical changes can be explained by the permanence of behavioral patterns, the reconstruction of which must be preceded by the full realization of the lasting influence of purely mental attitudes, often induced by literary models, even when material conditions have made them obsolete. See A. Scaglione, *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry and Courtesy from Ottonian Germany to the Italian Renaissance*, Berkeley 1991, p. 28; qtd. after G. Psaki, TMR 99.01.05.

The cultural process – we are describing it all the time – consists in an open expansion of values in space (transfer, transmission), in time (tradition), and in the media (remediation, i.e. translation from one medium to another). The whole point is to displace competing value systems from all over the world,⁶³⁶ and to strengthen the related ones.

Thus, finally concluding the review of the components of our theory, we shall confirm the character of religion as a cultural system in the perspective of Geertz, whose definition has guided us since the very beginning of this study.

636 M. Carruthers (1998: 46–59) discusses the rhetorical foundations of various displacement techniques, quoting many examples from the early Christian period.

18. The Aesthetics of Articulation and Factuality

1. GOD'S DWELLING WITH MAN. Does the articulation of devotion in the realm of behavior have a similarly strong doctrinal support as that which the fact of the Incarnation provides for art?

A certain exceeding of the framework of the Incarnation is inscribed in the theory of the Eucharist. Figuratively speaking, the doctrine of transubstantiation is an attempt to prolong the incarnate life of Jesus, that is, to preserve the physical, "non-mystical" presence of the sacred in this world. But it is more than an incarnation, or, more precisely, it is an incarnation understood not as a single fact, but as the whole – and still ongoing – process of human creation of the mystical Body of Christ. Thus, it is not so much "incarnation" as "recapitulation" that appears as the appropriate concept here.

We all know by heart the formula of the Incarnation, but we do not sufficiently ponder on what happened after the act itself: the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. To put emphasis on its importance, we shall describe it as the second breakthrough of the New Testament after the Incarnation: this time, it was the actual God's dwelling with men as one of them, and it is nothing like the corporeal manifestation of the divine messenger who brings news from elsewhere and leaves,⁶³⁷ let alone the symbolic presence of the Old Testament God in a cloud in the daytime or in a pile of fire in the nighttime. Visibility was an important aspect, perhaps even a condition of the work of recapitulation. In Colossians 1:15, Christ "is the image of the invisible God." According to Irenaeus, "Christ recapitulated [that is, "re-created"] all things in Himself. Now among those all is man also, the creature of God. [He] thus recapitulated man in Himself, becoming visible, He Who is invisible, [becoming] man, He Who is The Word."⁶³⁸ Irenaeus puts even greater emphasis on Christ's corporeality in *The Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*. "The Word of God, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Our Lord ... who at

637 St. Athanasius ruminates over this: "He took to Himself a body, a human body even as our own. Nor did He will merely to become embodied or merely to appear; had that been so, He could have revealed His divine majesty in some other and better way. No, He took our body" (St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation: The Treatise De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*, trans. A Religious of C.S.M.V., intr. C.S. Lewis, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press Crestwood, New York 1996, p. 34).

638 *Adversus haereses* III, 16, 6.

the end of the age was made man, visible and tangible in order to abolish death and show forth life and produce perfect reconciliation between God and man.”⁶³⁹

The source of the theory of recapitulation is St. Paul’s concept of Christ as the Head of the Church⁶⁴⁰ (Ephesians 1:10, 22; 4:15; Colossians 1:17–18), which for the whole creation means a regrouping of the forces of good, their reorganization and merging into a new corpus: “the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part” (Ephesians 4:16). This body is not so much organic as it is “mystical.” However, Paul’s definition clearly implies a pragmatic understanding of this mysticism as continuous communication. In contemporary Maturana and Varela’s (1998: 234) account, “the mind is not something within my brain. Consciousness and mind belong to the realm of social coupling. That is the locus of their dynamics.”

For Robert Grosseteste even “Christ’s role as redeemer was secondary to His role as the head of creation” (Constable 1995: 245).⁶⁴¹ From this viewpoint, the most important aspect of the Mass is not the sacrifice, a memorial of the salvific offering and resurrection of Christ, but it is the continuity of exchange, to which the word “communion” refers.⁶⁴² It is important to remember that this exchange was not merely a vertical “transmission” (Hugh), although Camille (1989: 215)

639 *Epideixis*, a passage from chapter 6. The English translation qtd. after D. H. Williams, *Evangelicals and Tradition: The Formative Influence of the Early Church*, Baker Academic Group, p. 63. In the Vulgate, *anakefalaiomai* (“to recapitulate,” meaning “to renew”) as *instaurare*. L. Andrzejewski, *Anakefalaiosis*, in: *EK* 1, col. 478.

640 It is widely discussed in J. Stępień, *Eklezjologia św. Pawła*, Poznań 1972.

641 With a reference to the treatise *De cessatione Legalium*, eds. R. C. Dales et al., London 1986, discussed in: P. Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall and the Tradition of Oxford Theology*, Oxford 1987, pp. 226–231. Symptomatically, Grosseteste is also the author of the poem *Château d’Amour* (*Castle of Love*), which popularizes the theological theory of redemption in Anglo-Norman (Old French); what is more interesting, he uses the theme of the dialogue of Four Daughters of God (lines 205–456), which is very characteristic for recapitulative approaches (known also from drama – see our chapter 25); C. W. Marx devotes to this work chap. 4 of his 1995 monograph (65–79). See also J. Murray, *Le Château d’Amour de Robert Grosseteste, évêque de Lincoln*, Paris 1918.

642 This finds confirmation in the textbook presentation of the “liturgical gathering as a process of communication” (Nadolski 1989, Vol. 1: 91–128). Hugh of St. Victor described it as an accurate image of “the Holy Mass as a transmission: “Missa autem dicta est quasi transmissa, vel quasi transmissio, eo quod populus fidelis per mysterium sacerdotis, qui mediatoris vice fungitur inter Deum et homines, preces et vota et oblationes Deo transmittat” (*De sacramentis*, lib. II, p. VIII, PL 176, col. 472AB).

argues rightly that it was the only way for man (or more precisely, the “late-medieval beholder”) to get across the gap between the earthly and heavenly realms. Camille emphasizes the special role of the Eucharist in raising people’s awareness and crossing the ontological boundary, and laments that, for the changes in the function of images, there was no public experience of as fundamental importance as the Mass, even though it remains one of the least studied phenomena in art history.

We can only extend this: from the viewpoint of the aesthetics of recapitulation, the Mass is a prototype of “public experience.” It is everyday interaction and mutual, in fact common, exchange that provide the simplest and immediate confirmation of the factuality of faith in a familiar language, with the work of all the senses, in a manner meant for everyone, not only for the chosen few. What is more, it does so even more powerfully than painting or sculpture, for it occurs on an existential level. The extent of the faithful’s participation in particular liturgical activities has changed in the course of history, as has the definition of the extent of Christ’s presence in the liturgy, but the latter has invariably been “the work of the whole Church” and “a true *sacrum commercium*, a sacred exchange, a dialogue between God and man.”⁶⁴³ In fact, it always had the same solid and unshakeable foundation: the actual encounter of living people in the same place; above this structure, there emerged a superstructure of theological meanings which opened up a transcendent perspective by withdrawing the celebrated liturgy from secular time and space (Edwards 1977: 47). Such an image springs from the oldest preserved description of the Mass in St. Justin’s *Apology*.⁶⁴⁴ This finds reflection in the synthetic theory of the origins of the Church, according to which the Church-forming dimension is inherent in the whole life of Jesus, his teaching, activities, and salvific deeds, and not merely in the Incarnation (as in the incarnational theory) or redemption through the Passion, Death, and Resurrection (as the paschal theory has it).⁶⁴⁵

643 Nadolski links this last formulation (1992: 107) with the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Y. Hen (1995) based his analysis of the role of religion in Christian society in the early Middle Ages on the idea of its universality in the political and social dimension.

644 M. James (1983: 9, f. 21) even writes of the Church as a mediatory institution and the peacekeeping functions of the Mass: J. Bossy, “Blood and Baptism: Kinship, Community and Christianity in Western Europe from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries,” in: *Sanctity and Secularity: The Church and the World*, D. Baker (ed.), London 1973, p. 138 ff.

645 According to M. Rusecki (1991: 415), the synthetic theory “has probably the largest number of proponents;” at any rate, this is the position of the Second Vatican Council.

Thus, to be effective, recapitulation requires not so much visibility as presence, action, a living example. In the preface to his play, De Mézières promised “pious speeches, new actions and images.” It was also by virtue of this multiplicity of means that his contemporary Thomas a Kempis could write:

It has become much more comforting than in times past under the Old Law when the gate of heaven was kept shut and the road to heaven seemed hidden and when so few cared to seek the kingdom of heaven. If you had not gone before us and taught us the way, who would have taken the trouble to follow? ... Alas! How many people would have lingered far behind unless they had seen your splendid example?⁶⁴⁶

The contemplation of humanity in all its “non-kingly” fragility was one of the essential consequences of the Gregorian program of spiritualization of the sacred. The extreme instigators of this program,⁶⁴⁷ such as Wycliff and his followers, did not oppose images themselves, but they condemned the kingly splendor of representations of Christ and saints (Riggio 1991: 267). Reflection on the ideal salvific form of humanity had to cover everything from the stable, through the boy’s age, to the prophet’s barefoot wandering. What is more, it had to end up considering the terrible paradox that, being the Son of God, Christ died by succumbing himself to unspeakable torment. After all, “ordinary” death would be still sufficient for the victorious resurrection.

2. AESTHETICS OF RECAPITULATION. Thus, we have arrived at the necessity to broaden the conception of the incarnational aesthetics. For the concept of the aesthetics of recapitulation better emphasizes the already mentioned communicative universality of Catholicism. This kind of aesthetics covers all levels and channels of communication, explains symbolic behaviors – including artistic production – as a form, chance, obligation, and coercion of constant observation, articulation of values, and multiplication of evidences of the factuality of the religious system. Therefore, it reflects the system’s cultural character. The system has prepared all people to demonstrate their will to embrace salvation and to strive for moral perfection.

Going beyond the field of aesthetics, this means that Christianity’s essential discovery, specifically grounded in medieval Catholicism, was that it saw devotion in everything, even in the most ordinary behaviors of the most ordinary people. Since the Word came into existence in the stable and was first revealed

646 *The Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis*, trans. and ed. William C. Creasy, Macon 1989, p. 75 ff.

647 We have discussed it in chapters 7 and 10.

to illiterate shepherds, and then to three foreigners, the identity of the individual is not a matter of wisdom, intellect, theoretical knowledge, even the mother tongue, but it is, above all, a matter of behavior. “Surely, when the day of judgment comes we shall not be asked what we have read but what we have done, not how well we have spoken but how devoutly we have lived,”⁶⁴⁸ Thomas a Kempis writes. Again, we must return to the Gregorian movement, which contributed to Christianity by

... making clear that holiness did not belong to a small elite which consecrated itself to the life of perfection by fleeing from the world, but that it belongs to all those, whatever their work may be, who bear the name of Christian and live well the role in society that belongs to them.⁶⁴⁹

This Christian egalitarianism brings a similar revolution in the field of literary aesthetics. Not only does it undermine the Ciceronian order of three styles that correspond to the hierarchy of objects⁶⁵⁰ – for in the eyes of Christ, no one is so humiliated as not to be elevated – but it also turns the rough style of the Bible into a principle (*humilitas, rusticitas*) and contrasts it with the tradition of rhetorical sublimity, which it also adapts in various ways (Haug 1992: 18). The competition and coexistence of these two schools mark the entire history of Christian aesthetics (Haug 1992: 22).

Since the aesthetics of recapitulation refers to the realm of religion, but the principle of its operation – the articulation of values – concerns the whole culture, it would be better to use the term “communicative aesthetics,”⁶⁵¹ especially in these more general, secular areas and contexts. In relation to the field of devotional art, Pochat (1986: 201) refers to a similar program of aesthetics of reception. The latter is a general theory which considers the role of the audience in the interpretation of a work of art, also in the sense that it explains the artist’s decisions as motivated by his or her anticipation of the audience’s response (Segers 1978: 9) – which amounts to a desire to incite certain reactions, or more generally, to achieve certain effects (perhaps, not necessarily “temporal”).

648 Ibid. p. 6.

649 M. H. Vicaire, *The Apostolic Life*, Chicago 1966, pp. 82–83, qtd. after Aumann 1993: 140.

650 In St. Augustine’s phrasing: *De doctrina Christiana* IV, XVIII, 4–9, 12–21, 58–63, against Cicero, *De oratore* (qtd. after: Haug 1992: 17 ff).

651 I do not wish to discuss the usefulness of the existing theories of communicative aesthetics, e.g. G. Waldmann, *Kommunikationsästhetik*, Munich 1976.

The concept of the aesthetics of reception⁶⁵² covers a wide range of phenomena described in this book. However, I will not employ this term because we are dealing with the times and works, in which the boundary between the sender and the recipient is not always clear. Rather, many phenomena, which we today consider as works appearing between these two parties, consisted not so much in reception as in participation: a common development of the communicative competence in the contact with the devotional material – its cognition, experience, shaping, and further transmission. However, let us notice the undoubtedly cognitive character of the theory of reception. Apart from general knowledge, which is sometimes necessary to understand “even simple sentences,” there is also a second type of knowledge, which determines the effectiveness of text reception, which depends on the writer’s choice and arrangement of predications the reader will understand (Olson et al. 1981: 287); I shall pass over the detailed analysis of the relationship between the writer and the reader, which is governed by the “Guidance Principle” expressing the reader’s belief that the writer is a trustworthy guide (Olson et al. 1981: 287). In the context of tombstone art, Jarzewicz (1998: 31) writes of the “inclusion of the relation with the recipient as a co-shaping factor in the structure of the work.”

3. LETTERS FROM GOD. According to John, the essential reason of the recapitulation is that the law is no longer sufficient: “For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Thus, there emerged a need for a model for everyday life, which cannot be fully regulated by the law, but which also cannot do without certain rules. It is this model – “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) – that Christ deigned to become. “It was in the course of the Middle Ages, and above all the twelfth century, that Christ was brought to earth as an example for everyday life and that the desire to imitate Him centered on His earthly life and character” (Constable 1995: 248).

In order to look for examples and create rules, medieval Christians dissected the Evangelical biography of Christ into atoms and rehearsed its every, even the smallest, motif in thousands of ways, building more or less systematic “mirrors” that could provide a measure for every person. Mystics (like Bernard) and scholastic thinkers of various currents have joined forces in this endeavor: both

652 It is a well-established aesthetic school, cf. e.g. the collection of papers edited by R. Warning (1975). For its most fruitful practical applications in the field of Romance philology, see H. Jauss’ works, especially the lecture “Literaturgeschichte as Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft” (Literary History as a Provocation to Literary Scholarship), Konstanz 1969.

Franciscans (like Bonaventure) and Dominicans (like Aquinas);⁶⁵³ in fact, there were representatives of all religious formations, theological and philosophical schools, and even later humanists like Erasmus or Ficino. According to the latter, “Christ alone by His example has been of greater profit to more people in leading them toward a more noble and holy life than all the orators and philosophers with their words.”⁶⁵⁴

Let us not forget of the most important issue: it is all about a description of the behavior of living Jesus who acts among people. This reproduction – the imitation of the demonstrated and proved virtues of Jesus – was to become a way for human beings to regain their lost similarity to God.⁶⁵⁵ To be sure, this does not mean setting aside the incarnational or paschal theme, namely the divine aspect. On the contrary, one may contend that the right proportions were reached⁶⁵⁶ thanks to the fact that the divine aspect was enriched by the inclusion of the realm of human behavior and relationships. This enrichment was not an accidental innovation, which happened to survive in the turmoil of constant reforms. In fact, it came from the very essence of the transformation of faith brought about by the New Testament. From the beginning, it was intended as a new letter from God, “written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart” (2 Corinthians 3:3).⁶⁵⁷

The New Testament is no longer a testament of the letter, but it is a testament of the spirit; “for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” (2 Corinthians 3:6) What Saint Paul means here is the “oldness of the letter” of the former Law (Romans 7:6). Christ himself repeatedly underscores the difference of his

653 The baptizing of Christ showed that “Christ was set before men as an example to all” (*in exemplum omnium*), *Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 39 art. 3 resp. ad 3 (English translation: *Summa Theologiae, Vol 53: The Life of Christ*, trans. S. Parsons OP and A. Pinheiro OP, London 1971).

654 *Letters of Marsilio Ficino I*, London 1975, 136, No. 86; qtd. after Constable 1995: 238–239.

655 In the version of Ludolph of Saxony (*Vita Christi*, qtd. after Constable 1995: 235).

656 Not because they are restored; to be sure, scholars often point to “an exaggerated emphasis on the deity of Christ” as the heritage of the early Middle Ages – a consequence of a long fight against Monophysitism’s and Arian negations (R. Rak, in: EK 4, col. 1266); some attributed this to a decrease in the frequency of receiving the Communion: “The Mass began to be described as a *mysterium tremendum*, which distanced the faithful from the table of the Lord” (Nadolski 1992: 103); but due to the changes of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries Christ lost little and gained much.

657 Here, St. Paul uses the term “letter from God” to designate the Apostles, to whom he did not belong.

message. It finds especially strong expression when he describes himself as the eucharistic bread: “This is that bread which came down from Heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever” (John 6: 58). Thanks to this enrichment and transformation, it was easier to identify those behaviors (or words written “on fleshly tables of the heart”) that lead to “salvation.” Numerous distinctions were made based on the attempts to estimate whether a given behavior or attitude serves this purpose, i.e. whether it falls “under the one banner” and follows the one king who is “the way, the truth, and the life;” the attempts, in other words, to determine which of the many human paths, truths, and ways of life are pleasing to God.

4. THE SAME PLOT. In the world of the profane, there is more truth than was revealed and brought about by the appearance of Christ. Other truths reveal themselves or require disclosure, and their validity needs to be constantly checked.⁶⁵⁸ The multicultural nature of Christianity created the need to reconcile truths of different origins: different traditions of customary law, measuring systems, other role models, themes of oral literature, language systems – and all this was never fully homogenized, neither in the first six Greek centuries nor in the Latin Western Christian civilization of the next centuries, which, after all, faced the task of assimilating new areas.⁶⁵⁹

658 Still, this does not always help. The greatest achievement in this field are man-made elements in physics, which fall apart after being brought to life, or perhaps even earlier. Another invention that Antichrist would probably not be ashamed of is the world’s financial market, with its floating exchange rates, securities and the like. One can make a fortune there in no time. What, compared to this, is the stinking kitchen of a medieval alchemist who was damned by anathemas not for making gold, but for the mere intention to make it? For an explanation, see chapter 5.4.

659 In *The Discarded Image*, C.S. Lewis calls for taking into account the contribution of the so-called barbarians to the heritage of the Middle Ages (Cambridge 2012, p. 8). L. Leciejewicz presents an overview of the whole process, concluding that “apart from the ancient legacy, the cultural heritage of the inhabitants of the former *barbaricum* was to largely determine the shape of the future European civilization” (1999: 150). The process of integration of barbarians in the Empire of Late Antiquity is discussed in the collection of studies titled *Kingdoms of the Empire. The Integration of Barbarians in Late Antiquity*, ed. W. Pohl, Leiden 1997. The same publishing house (Brill) initiated the *Transformation of the Roman World* series supported by the European Science Foundation and devoted to the transformation of the Empire in Western and Central Europe in the fourth to the eighth centuries. The first volume is: J. Arce et al., *East and West: Modes of Communication*, 1999; related cultural transformations are discussed in the collection *After Empire. Towards an Ethnology of Europe’s Barbarians*, ed. G. Ausenda, Woodbridge 1995. H. Samsonowicz 1999.

These are all manifestations of a new way of managing truth in the world of the profane. The confrontation of attitudes and defense of one's own reasons is most safely done on materials of lower status than the Bible, which made calling them into question a little less risky (Pavel). Here, one may give the example of hagiographic forms: according to Johnson, Chaucer, in one of his *Canterbury Tales*, namely "The Man of Law's Tale," provides a "unique fusion of sacred form and worldly meanings." Based on secular material, Chaucer staged a hagiographic topos of evil pagans and interreligious marriage (*disparitas cultas*), thus putting to the test the unquestionability of his faith. In the "Knight's Tale" (Johnson 1981: 201), which we discussed above (chapters 12.6, 13.2) as a voice condemning the lack of courage in the use of freedom given to man by God. Robert Jordan (1967: 179) sees this as a tribute to the human ability to build.

The harnessing of arts to the tasks of observation, revelation, articulation, and control of the truth serves to harmonize and standardize values as well as to dismiss all doubts; in other words, to make the system of symbols more coherent, to multiply evidence of its rightness, and to intensify its aura of factuality. That is why Peter Abelard boldly initiates a critical reading of the highly esteemed but inherently contradictory monuments of Christianity by employing the method of *quaestio*,⁶⁶⁰ which, in turn, becomes the reason for Bernard's uncompromising attacks against Abelard accused of defining faith as opinion. "Faith is not estimation but certainty," he replies.⁶⁶¹

As we can see, an excess of truths can also be felt in theology, and the task of making it coherent is not overlooked. Gillian Rudd (1994: 205) devoted an extensive study on knowledge and cognition in the poem *Piers Plowman* by William Langland to discuss various attempts to adapt to the "pluralism of truths" and the necessity to interpret these truths. Noteworthy, Rudd's analysis focuses especially

660 *Sic et non* (col. 1121–1122), *Theologia christiana* (col. 1123), PL 178.

661 "Non est enim fides aestimatio, sed certitudo" (col. 1062B). *Tractatus de erroribus Abaelardi*, cap. "IV Refellit definitionem fidei, qua dicit Abaelardus fidem esse aestimationem." PL 182, col. 1053–1072; estimation (*aestimatio*), that is, a provisional opinion. The following Abelard's sentence could have given the pretext to start the controversy: "To suppose is the same as to believe and opinion is supposition and faith." However, Abelard did not define religious faith, but he distinguished between types of cognition and used the word *existimatio* (not *aestimatio*, as Bernard writes) to designate the understanding of predications, e.g. "man is a tree," without accepting them as true.

on the dispute of Four Daughters of God⁶⁶² (Passus XVIII), who are presenting different interpretations of the Crucifixion, each of which is right and equally well grounded in Scripture.⁶⁶³

The growing written tradition, which developed around the Bible, has become a separate exegetic problem after theology, in which subjective spirituality prevailed so far, began to systematize itself, using the apparatus of logic and philosophy, and becoming a theory of a unified religion and a centralized Church. The breakthrough was the controversy over the key issue of sacramentalism, that is, transubstantiation;⁶⁶⁴ to explain it, theologians employed old and devised new tools, sharpening their views on the relations between the physical and the metaphysical worlds, between the dialectics of words and the dialectics of things, constantly improving methods and theories without ever removing the mystery.

Anselm of Canterbury⁶⁶⁵ played a crucial role in the development of methodology. His *sola ratiōne* (“by reason alone”) approach seeks to rebuild theology

662 See the discussion of the theatrical history of this theme: Chapter 25 and Dąbrowka 1999; the German tradition is discussed by W. Timmermann, *Streit der vier Töchter Gottes*, VL 9: 396–402.

663 D. Lawton, “The Subject of Piers Plowman,” *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 1/1987; M. Carruthers provides the most extensive discussion of the philosophical backdrop of the poem: see “The Search for St. Truth: A Study of Meaning,” in *Piers Plowman*, Evanston 1973. The series *Piers Plowman Studies* edited by J. Simpson. The acceptance of contradictions characterized biblical exegesis as opposed to dialectics, which sought to resolve the contradictions between theorems using the “either-or” method: C. Brown, *Contrary Things. Exegesis, Dialectic and the Poetics of Didacticism*, Stanford 1998; qtd. after C. Ho in: *TMR* 99.05.15: “the inclusiveness of Christian exegesis, ‘in which Biblical contradiction is the textual incarnation of a truth that is at once and paradoxically singular and multiple’ with dialectic which seeks to resolve contradiction by favoring ‘either one proposition or the other.’” T. L. Reed, (*Middle English Debate Poetry and the Aesthetics of Irresolution*, Columbia 1990) studies allegorical genres in this spirit.

664 The fiercest phase of this “Eucharistic dispute” took place in the years 1050–1080; Berengar of Tours played the main role in the dispute, but the theme was picked up by many other theologians and is still debated today. For a longer discussion, see: G. Evans 1996: 151–170, see also Gilbert 1997: 70–78; A. J. MacDonald, *Berengar and the Reform of Sacramental Doctrine*, London 1930; see the discussion of the Feast of Corpus Christi, chapter 22.3.

665 Especially *Monologion* (ca. 1076) and *Proslogion*; for an English translation, see Anselm, *Monologion and Proslogion: with the replies of Gaunilo and Anselm*, trans. T. Williams, Indianapolis/Cambridge 1995; see Gilbert 1997: 79–90, with bibliography. Cf. references in *The Tradition of Medieval Logic and Speculative Grammar from*

by using the forces of the human mind. The point is to justify the truth of faith by invoking as little quotations from Scripture or tradition as possible (Gilbert 1997: 88). This does not mean getting lost in empty verbal games based on formal language definitions (dialectics *in voce*). On the contrary, one has to constantly ask about the actual relations between denotations of words (*appellatio*) and make them the source of conclusions (dialectics *in res*) if formal considerations fail.⁶⁶⁶

Anselm's program of the use of logic for "faith seeking understanding" (*fides quaerens intellectum*) should be considered as evidence of the full Christianization of cognitive domains, which serves human beings as a basis on which to build a comprehensible image of the world and their place in it. There is a moment in arranging a puzzle, when the covered fields allow us to guess how the whole looks. Since we are aware of the kind of the "world" we are building, we can anticipate what this world is missing, and it becomes easier to find the right place for all loose fragments, which we noticed at times, but which remained "incomprehensible." Another analogy is the learning process: after repeated imitation of a pattern, there is a phase of transfer, i.e. independent action, which to a small extent is still a kind of mimetic reproduction depending on the application of an automatized procedure and, most importantly, on the use of comprehensible rules. This indicates one of the motives of this quest, namely – didactic needs.⁶⁶⁷

Anselm to the End of the Seventeenth Century, Vol. 1 (1836–1976), ed. E. J. Ashworth, Toronto 1978; Vol. 2 (1977–1994), ed. F. Pironet, Turnhout 1996.

666 A practical example is the solution of the issue of the incarnation in the dialogue *Cur Deus homo*, which we have already mentioned (chapter 9.3): it is not justified by the distribution of sacredness and competences in Trinitarian theology or by means of definitional analyses, but it is justified by the knowledge of reality. "The living faith enlivens reason, directing it toward that which is not only *in intellectu* but also *id quo maius cogitare nequit*" (Gilbert 1997: 89, with a reference to Chapter 78 of *Monologion* and Chapter 2 of *Prosologion*). Let us recall that a somewhat similar limitation was discovered in structural semantics, which at some point must go beyond the meaningful oppositions and indicate something real.

667 They lie at the origin of the first pre-scholastic theological syntheses, such as Hugh of St. Victor's *De sacramentis*. It is probably not worth listing all the professors of Paris (like Thomas Aquinas) and Oxford (like Roger Bacon, who described Thomas' masters as "the Paris mob"). Let us mention only two simple teachers: the Franciscan David of Augsburg, whose book of instructions for the novitiate we shall quote several times, and another Franciscan, Thomas a Kempis, who for many years served as a teacher of novices of the Canon-Regulars of St. Augustine at the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes in Zwolle (1448–1471); for a more extensive biographical sketch on Thomas, see P. J. van Geest, "De sermone van Thomas a Kempis; een terreinverkenning," *Trajecta*

We shall further describe a similar process in relation to devout imagination and juxtapose it with the theory of the scholasticism of Gothic art (Panofsky 1957).

The second important step toward the rationalization of theology is linked to Abelard, who based his conception on a dynamic understanding of thought as “a necessary bridge between word and thing” or “a path crossed in a systematic fashion.” Abelard could achieve this systematicity by way of recognizing universals as “practical principles of reason” (not a reality in itself) and structuring names in an appropriate order. Attributing meaning to names and designating things with names were not entirely new operations; but the novelty of Abelard’s approach was that it allowed denotation, and hence thought (not only real, *res*) reference (which brings to mind Frege’s triangle); this paved a way for strict logical reasoning (Gilbert 1997: 94).

Abelard’s method of *quaestio* requires the thinker to reproduce the content of the written tradition with his unifying thought apparatus in order to make it possible to compare and adopt theological positions. This is the only way to ensure productive scholarly discussion and safeguard the unity of faith. Without opening this path of communication between people, communication between man and God would not be possible. No one would have written a dialogue of God and the sinner, in which the latter agrees with the arguments of his interlocutor: “You convince me, Lord, evidently, and you conclude by arguing irrefutably.”⁶⁶⁸ God himself would not have had to ask his Son for advice, since Justice and Mercy already expressed their views on man’s sin; the first one demanded reparation, the other – forgiveness. Irreconcilable as they were, God had to honor them both to remain in accordance with the majesty of his position.⁶⁶⁹

Illustratively speaking, we may say that a step has been taken toward the self-reliance, self-explanation, and self-organization of reason; it opened up its own world of thought. It is in this cognitive space that different minds can meet and communicate with each other (“unite and keep in touch”). Henceforth, thinking becomes a kind of theater: only those present on stage are important, they need to know something about, and have something in common with, each

2/1993, pp. 306–310; see also van Geest’s entry “Thomas Hemerken von Kempen,” in: VL 9: 862–882.

668 “Peccator ad Deum: Convincis me, Domine, evidenter et conclusis argumentando irrefragabiliter,” Innocentius III, *Dialogus inter Deum et Peccatorem*, PL 217, col. 691–702.

669 That is how the Brabant eschatological mystery play, *Eerste Bliscap*, puts it: “Want alle beide moeticker plegen. / Dadict niet... / Ic ginge miere hoger godheit tegen” (1213–1215).

other; in short, they need to become a fitting cast for the same plot. And the more representative cast human reason can find, the better the show is.

Assuming as its main goal the association of the human world in the Church, i.e. the Body of Christ, the principle of recapitulation emerges as the supreme directive for the pursuit of the tasks of providing devotional consistency, as the “mother of all plots” of religious drama. Hugh of St. Victor, who divided history into two stages – before the Incarnation (*opus conditionis*) and after the Incarnation (*opus reparationis*)⁶⁷⁰ – identified Christ with the Church in a figurative manner: the laity and the clergy are inseparable like the two sides of Christ.⁶⁷¹

In this spirit, the illustrator of the Winchester Bible⁶⁷² (1150–1180) harmonizes both these times and subordinates the first stage to the second, replacing six days of creation with six epochs of salvation (Rudolph 1999: 43). The concept of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ receives a sophisticated form in Innocent III’s sacramentology. A collective subject, knowing, believing, and loving is integrally built into the sacrament of the Eucharist, broadly understood as a dynamic movement of mutual references between words and designates:

In the Sacrament of the “Altar,” three elements emerge: visible form, bodily truth, and spiritual power. The form of bread and wine, the truth of flesh and blood, the power of unity and love. The first one will be recognized by the eye, the second is that in which the mind believes, while the third is felt by the heart.... The form of bread means both of Christ’s bodies: the true and the mystical one. The true body has both extensiveness and

670 According to Hugh of St. Victor, the work of reparation (that is, redemption, restoration: *restauratio*) includes “the incarnation of the Word with all Its sacraments.” “Duo sunt opera in quibus universa continentur quae facta sunt. Primum est opus conditionis; secundum est opus reparationis ... quo factum est ut melius essent quae perierant. Ergo opus conditionis est creatio mundi, cum omnibus elementis; opus restaurationis est incarnatio Verbi cum omnibus sacramentis suis.” *De sacramentis*, prolog. 1.2, PL 176, col. 183. Here we may notice an evident convergence, if not identity, with the idea of recapitulation, which the Vulgate expresses with the related word *instaurare* (L. Andrzejewski, *Anakefalaiosis*, in: EK 1, col. 478).

671 According to different approaches, Christ is the Beloved of the Church and hence the Mother of its Sons. M. Daniluk in: EK 6, col. 1295. The notion of Christ as mother in the revelations of Julian of Norwich is discussed in *The Shewings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. G. R. Crampton, Kalamazoo 1994, Chapters LII–LXIV, pp. 110–30); B. Pelphrey, *Christ Our Mother: Julian of Norwich*, Wilmington 1989; R. Jacoff, “God as Mother: Julian of Norwich’s Theology of Love,” *Denver Quarterly* 1984, 18.4, pp. 134–139; C. W. Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, 1982; the notion also appeared in iconography.

672 For an example, see f. 5 in: C. M. Kaufmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts, 1066–1190*, London 1975, Vol. 3, no. 83.

meaning, and the mystical body signifies, but is not limited by place. Just as one bread is made of many grains, and one wine is drained from many grapes, so the body of Christ has numerous members, and it is from this variety that the unity of Church stems: from the destined, called, justified and endowed with glory. *And then, after getting them established, he stayed with them to the end, gloriously completing what he had begun* (Romans 8:30). *Because there is one loaf, our many-ness becomes one-ness* (1 Corinthians 10:17).⁶⁷³

In the field of organization of devotion, the existence of this goal was highlighted by the Feast of Corpus Christi, established in 1264,⁶⁷⁴ whose great importance confirms the opinion that it was the crowning achievement of the Gregorian revolution and a manifestation of the victory of sacramentalism. Since the very beginning, the complex Procession of Corpus Christi,⁶⁷⁵ prepared by members of all social strata, to whom it gave an opportunity of self-presentation, fulfilled the aspect of participation, that is, liturgical participation emphasized so

673 “Tria quippe in hoc sacramento sunt discreta videlicet forma visibilis, Veritas corporis, et virtus spiritualis. Forma panis [et] vini, Veritas carnis et sanguinis, virtus unitatis et charitatis. Primum oculo cernitur, secundum animo creditur, tertium corde percipitur. ... Nam forma panis utramque carnem Christi significat, id est veram et mysticam. Sed veram carnem et continet et significat; mysticam vero significat, sed non continet. Sicut unus panis ex multis granis conficitur, et unum vinum ex diversis acinis confluit: sic corpus Christi ex multis membris componitur, et unitas ecclesiastica ex diversis consistit; in praedestinatis, vocatis, justificatis et glorificatis. Nam quos praedestinavit hos et vocavit, et quos vocavit hos et justificavit (Rom. VIII). Propter quod dicit Apostolus: Unus panis et unum corpus multi sumus” (I Cor. X). – *De sacro altaris mysterio*, IV.36 (PL 217, col. 879BC). Master Simon used the image of multiple grains and the comparison to the mystical body of the Church, composed of many people, in the treatise *De Sacramentis*; H. Weisweiler, *Maitre Simon et son groupe*, Louvain 1937, p. 27; qtd. after Rubin: 23; it appears also in Jacques de Vitry’s (d. 1240) short lecture on sacramentology: *The Historia occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry*, ed. J. F. Hinnebusch, Fribourg 1972, p. 211.

674 In the time of Urban IV, whose death deferred the publication of the Bull *Transiturus* (Mansi Vol. 23, col. 1077–1080), John XXII accomplished this, including it in the new version of the Code of Canon Law, the so-called Clementines (1317) – Z. Zalewski in: EK 2, col. 861. The official names of the feast: Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Solemnitas Sanctissimi Corporis et Sanguinis Christi, in short: festum Corporis Christi or Corpus Christi; Thomas Aquinas established its mass formula (Smoleń 1987: 181).

675 First certified in 1319 “at the territory of Spanish Gerona and Polish Cracow” (Smoleń 1987: 182). However, the Cologne procession before 1279 is quite well documented (Küster 1989: 152, with reference to: Th. Schnitzler, “Die erste Fronleichnamspzession. Datum und Charakter,” *Münchner theologische Zeitschrift* 1973, 24, pp. 352–362).

strongly in the theory of the twentieth-century liturgy and linked precisely to “the concepts of liturgy as a cult of the Church and of the Church as the Body of Christ” (Nadolski 1992: 106). At the heart of this feast lies the Eucharist, which by virtue of its rich symbolism brings together and evokes the most important mysteries of the Catholic faith in one ritual. Mervyn James (1983: 4) underscores the creative aspect of the worship of Corpus Christi, insisting that

the theme of Corpus Christi is society seen in terms of body; and that the concept of body provided urban societies with a mythology and ritual in terms of which the opposites of social wholeness and social differentiation could be both affirmed and also brought into a creative tension, one with the other.

However, the feature of mitigating deep social divisions can be attributed to every form of the Church liturgy.

There is a certain shift, symptomatic in its extremity, as it refers to the revealed truth itself, namely – the revaluation of the attitude of the “doubting Thomas” (John 20:25), a figure who has traditionally served as an example of a man of little faith. There is a Middle English sermon⁶⁷⁶ which places him even above the other, unwaveringly faithful apostles, for it is thanks to Thomas’ doubts, quickly dispelled by Christ, that “we resolve our own doubts and become more confident in our faith.” Christ’s corporeality becomes an irrefutable and tangible evidence,⁶⁷⁷ possible on the basis of the incarnational aesthetics (Gibson’s interpretation). But this need for a literal visualization of the revealed theme is also a symptom of the separation of the world of the profane, with its naive if fundamental empiricism and a practical application of the coherence theory of truth long before its academic formulation. Perhaps, this formed a background for the emergence of the fourteenth-century neo-nominalism with its characteristic theoretical skepticism. According to Peter Juliani (Pope John XXI, d. 1277), every point of view is equally legitimate and everything that is not available to the senses, and thus directly given to human consciousness, is questionable.⁶⁷⁸ It is not entirely correct to define nominalist views on ontology as skeptical; this can be demonstrated by the following formulation of Petrus Aureolus: “Every

676 Gibson 1989: 16, with a reference to: W. O. Ross, *Middle English Sermons*, London 1940, p. 134. One may wonder if this example was not intended to alleviate anti-heretical sentiments by calling into question the evangelical lineage.

677 Also the evidence that man can come to know God through senses, i.e. by “touching.”

678 *Summulae logicales*; G. Pochat (1986: 195), discussing Anneliese Maier’s findings. Cf. comments on the methodical doubt in Descartes and his opposition to scholastic empiricism (the end of p. 5).

thing exists only for itself and not for the sake of anything else.”⁶⁷⁹ This may be a skepticism about certain theories, which make the object’s existence dependent on acts and the like. Still, it is an optimistic defense of the sovereignty of things, that is to say, of their full independence.

It would be more appropriate to speak of relativism,⁶⁸⁰ which does not deliberately question the established values, but only unwittingly undermines their system, advocating for different values and promoting continuous experimentation as a means to determine the plausible state of affairs – and so Peter Juliani advised, for instance, to check the quality of medicines before taking them (in his treatise on diet and medicine, *Commentary to Isaac*; Crombie 1960, Vol. 2: 37–38).⁶⁸¹

We would rather look elsewhere if we wish to search for skepticism about seemingly unquestionable facts. According to the moderate views of Augustinians, even “a miracle by itself cannot have the full consent of faith, and therefore it attains ... fuller effectiveness when combined with other arguments;” the justification is, among other things, the fact that even the miracles of Christ could not have produced “an unwavering conviction of his divinity”⁶⁸² among the apostles.

The situation in which the omnipotent God needs to persuade every human being may appear as a terrible paradox, but it only highlights the cognitive nature of faith, which is impossible if deprived of any knowledge. This means that God exists for man as knowledge about God. It is not enough to single out this knowledge as a separate divine person (Logos), it cannot remain “with God,” it must be passed on to people, it must become an object of human knowledge.

Among the various explanations of this paradox is Eriugena’s noteworthy concept of the “weakness of the good spirit,” which acts “not from the position of secure domination, but in the constant danger” of bodily dependence. Only evil reigns without the help of inner strength, or rather by the lack of inner strength (in man).⁶⁸³ Particularly telling in this respect is the projection of this relationship

679 “Omnis res est se ipsa singularis et per nihil aliud” (Pochat 1986: 195).

680 G. Pochat mentions this term, providing a longer discussion of the issue of the nominalist skepticism: various scientific concepts drawn from strictly empirical observations “led to a relativistic view of the world” (1986: 198–200).

681 For an overview of the history of European medicine in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, breaking free from Greek and Arab influences, see the collection: *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death*, eds. L. Garcia-Ballester et al., Cambridge 1994.

682 G. Terreni (d. 1342), *Quodlibet*, fol. 183v, col. 2; qtd. after: Rusecki 1991: 113–114.

683 Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *Über die Einteilung der Natur*, W 31, Hamburg 1984, Vol. 2, p. 297; qtd. after Villwock 1992: 119. New edition: *Periphyseon, De divisione naturae*,

onto the relationship between God and man, when it became clear that it was no longer defined by the letter but by the spirit. The law could have been written for man on the tablets without his consent – at best, he could refuse to read it. However, in order for God to write a letter in the fleshy tables of man's heart, man needs first to open this heart. Without man's consent, the letter cannot be written at all. The Divine Truth must be understood by man, that is to say, it needs to be "invented" by his efforts alone.

5. WILLFULNESS OF IMAGINATION. Getting to know someone else's truth, even accepted as a model, resembles the phase of memorizing a text during transcription – then it is written down from memory. Just as every writing hand uses its own handwriting, learning the content requires its translation into one's own terms, its bending to one's imagination. With every message transmitted in the spatial and temporal dimension, one has to reckon with the fact that the reproduction will not be complete, but that it will take place through a kind of translation. It is as unwitting as it is unavoidable in the mere writing down from memory, but it is also indispensable when making a recording in another medium. Although one may consider writing as the hand-copying of a drawing, even illiterate monks in Eastern monasteries used this method to secure the identity of their message: someone who is able to write distorts the text during the phase of memorization or deliberately changes it for some reason. Translation from a foreign language shows this equally clearly, albeit from the other side. Interference – which looms every step of the way – is one of the basic problems in the methodology of teaching foreign languages, examples of giving in to a foreign linguistic system are the fulcrum of translation criticism, and the core of translatology is the theory of equivalence, i.e. the truth of translation.

In order to understand the effects of the mediation of memory and imagination in the processing of messages, let us compare two different ways of treating the revealed source. In the unique testimony of Biblical devotion, the Carolingian *Utrecht Psalter*, nearly every verse is illustrated: for instance, a picture of a man sleeping in a cradle, with a halo on his head, accompanies the words "Wake up, why do you sleep, Oh Lord."⁶⁸⁴ It is a proof that the text makes it possible to remember the recognized predications: the question: "why are you sleeping?" contains the predication: "you are sleeping." Then we use them to

CCCM, no. 161, Turnhout 1996. The weakness of God is mentioned in the Second Letter to the Corinthians (13:4).

684 Gibson (1989: 13), with a reference to E. T. De Wald, *The Illustrations of the Utrecht Psalter*, Princeton 1932, ill. 40.

recreate the right message, which we compose in our own way. In the English Early Romanesque *St. Albans Psalter* (before 1123), the illustrator of the scene in Gethsemane shows a chalice standing on a rock in front of Christ. The text refers to it metaphorically: “Put away this chalice.”⁶⁸⁵ These are examples of an extremely literal reproduction of the remembered content of the “read letter.” A separate issue is the so-called visualization of new metaphors (see chapter 20.3).

At the other extreme we have the arbitrariness of imagination in *Meditationes vitae Christi* by Johannes de Caulibus,⁶⁸⁶ which Gibson describes as the most influential work (apart from the Bible and apocrypha) in relation to English drama of the fifteenth century. For it provided

basic religious aesthetic for vernacular devotional literature ... replaced the claims of traditional authorities with the claims of the heart, challenged the claims of historical veracity with the claims of the eye. Even time, the sacred artifact of God himself, could be bent by the *Meditationes* to the greater demands of empathetic effectiveness (qtd. after Gibson 1989: 10).

It remains the arbitrary decision of the author of these *Meditations* to move the events separating Christ’s entrance to Jerusalem from the Last Supper to an earlier time. “Truth ... was sacred events as they occurred or as they might have occurred according to the devout belief of the imagination” (qtd. after Gibson 1989: 10). If we looked for an early definition of cognitive constructivism, this is precisely what we have just read. If even the revealed truth is translated into images of devout imagination, how can this leave human truths untouched? “To understand is to invent” – this slogan encapsulates Jean Piaget’s theory of psychological Constructivism (Wadsworth 1998: 170). Dante was well aware of this, when he wrote: “No painter will ever create any figure unless he previously makes it in his mind as it should be.”⁶⁸⁷

685 Pickering (1970: 165), with a reference to O. Pächt, *The Rise of Pictorial Narrative in Twelfth-Century England*, Oxford 1962, p. 58; J. Schwietering, “Die mittelalterliche Dichtung und bildende Kunst,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 60/1923, pp. 113–127.

686 *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, trans. I. Ragusa, R. B. Green, Princeton 1961. N. Love translated the work at the beginning of the fifteenth century under the title *The mirroure of the blessed lyf of Jesu Christ*. The original, earlier attributed to Bonaventure, was created in the second half of the thirteenth century among Tuscan Franciscans (Constable 1995: 234); for a new critical edition, see *Meditationes vitae Christi, Iohannis de Cavlibus Meditationes vite Christi: olim S. Bonaurenturo attributae*, ed. M. Stallins-Taney, Turnhout 1997 (CCSM 153; Washington 1965).

687 Dante, *Convivio* IV, X; the English translation qtd. after *Medieval Aesthetics*, ed. C. Barret, Paris 1979, p. 284.

Setting aside other factors, we may notice the historical functioning of the aesthetics of reception: as the audience moves away in time from the events (the Bible), the authors have to choose motifs which it understands. Given the cognitive aspect (there are no authors who are not recipients), we shall generalize this statement: cognitive structures change with the passage of time, which leads to the inevitable evolution of language and forces a revision of the Tradition. This, in turn, becomes the seed – and justification – of fiction.

As we have already mentioned, it is the next step on the path from the Revelation through more or less systematic allegory, typization,⁶⁸⁸ occasional personifications, and exemplarity⁶⁸⁹ to the typology of a realistic and non-fictional document. The line of fiction, abandoned on the verge of paraliterary forms of reportage, finds its continuation in a deliberately constructivist method: grotesque, absurd, and fantasy. We can roughly describe this boundary as historicity, and the whole way as a transition from macrohistory to microhistory. It is not hard to see that, at successive stages of this path, the theme is conveyed by increasingly smaller and more particular fragments of reality, which are meant to suggest larger wholes.⁶⁹⁰

Northrop Frye described the substitution of the “metaphorical language of myth” by this metonymic imagery as serving to reinforce “[a] verbal imitation of a reality outside itself, strengthening the referential, ‘objective’ status of historical discourse.”⁶⁹¹ All communication, not only literary, serves to check the distribution of objectivity: how smaller and smaller entities, all the way down to the individual subject, participate in communication, but also how stable the whole remains (cf. the somewhat similar history of the distribution of power, goods, and money, which would be also impossible in an open system, devoid of

688 Appearing as the type figure, e.g. “ploughman, refugee, pilgrim, survivor” (Gradon 1971: 114). This includes also the “universalized type,” which B. Spivack rightly distinguishes from the personification of abstracts. After all, as Spivack points out, the figure of Man in morality play is neither a personification or allegory. See *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, New York 1958, p. 93; qtd. after Crohn Schmitt 1982: 309–310.

689 Historic or figurative – for instance Vergil, Scipio (Gradon 1971: 114) – or fictional, like the protagonists of many exempla; exemplary representation is often used in painting and drama (e.g. the scene of the Last Judgment), when, for technical reasons, a larger group (“legion”) needs to be represented by one or several people (Sheingorn, Bevington 1985: 132).

690 See the discussion of metonymy in chapter 10.4 and the discussion of segmentation in chapter 20.3.

691 N. Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*, New York 1982; qtd. after: Spiegel: 148.

boundaries, that for this reason cannot form a separate whole; another analogy is the relation between the sacred and the profane, which need to communicate with each other for this relation to exist, while their communication is conditioned precisely by their separation, that is, the definition of the participants).

The “willfulness of imagination” explains the compulsion to complete the biblical narrative message, a process to which Marrow devotes a copiously documented study; one of the factors behind the “narrativization” was the translation of the biblical text into national languages, where its themes lost their anchoring in the context, and thus part of their potential, due to the lack of associations. Therefore, they could – and had to – acquire different settings and functions (1979: 195–197). Since the translations were often fragmentary, the whole phenomenon resembled the method of isolating themes from their microhistories described by Auerbach.

Tracing the movement of allegory toward fictionalization based on a historical detail and current realities, we cannot forget that the authors and artists of that time simply “wanted to know what has happened to Jesus” (Marrow 1979: 199), which means that they had cognitive motivations. The result was a significant stylistic shift – we described it here as the aesthetics of incarnation: narrativization, rhetorical refinement, literalization of language, realism. In Marrow’s opinion (1979: 205), it is only the simultaneous perception of Passion imagery on two distinct levels – a holy metaphor and a descriptive narrative, allegorical and literal meanings, symbols and reality – that brings us closer to the whole “complexity of conscious and unconscious allusion and synthesis embodied in the formulation of creative personalities” of the artists.

This process also brought a renunciation of the universal allegorism and “hermeneutics of nature,” the predetermined heteronomy of meaning (*liber et pictura*), which was perforce unchangeable. The redefinition of meaningfulness in earthly terms was accompanied by the displacement of simultaneism by illusionism in painting and theater. Not only did it operate with greater realism, but it also made it possible to express the same thing in different ways, so it was to a large extent alterable. Like painters, the creators of theatrical performances had to solve an important aesthetic problem, namely – to make a generic translation, which Hardison describes as “historical improvisation:”

An example of such improvisation is the reconstruction of direct speech or dialogue in the parts of the sources which contained only a summary of someone else’s words. It is not a matter of some implicit events, but of a rather obvious formal transformation of the message without changing its content. The moment when the two Marys tell the disciples about the Resurrection was not recorded in the Gospels in the form of dialogue, but this dialogue must have

happened. The procedure of “historical improvisation” is in this case not a fantasy, but a reconstruction of the real appearance of a historical event, which tradition and liturgy conveyed in a shortened and simplified form. Sometimes “trivial creativity limited to interpolation” was sufficient (see chapter 22.4), but in principle the theatrical director and author had to overcome what Marshall called the “iconography” of gesture in the liturgical drama (see below), or bend to the systemic compulsion to fill the “total action” with fictitious details (Kolve 1966: 199).

That is why Warning’s assertion (2000: 270) that the entire vernacular tradition of mystery play could only appear “in opposition to the actual religious cult” and that it developed around a ritual which does not exist in the Christian liturgy, disregards the artists of that time and is simply incorrect.

In the complex lines of the Gardener, who teases crying Mary Magdalene before she recognized in him the Risen One (the *Sterzing Passion Play*), Warning (2000: 104) hears an echo of the “return of the life-force and fertility”, which is celebrated in the garden scenery of resurgent nature.

However, instead of talking about “this Jesus-hortulanus” remaining “bi-valued, ambivalent ... the Christian resurrected Christ and at the same time the pagan year-god” (2000:83), or about the “ambivalence of kerygma” (2000:243), and “regression into archaic ritual (2000: 218),” it would be simpler to consider different versions of Hortulanus as literary variations of “devout imagination” about how to show the sadness of the death of the God man and the joy of the Resurrection, when we know that they were worried and happy at the same time, but we have no idea how they expressed it.⁶⁹²

The legitimacy of devout imagination and historical improvisation also forces us to look at visionary records in a different way. We will never find out how much authentic content there is, and how much influence of the conceptual apparatus that the visionaries employed (apart, to be sure, from the co-creative role of “fantasy” already at the stage of recognizing “authentic” sensations and “assembling” them into certain wholes).⁶⁹³ It becomes more complicated when the visionary records the vision with a poem in which the constraints of rhythm,

692 See Schnyder’s arguments (1995).

693 Z. Kuksewicz (1996) considers medieval views on the role of fantasy (the sense for storing knowledge) and imagination (the sense that creates an image of things) as the inner senses, ordering isolated data coming from the outer senses. His research shows that the role of fantasy and imagination in scholarly circles, e.g. in fifteenth century Cracow, was perceived with distrust (Kuksewicz 1996: 24). In the version of Aristotelianism developed by Thomas Aquinas, the distinction between fantasy and

rhyme, strophes bring both an excess and deficit.⁶⁹⁴ Even greater distortions may be attributed to text dictated by an illiterate visionary to someone fluent in writing.⁶⁹⁵ In principle, we are confronted with intermediate forms, in which the author's filter is covered with yet another filter of the editing process, usually imposed by the spiritual guardian of the person who had the original vision.

A separate issue is to distinguish the functioning of "devout imagination" from the "inspiration of the Holy Spirit," which serves to establish the canon and to exclude the corpus of apocryphal production. The pressure coming from this area is sometimes so strong that it leads to an inconsistency between the canonical text and the liturgical tradition, as in the case of descending to Hell or the Assumption of Mary. "Unrestricted by the Bible's message, imagination freely shapes the scenes in which Jesus, aware that He inflicted suffering on His Mother, wants to compensate it and show Her gratitude." The Polish poet of the fifteenth century (and he is not the only one) does not hesitate to bring Jesus twice to earth for this purpose (Michałowska 1998: 198–190). Lewański (1978: 251–255) quotes several examples filling the spectrum between "naive unceremoniousness" and "poetic independence;" in the latter group, he includes *Skarga umierającego* (Lament of the Dying Man), the oldest Polish "fully dramatic work," written on the basis of some *Ars moriendi* text.⁶⁹⁶

This "devout imagination" is so powerful, because it is a synonym of mental powers; it already covers the entire network of cognitive structures, on which we build our truths, and if it still does not fill these structures, it forces us to fill them with whatever we have.

Earlier (chapters 2.5 and 8), we have discussed the impossibility of purely structural semantics and the need to have empirical and historical knowledge of the essential features and certain coordinates of reality, which are the only basis

imagination disappeared within the concept of inner senses. This may be related to his concept of the unification of the soul (see chapter 10.4).

694 For this reason, M. Buber included only prose (and not poetry) in his anthology of the mystical writings, *Ekstatische Konfessionen*, Berlin 1930.

695 J. Sokolski (1996: 120) discusses one such case, namely – *Visio Alberici*. The collection *Gendered Voices. Medieval Saints and Their Interpreters* (ed. C. M. Mooney, Philadelphia 1999) sheds light on different aspects of the problem of "man's mediation" in the transmission of women's religious experiences; A. Jönsson, the editor of *St. Bridget's revelations*, underscores this aspect. See *St. Bridget's Revelations to the Popes: An edition of the so-called Tractatus de summis pontificibus*, Lund 1997; *Sancta Birgitta: Revelaciones*, Book III, ed. A.-M. Joensson, Stockholm 1998.

696 See chapters 24.2–24.3.

for its description that draws on the differences between these features. Scholars define as cognitive domains the basic knowledge of the necessary pillars, on which every description of a language or culture created by particular organisms living in a certain space-time has to be founded – it is these domains that provide resources for the development of all linguistic and cultural systems. Although the concept is new, an awareness of this dependency has accompanied cognitive reflection for quite a long time. Already Aristotle described the intellectual faculty responsible for segregating data coming through the senses as the “common sense” (*sensus communis*), which, according to John of Głogów (a Polish proponent of Albert the Great’s version of Aristotelianism), performs three operations: “learns about the operation of the five external senses, recognizes the differences between impressions originating from them, and learns about their objects.”⁶⁹⁷ Origen is amazed with how much knowledge man can embrace with his “heart,” and he goes on to consider man’s ability to build these foundations of knowledge as a gift from God, together with the Book of Wisdom:

‘He gave me true knowledge of those things that are: to know the reason for the world, and the workings of the elements; the beginning and the end and the midpoint of the ages; the changing of the seasons and the passing of the months; the rotation of the years and the abode of the stars; the natures of animals and the fury of beasts; the power of spirits and the thoughts of men; the varieties of trees and the power of their roots’ (Wisdom 7:17–20). You see that man’s heart, which can grasp so much, is not small. Realize that its greatness is measured not by the side of the body but by the strength of its awareness.⁶⁹⁸

This strength produces the conviction that it is exactly there, “within” the soul, the Parousia of Christ occurs:

Should not the way be prepared for the Lord within? Should not straight and level paths be built in our hearts? ... Whatever cities we have traveled through, we have in our souls. Their qualities, and the plans of their streets and walls and buildings, are present in our hearts. We retain, in the picture and description of memory, the street we entered upon. In silent thought, we encompass the sea we sailed upon. As I said, man’s heart, which can encompass such great things, is not small. But, if it is not small, and can encompass such

697 Johannes de Glogovia, *Quaestiones librorum de anima*, Cracoviae 1514, fol. 121r–v; qtd. after: Kuksewicz 1996: 19. The elements listed in Origen’s text and the passage from the Book of Wisdom he cited encompass several important cognitive domains; the same is true for the disciplines of “science” in Hugh of St. Victor (chapter 15).

698 Origen, *Homilies on Luke*, trans. J. T. Lienhard, S.J, Washington D.C.: 1996 (passages from Homilies 4 and 21).

great things, it follows that the way of the Lord is prepared in it and his path becomes straight, so that the Word of God and his Wisdom can walk in it.⁶⁹⁹

This demand to create a spiritual stronghold for the “Word of God” within man can be described as a project of forming a Christian personality. Is it still connected with the theory of recapitulation?

6. THE INNER MAN. We have suddenly proceeded from incarnation to spiritualization. This was not so unexpected, since the closing of the period of Jesus’ presence among the people – the Incarnation – was Pentecost (the descent of the Holy Spirit). It indicated further ways in which man’s communion with the sacred was to develop.

Spinning the arch from Origen over a forest of authors until the late Middle Ages, we arrive at Thomas a Kempis and his great synthesis, *The Imitation of Christ*. Here, the construction of the spiritual man is (still?) the most important task. It is something more than leading an obedient life “according to the Spirit,” as St. Paul describes it (Romans 8:5),⁷⁰⁰ a life to which the voices in *The Imitation* refer. It is an essential “spiritualization,” going beyond obedience to God’s commandments, beyond their interiorization – and turning them into the core of human subjectivity. Thomas’ “law of ... the spiritual being of man” (III. 55:3) may not be his own discovery, but at least it accurately integrates and conveys in an accessible manner the achievements of many writers who dealt with human philosophy before him and, to varying degrees, distinguished between the “outer”

699 Ibid. A somewhat similar position, recognizing “the possibility of knowing God through reflection on the human soul, which is a mirror of the Logos, as well as by the existence of creatures” can be found in St. Athanasius of Alexandria (ca. 323; E. Florkowski, in: EK 1, page 1027). Cf. even more vivid image of consciousness as the inner space in Augustine: “Now I arrive in the fields and vast mansions of memory, where are treasured innumerable images brought in there from objects of every conceivable kind perceived by the senses” (*Confessions*, X.8; see *The Confessions: With an Introduction and Contemporary Criticism*, trans. M. Boulding, San Francisco 1997, p. 273). There is also an understanding of the difference between conceptual knowledge and the memory of images (X.9–11). Cf. H. Rahner on the patristic idea of the birth of Christ in man’s heart: “Die Gottesgeburt. Die Lehre der Kirchenväter von der Geburt Christi im Herzen des Gläubigen,” *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 59/1935, pp. 333–418.

700 New Revised Standard Version of the Bible – this translation comes closer to the meaning of Paul’s words in Polish. In Authorized King’s James Version, which we use for other biblical quotations in this volume, the quoted passage is: “after the Spirit” [translator’s note].

and “inner”⁷⁰¹ dimensions of man. This was not only a matter of scholarly reflection but also a program of exercises leading to the construction of an inner apparatus necessary to control the everyday conduct and moral choices. One of such programs was developed by the Franciscan David of Augsburg in *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione* (after 1240).⁷⁰²

XXIV. “On the Mirror of All the Virtues Presented to Us; Or on the Life of Christ”

In all virtues and good behavior, always put before yourself the most brilliant mirror of sanctity and the most perfect example, that is the life and death of the Son of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, Who was sent from heaven to precede us on the path of virtue and give us by His example the law of life and discipline and shape us according to His design. For just as we are created in the likeness of God, so we seek, where possible, to shape our customs in His likeness, we who have defaced His image with sin.... / Describe his conduct in your heart: how humbly He behaved among people, how kind He was with the disciples, and how moderate He was while eating and drinking, how merciful toward sinners, to whom He always compared himself; and how He despised no one, nor did He flinch at anyone, even a leper, and how He never flattered the rich; He did not care for the needs of the flesh: how modest He was in appearance, and how patiently He endured the insults, and how gently He repulsed the accusations. He did not want to take revenge with a bitter or unpleasant word – but he replied with a polite and humble response to the iniquity of others. Finally, how concerned He was about the health of souls: for whose salvation He was born and decided to die, even though He was God.⁷⁰³

701 “Yet God is to be sought and entreated in the hidden parts of the rational soul, which is called the inner man” (Augustine, “The Teacher,” in: *Against the Academics and the Teacher*, trans. P. King, Indianapolis/Cambridge 1995, p. 96). A similar passage (which Augustine later quotes) appears in Paul’s *Letter to Ephesians* (3:14–16): “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... that he would grant you ... to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”

702 F. 426. A. Seebohm (1996: 71) quotes the treatises of John Cassian (d. 435) as the first systematic application of Paul’s distinction between the spiritual and physical dimensions of man (Romans 7:22 and 2 Corinthians 4:16) to pedagogical practice in monastic life: first *De institutis coenobiorum et de octo principalium vitiorum remediis libri XII*, II.9; ed. M. Petschenig, CSEL 17, Vienna 1888; also J.-C. Guy, *Institutions cénobitiques*, Paris 1965; further – *Conlationes*, ed. J.-C. Guy, rep. 1886 and 1959 (Conférences). On the pioneering role of Cassian, see M. Carruthers (1998). For general accounts of monastic education, see *Medieval monastic education*, eds. G. Ferzoco, C. Muessig, London 2001.

703 XXIV. “De speculo omnium virtutum nobis proposito, id est vita Christi” / “In omnibus virtutibus et bonis moribus, semper propone tibi illud praeclarissimum speculum sanctitatis, et perfectissimum exemplum: scilicet vitam et mortem Filii Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui de coelo ad hoc missus est, ut nobis praeiret in via

Mary Carruthers demonstrates how long the tradition of meditation was treated as a practical exercise in a craft.⁷⁰⁴ In his study of late medieval psychology, Zur Mühlen (1992: 99) infers that the release of emotions which characterizes the *devotio moderna* was not about “a mystical intuition of God or an ecstatic relationship with God,” but it was about employing feelings to strengthen every person’s will to shape their lives according to the model of Christ.⁷⁰⁵ The *devotio moderna* has emphasized the emotional theme in the program of rational self-control, which is already found in pre-scholastic thinkers.⁷⁰⁶ Chapter V (col. 494) of *Meditationes piissimae de cognitione humanae conditionis*⁷⁰⁷ offers an exact procedure of everyday self-control, which nonetheless aims to reveal the thereby obtained truth about one’s inner self to others:

virtutum, et legem vitae et disciplinae suo nobis exemplo daret, et erudiret nos sicut semetipsum.... Sicut enim naturaliter ad imaginem Dei creati sumus; ita ad morum ejus similitudinem pro nostra possibilitate conformemur, qui ejus imaginem peccato foedavimus.... Decribe in corde tuo mores ejus: quam humiliter se habuerit inter homines, quam benigne inter discipulos, quam modeste comedendo et bibendo, quam misericors super peccatores, quibus se similem fecit per omnia; quomodo nullum spreuit vel horruit, etiamsi esset leprosus quomodo divitibus non adulabatur; non anxius pro corporis necessitatibus erat: quam verecundus in visu, quam patiens in contumeliis, quam mitis in responsionibus. Non enim studuit se vindicare in verbo mordaci et amaro: sed blanda et humili responsione, alterius malitiam sanabat. Item, quam sollicitus in animarum salute: pro quarum salute, cum Deus esset, nasci et mori dignatus est. Qui est benedictus super omnia in saecula. Amen” (1198CD).

- 704 “One meaning of the Latin verb *meditare* ... is *exercendo preparare*, ‘to do preliminary exercises, to learn an art or science by practicing’” (Carruthers 1998: 82; with a reference to I. Hausherr, *The Name of Jesus*, Kalamazoo 1978, pp. 174–175; originally published in French: Rome 1960).
- 705 K.-H. Zur Mühlen explains that this position: the conflation of two realms of affects and will into one psychological whole has its origins in Augustinianism and Neoplatonism, e.g. in Bonaventure (*Itinerarium mentis in deum*, ed. J. Kaup 1961) and P. D’Ailly’s *De anima*. Cf. also *Spiritualities of the Heart. Approaches to Personal Wholeness in Christian Tradition*, ed. A. Callahan, New York 1990.
- 706 Cf. Augustine’s thesis (*De Trinitate*) that “without arousing emotions and so moving the will, there will be no remembering and thus no creating of thoughts” (Carruthers 1998: 100, with a reference to M. Colish, *The Mirror of Language*, Lincoln 1983). See the discussion of the drastic quality of the Passion scenes in chapter 25.3.
- 707 Attributed to St. Bernard or Hugh of St. Victor; circulating also under the symptomatic title *De Interiore Homine (On the Inner Man)*.

“About the daily self-examination”

Be careful: where you make progress and where you fail, what behaviors you perform and what feelings you have; how similar or dissimilar you are to God; how close to, or how far from, Him you are – not in spatial but in moral terms. Strive eagerly to get to know yourself: because it is more glorious to know yourself than to neglect it, while knowing the movements of stars, the powers of herbs, human characters, and the nature of animals, and even having all knowledge of heaven and earth. Turn to yourself. If you cannot do it all the time, then do it often, or at least sometimes. Master your feelings, direct your actions, correct your conduct. Let nothing in yourself remain insubordinate. Expose all your offences to the sight of your eyes. Stand in front of yourself as you stand in front of the other; and cry over yourself. Repent for your anger and your sins, which offended God: judge your misfortunes and reveal your wickedness to the enemies.⁷⁰⁸

In this twelfth-century program of “incentives for the inner life,”⁷⁰⁹ one can see a counterargument to Aron Gurevich’s (1988: 274) claim that medieval people saw in themselves no center and unity of acts directed toward others. Gurevich draws this conclusion from his analysis of several autobiographies. To be sure, we oppose this view by citing only one educational program, but its formulation also testifies to something, especially against the backdrop of our earlier remarks about *The Imitation of Christ* and its messages, such as:

He who tastes life as it really is, not as men say or think it is, is indeed wise with the wisdom of God rather than of men. He who learns to live the interior life and to take little account of outward things, does not seek special places or times to perform devout

708 Cap. V. “De quotidiano sui ipsius examine” / “Attende diligenter quantum proficias, vel quantum deficias, qualis sis in moribus, et qualis in affectibus: quam similis sis Deo, velquam dissimilis: quam prope, velquam longe, non locorum intervallis, sed morum affectibus. Stude cognoscere te: quam multo melior et laudabilior es, si te cognoscis, quam si te neglecto cognosceres cursum siderum, vires herbarum, complexiones hominum, naturas animalium, et haberes omnium coelestium et terrestrium scientiam. Redde ergo te tibi, et si non semper, vel saepe, saltem interdu. Rege tuos affectus, dirige actus, corrige gressus. In te nihil remaneat indisciplinatum. Pone omnes transgressiones tuas ante oculos tuos. Statue te ante te, tanquam ante alium; et sie temetipsum plange. Plora iniquitates et peccata, quibus Deum offendisti: iudica ei miserias tuas, ostende illi malitiam adversariorum tuorum” (col. 494–495).

709 This is how the author of *The Imitation*... himself summarizes the first two parts of his work. His educational writings (*Hortulus rosarum* and *Vallis liliorum*) “outline an image of the inner life as a development in which every word, thought, act, and omission is subject to regulations” (van Geest 1995: 109). Worth mentioning is Bernard’s idea of staging the construction of conscience as the interior design of the house: *Tractatus de interiori domo seu de conscientia aedificanda*, PL 183, col. 507 et seq.

exercises. The inner man quickly recollects himself because he has never wasted his attention upon externals (II. 1:7).

We may supplement this program with the related call to “renounce one’s own will,” which appeared in the middle of the thirteenth century.⁷¹⁰ If some readers do not believe that early lyric poetry contains any sincerely personal content under the shell of the repeated pattern,⁷¹¹ perhaps we may inspire their thoughts with a “negative dialectics:” glaring examples of an interest in the identity of the person arrive together with numerous themes of denying or undermining the identity: twins, doubles, outcasts, the replacement of babies, not to mention the practices of dressing up,⁷¹² masking oneself,⁷¹³ or pretending to be someone else. And what should we say about the description of self-alienation found in John of Salisbury’s (d. 1180) writings? It may affect a ruler, from whom the fortune’s smile conceals the truth, hiding it behind a host of “delicacies,” which makes his soul alien to itself, deprived of its inner goodness, and wandering about in the realm of external deception...⁷¹⁴

Dramatic production includes certain pairs of characters – such as homogeneous pairs of characters, whose difference in identity is only formal, and

710 “De amore cellae et abnegatione propriae voluntatis” – the title of Chap. XIII in *Ad quid venisti* by David of Augsburg (PL 184, col. 1194).

711 T. Michałowska criticizes this skepticism, writing about Gertrude (1998: 260); see T. Michałowska, *Ego Gertruda. Studium historycznoliterackie z XI wieku*, Warszawa 2001.

712 A few dozen lives of holy women, who at some stage of their lives used men’s disguise, is discussed in V. R. Hotchkiss, *Clothes Make the Man: Female Cross Dressing in Medieval Europe*, New York 1996 (after: L. Ramey, rev. in TMR 97.10.01). For a discussion of the secular context, see Lenk 1966 among others.

713 In “Knights in Disguise: Identity and Incognito in Fourteenth Century Chivalry,” in: *The Stranger in Medieval Society*, eds. F. R. P. Akehurst, Cain Van D’Elden, Minneapolis 1997, pp. 63–79, Susane Crane discusses the perverse function of the masking of knights as a way to increase one’s significance and arouse interest in one’s identity: “Chivalric incognito, as a motif of romance and as a historical practice, amounts to a peculiar kind of self-presentation, a self-dramatization that invites rather than resists public scrutiny” (p. 63; qtd. after C. Ho, rev. in TMR 98.11.02).

714 *Policraticus* I, 1: “ut animus ... quadam alienatione sui ab interiore bono deficiens per exteriora mendacia variis concupiscentiis evagetur;” PL 119, col. 389AB; qtd. after: J. van Laarhoven, “Ideologie ontmaskerd. John of Salisbury als humanistisch ‘moralist,’” in: Bange: 113–125, here: pp. 113–114 and f. 2. Cf. also H. Liebeschütz, *Medieval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John Salisbury*, London 1950, repr. 1980.

thus apparent, as they result from the breakdown of a monologue into dialogue⁷¹⁵ – and repetitions of action combined with situation reversals (Hüsken 1987: 216), which also have a constructional function and appear frequently in comedies, where the previously mentioned tricks are particularly effective. Their effectiveness is based on the constant, simultaneous revealing of contradictory references – “this one; not this one” – a practice we should rank among the greatest achievements of comedy (see chapter 26.4). Vital de Blois makes perfect use of this game of pairs in his comedy *Geta*, in which the eponymous servant of Amphitryon, suffers the torment of doubt about his own existence after an unexpected encounter and sharp confrontation with himself. In fact, as the audience knows, it is Mercury, who took Geta’s form and came down as a companion of Jupiter, who took Amphitryon’s form in order to get his wife Alcmena.⁷¹⁶

Without all these experiments, plays, and identity games, many literary plots would lose much of their brilliance. They do not always concern the identity of a person in relation to others. Sometimes they serve to thematize the development of a person in time (the essential motif of fairy tales about two or three brothers, of whom only the last one reaches the goal). Let us juxtapose Gurevich’s conclusion with the following words of Stefan Swieżawski: “in the twilight of the Middle Ages, man feels threatened not only by the universe but also by himself, his own subjectivity” (1998: 50). This sheds a different light on the grotesqueness and absurdity of farce.

For the purposes of our deliberations, we will consider the above program of building the “inner man” as a necessary step to fulfill the “law of the spiritual essence” of the sacred, which after its transcendentalization becomes unattainable at the bodily level alone. This transformation of the sacred was also the aim of the radical programs of Wycliff and the Church of the Spirit, the *Geistkirche* (see chapter 7.1), aimed at this. It was not by coincidence that both Luther and Calvin wallowed in reading *The Imitation...* They appreciated the focus on Christ and the complete silence about the saints. From this point of view, we may see the effect of the program of recapitulation, which insisted on placing Christ at the center – or rather the forefront – of worship. The whole program can be considered as part of sacramentalism. For it is precisely by reducing the earthly presence of the sacred that it somehow repeats the behavior of Jesus, who returned to Heaven. The Gregorian reform was in this sense an action of adapting worship to

715 Hüsken 1987, 217, f. 12, with a reference De Gentse Spelen van 1539, eds. B. H. Ern , L. M. van Dis, The Hague 1982, p. 25.

716 E. R. Curtius demonstrates the popularity of this work (2013: 50).

the new situation – of equipping it with new tools of communication with God. Those who believed that the means of the Old Testament were sufficient for this purpose, and that no other means should be used, ended up founding another Church.

7. SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE MYSTICAL BODY. The fact of incarnation also changed the attitude toward God in that it more clearly separated His presence from absence. What in the Old Law was an ontologically undefined – neither physical, nor spiritual – mysterious accompaniment of man from behind the cloud, acquired a different character: Jesus' significant presence among people marked the boundary between the presence and absence of God on earth. The fact that God returned to Heaven after the incarnation changed the situation of man. The sacred became physically distant and yet spiritually closer. For God left to every human being His own human image, which could continue to exist in all people, provided that they had constructed it in their inner worlds.

Part of this task was to build an apparatus proper to receive "God's speech and wisdom" (allegoresis, semiotics) and, in general, the development of means of mutual communication of a spiritual content (Glunz 1963). The task was not small and required the development of certain skills of reading the spiritual meanings expressed in words, images, and behaviors. Indeed, it proved decisive for the shaping of the character of fine arts and the activity of the new preaching, while also becoming part of the statutory tasks of literary confraternities. This explains the success of the former and the range of the latter, as well as the interest in poetry, drama, and music – consuming large funds and much energy, but at the same time quite fruitful – which may be astonishing among the otherwise simple people. Moreover, it explains the enormous creative production, which employed a vast variety of themes drawn from the closest surroundings of man, and which served to assert and express the desired presence of God.

This full, self-sufficient spiritual life – necessary for a human being to preserve the image of God – can be regarded as a by-product of this kind, which in most cults constitutes the concealed essence of ritual commands, encompassing practical knowledge (like hygiene regulations) or strengthening moral standards.⁷¹⁷ We may compare this to the role of the seed in a fruit or a little grain hovering in the air with a clever propeller: a complicated organ serves to transmit information further. For, of course, it was not about a static contemplation of some image

717 This customary role of the rules of ritual impurity has been discovered thanks to M. Douglas; see the summary in Douglas 1984: 136ff.

of God, but about creating a spiritual place for the encounter with the physically inaccessible true God.

This new position of man can already be found in Hugh's treatises, which combine a bit of pedagogy, ethnography, and anthropology of man left on his own in the world of the profane, amongst a variety of paths, truths and ways of life, with God only "in his heart." Summarizing the "considerable results" of the analytical part of the Victorine aesthetics, mainly Hugh's and Richard's, Tatarkiewicz (1965: 190–92) enumerates several points, of which the most useful for our argument seem to be: the diversity of beauty, discerned not only in things but also in actions and behaviors (or customs, following Richard), the anchoring of arts in different human needs, and the recognition of the value of various aims of art, including the production of pleasant things.⁷¹⁸

In this transfer of the visible world (of course, only the sublunary one) to the possession of man, we may begin to see the reason for changes in the ways of representing it.⁷¹⁹ According to Pochat (1986: 201), this occurs within forms of devotion:

the various manifestations of devotion – with all the diversity of means and multiplicity of themes – can be closed into a certain whole.... In that period of empirical reconnaissance and gradual acquisition of the visible world, one may compare them to a journey into one's own interior. The increased awareness of the psyche and subjective experience finds its reflection in literary and visual forms that express the interdependence

718 Scholasticism includes pleasure in its aesthetic reflection. Alexander of Hales: "Artifex creatus complacet sibi in opere suo" (The artist finds satisfaction in his work), *Summa fratris Alexandri*, ed. Quaracchi II, p. 743, for: Pochat 1986: 159; Thomas Aquinas combines beauty with mental experiences (as in Augustine, Basel): we consider something beautiful when we view this with joy; we call beautiful what we like ("pulchra enim dicuntur quae visa placent") *Summa Th.* I q.5 a. 4 ad 1 (Pochat 1986: 179). For a discussion of the recreational meaning of pleasure in Thomas Aquinas, see chapter 15.1.

719 In particular, it is permissible to allow an earlier activation of a realistic tendency in art regardless of epistemological and metaphysical views. The issue of the influence of philosophical nominalism on writers is already the subject of a separate current in literary studies, and its presentation would require a separate dissertation. The most important works in the field are: R. J. Utz, *Literarischer Nominalismus im Spätmittelalter. Eine Untersuchung zu Sprache, Charakterzeichnung und Struktur in Geoffrey Chaucers "Troilus and Criseyde"*, Frankfurt am Main 1990; *Literary Nominalism and the Theory of Rereading Late Medieval Texts: A New Research Paradigm*, ed. R. J. Utz, Lewiston, New York 1995; *Nominalism and Literary Discourse, New Perspectives*, eds. H. Keiper, Ch. Bode, R. J. Utz, Amsterdam 1997.

between emotions and the sensual shape – it is in this area that the mental processes and their conscious reproduction (*Nachvollzug*) assume a formulaic character (*formelhafte Prägung*), which should dispose the observer to embrace devout imitation (*Nachvollzug*) and similarity.

One may describe this as the emergence of a new symbolic code against the backdrop of realistic methods and styles in depicting the history of salvation, and together with Pochat (1986: 201) believe that the aesthetics of reception describes this mechanism in its general form. This amounts to saying that the image not only represents certain motifs but also contains a theme, sets a task, and suggests a function.⁷²⁰

Therefore, there is a mutual exercise in visualizing and revealing mental states and in recognizing them, which determines the individual contribution of the author and the participation of literature in culture. The author's imagination creates, while his workshop shows examples of the actual personal experience of ideological content by living people. "The individual literary work is therefore situated at the point of connection between the imaginary and the ideological: in order to restore the full meaning of a work, we must interpret its function as communication" (Poirion 1979: 406).

The development of language is similar: a spontaneous growth of meanings that a particular person uses for the first time is modified and standardized in public and long-term use. Thus, the continuity of dynamic systems, characteristic of culture, requires an openness of thought. This view appears already in Francis Bacon, who, in the preface to *Instauratio Magna* (1605), formulates the (still valid) conditions for verifiability of research results:

we still present things plainly and clearly. Hence our mistakes may be noted and removed before they infect the body of science too deeply; and anyone else may easily and readily take over our labours.⁷²¹

720 Special properties of the medium in the "sacred image" (*Andachtsbild*), which provide realistic representations of the history of salvation, "serve as a guarantee that the visual arts fulfill their instrumental role as a mediator, which apparently stands out in their character as living images (*tableaux vivants*) and in semi-dramatic forms of presentation. With all the diversity of media and themes, there is a structural and functional affinity. It boils down to the shared intention of not only pointing to an object, but at the same time processing (*umsetzen*) the feelings and the act of devout imitation into a text and image." (Pochat 1986: 201).

721 Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, eds. L. Jardine and M. Silverthorne, Cambridge 2000, p. 11. Cf. my earlier remarks on the empirical method in Peter Juliani (chapter 18.4) and the revealing of one's mistakes in David of Augsburg (chapter 18.6).

Against this backdrop, the position of Descartes looks completely different. His opposition to scholastic empiricism was a consequence of his faith in the innate nature of the idea of God in the mind: “even the philosophers hold it to be a maxim, in the schools, that nothing is in the intellect that was not first in the senses – where nevertheless it is certain that the ideas of God and of the soul have never been.”⁷²² This certainty stems from the exclusion of the possibility that the human intellect can attain knowledge about God (Descartes cannot forgive scholastic thinkers for holding such a position), but the primary reason is that he seems to underestimate the cohesive role that the common sense (*sensus communis*) plays in the scholastic theory of cognition; this is evidenced by his further argument:

And it seems to me that those who wish to comprehend these ideas by means of images are doing the same thing as using their eyes to hear sounds or smell odors, except that there is still the difference that the sense of sight gives us no less assurance of the truth of its objects than do those of smell and hearing; whereas without the intervention of our understanding, neither our imagination nor our senses could ever assure us of anything.⁷²³

The methodical doubt of the mind, which sees itself as completely formed and always ready, not as historically shaped through constant exchange and cooperation, leads to desperate solutions, which are supposed to safeguard the first principle of the Method, namely – self-evidence:

For notice that we can ... imagine when we are asleep that we have another body, and see other stars and another earth, without any of them existing. Whence do we know that the thoughts which come in dreams, rather than the others, are false, seeing that often they are no less vivid and explicit? Well, the best minds may study this as much as they please; I do not believe that they can give any reason sufficient to remove this doubt, without presupposing the existence of God.⁷²⁴

Francis Bacon gave the answer to this: things must be presented openly so that we can see our mistakes. It is the simplification and historicization of cognition – the recursiveness of self-control and control on the part of others that produce a system of knowledge through which we can distinguish between different realities. We shall redefine the hierarchy of cognition, granting a higher status to this

722 Descartes, *Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry, and Meteorology*, trans. P. Olscamp, Indianapolis 1965, p. 31.

723 Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, p. 31.

724 Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, p. 32.

reality in which, without calling on the help of God,⁷²⁵ “one can pinch oneself,” i.e. in which the mechanisms of repetitive control work. In dream reality, we do not have any “knowledge” about waking reality, we do not study waking phenomena from that viewpoint, we do not write down in our dream what happened to us in reality. But this cannot be asserted as long as we think in a non-processual way, realizing only the punctual sensations of a given moment: the dream impression may be ahead of the waking experience in terms of clarity (the Cartesian self-evidence), but it is not rooted in the whole system of verification, which safeguards subjectivity, cementing it and maintaining its connection with the environment.

8. “FOLLOW ME:” RULE WITHOUT VIOLENCE. Although the new situation of human beings gave them freedom of action, it also gave them more tasks. Satan did not stop threatening the souls left on earth, and the strength of the spirit of all believers became essential for this struggle. A large body of relatively unknown texts of various genres⁷²⁶ has been devoted precisely to this task of encouraging as many believers as possible to unite under one banner: among these texts, there is also *The Imitation of Christ*,⁷²⁷ a large part of which is a warm, lively, and instructive conversation between the master and his disciple.

Both these characters (or literary subjects) are composed of hundreds of biblical quotations. G. G. Coulton’s (1967: 95) opinion about this book well expresses the enormity of its literary borrowings: “there is scarcely an original sentence in it, whole pages ... are practically centos from the mystical writings of St. Bernard.” However, as Coulton adds, *The Imitation of Christ* is also “the quintessence of all that was truest and purest among thoughts of many monastic generations in the past.” Constable sees this as the reason for the book’s timelessness: “this work contains no word that could not have been written about 1200” (1995: 239); that is, 200 years earlier than it is assumed in most studies on its origin and (still not entirely certain) authorship. The work shares many characteristics with the genre of cento, but in Coulton’s opinion it is nevertheless

725 Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, does this much too often and, what is worse, his efforts are often futile: “our ideas or notions, which are real things, and which come from God insofar as they are clear and distinct, cannot but be true to that extent.” (p. 32).

726 See the last paragraph in chapter 22 (on drama).

727 *De Imitatione Christi*, a critical edition with a reproduction of the autograph: L. M. J. Delasse, *Le manuscrit autographe de Thomas a Kempis et l’imitation de Jésus-Christ*, 2 vols., Brussels 1956. The work was completed in 1427, later transferred in the oldest autograph from 1441, then in 770 manuscripts (also translations, the earliest one, albeit partial, is dated on 1434), and in thousands of printed editions.

original as an expression of an individual reading experience. The author proves that it is possible to achieve an unprecedented wisdom within the monastery walls by communing with other people's thoughts. We are witnessing the encounter of the reader and his Authors, who continue to live in the inner space of the spiritual world as long as their thoughts are enlivened through memory. Then they can enter into a dialogue with others and give birth to others. Even assuming that *The Imitation of Christ* was supposed to be a cento, safely quoting the words of the Auctoritates, we cannot deny that it is a methodical work: for, as we have already seen, the truth in the world of the profane requires a multiple checking and if we do not have a better methodology of sciences, it is not a mere compilation to collect statements from various sources, whose "proponents had not died out" (chapter 18.1), since these statements have been unanimous, agreed, and repeated for 200 years.

If it is necessary to look for something new, then we should turn to the writer's attitude. The work is addressed to the clergy, rather than the laity, but every reader can be a "faithful soul." He asks questions and receives answers. He complains and receives clues. He seeks to formulate a principle on his own. The places in which a person (faithful soul) performs a cognitive self-creation or construction – that is, makes judgments about himself, his behavior, feelings, attitude toward God – seem to be the most interesting. In fact, the value of this book can be measured by the number of sentences uttered in the first person singular,⁷²⁸ despite the fact that they are quotations, or, perhaps, precisely because they are the old and well-known truths drawn from writings, which someone experienced deeply. However, the sentences uttered by the figure of Christ are also important, because it is not only the Word of the Gospel but also Christ who tells us how a man of the late Middle Ages "devoutly imagines" him.

More than half of the book (parts III and IV) is a dialogue. According to the assumption that it is the "inward conversation of Christ with the faithful soul" (III.1), the soul that listens to the Voice. *The Imitation of Christ* is usually a complex prosopopoeia, partly reviving longer dithyrambs (like the whole chapter III.5), and partly embedded in a multiplicity of short monologues. Sometimes a didactic dialogue ensues, turning into a conversation, which transforms into an exchange of replies (III.6.1). However, what is more important than the

728 As reads the title of a chapter of *A History of Private Life* in the part "The Emergence of the Individual" by Philippe Braunstein. See *A History of Private Life. II: Revelations of the Medieval World*, eds. Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, Cambridge, Mass. 1988.

proportions of these forms of dialogue is the mere approximation of the speaking figures, the staging of a conversation between a man – who is weak but full of good will – and God.

It has been noted that the dialogical parts are actually a different book and could probably function separately. It is not a coincidence, though, that they survived together. First of all, it is a continuation of the dialogues written by Anselm, Bernard, Hugh, and many others. Then (or rather, at the same time) we can notice the aesthetics of recapitulation in this translation of the genre of treatise to the elementary communication situation. The book disposes the reader to embrace the role of a witness to the exchange of the living word, that is, the word which is most natural and most basic for the reader.

Much of the things against which Christ warns the believer's soul should be treated as observations of the growing pressure from the world of the profane, noticed by several writers already in the thirteenth century and described as "process of de-Christianization."⁷²⁹ The work, which keeps calling for a withdrawal from the clamor of the world, does not spare sound practical remarks ("Do not entangle yourself in affairs that are not your own") and, despite all its determination, does not require total obedience: "It is not lawful to cast them [bodily necessities] aside completely, for nature must be sustained." Its teaching aims to convince us that the Goal can be achieved through individual effort, suffering, sacrifice, and renouncement, which all give meaning to the activity, or struggle, that the Voice continues to encourage (e.g. III. 19:4, 35:2). This struggle is intended to bring order to the soul and thereby "prepare the way of the Lord" in it. For that is His wish: "Follow me." That is how the Voice declares to have taken the leader's position and calls for recapitulation.

This intention finds confirmation in many "leader-like" statements, which demonstrate their own indubitability and the absurdity of their alternatives: "Do not let your peace depend on the words of men. Their thinking well or badly of you does not make you different from what you are" (III. 28:2). There are many other promises of peace and reward, which, however, do not leave any doubt: as the conclusion of the narrative part (11.15) reads, "through much suffering we must enter into the kingdom of God." Still, there are no threats or traces of the "preaching of fear."

729 Henry of Ghent (d. 1293), *Summa quaestionum ordinariam* q. 2 a 9; qtd. after: Rusecki 1991: 104; we call this the separation of the world of the profane as a result of the transcendentalization of the sacred.

We may see here a proposition to solve the “problem of man’s liberation,” which, according to Swieżawski,⁷³⁰ was being decided in the late Middle Ages. This process consisted in a gradual release from the burden of determinism and in theological-philosophical defense of God’s undetermination and man’s free will. The philosophical contradiction between the positions of necessitarianism and voluntarism⁷³¹ sparked theological and religious divisions, whose most spectacular effect was the separation of Protestants from the Roman Church. The camp of proponents of introversion was diversified. The efforts of intellectuals who practiced various kinds of magic (from natural magic, or rather protophysics, through numerical and verbal magic, to demonic magic) played a certain role here. In some circles, certain forms of magic were treated as an attempt to shake off the “overwhelming burden of the universe” or as the “rightful path to God,” perhaps even more beneficial than its mystical counterpart (introversion). Here, it is worth looking at magic soberly as yet another tool to which people had to turn when they were left alone in their households. According to Swieżawski (1998: 47), “magic (as a means of liberating man from the domination of the material universe) directs man’s interest toward himself.” In fact, the opposite is true: magic not so much directs as expresses and confirms this interest as one of its manifestations. It was an effort of many generations to dismiss the notion of man as “part of the world” in favor of man seeing “himself as standing in face of the world,” also before fifteenth-century Neoplatonists, to whom Swieżawski attributes this achievement.

Agreeing with Swieżawski that the prospects for man’s self-apotheosis unfolded by various proponents of magic (including Neoplatonists interested in Hermeticism and Gnosticism) were quite illusory, it is nonetheless difficult to support his position that the turn to introversion led only in this direction. Even if “the magical current appropriates the guideline, which Petrarch inherits from St. Augustine: truth dwells in the inner man”⁷³² it has not become this current’s sole property.

We were so busy with the paths of truth that we forgot about something else that “came through Jesus Christ” – not only truth but also grace. The opposition between them and the law “given by Moses” has called attention to God’s greater

730 In the paper “Problem wyzwoliny człowieka w myśli późnośredniowiecznej,” in: Swieżawski 1998: 41–58. In what follows, we shall draw on Swieżawski’s findings.

731 See chapter 13.2 (on the conception of the will in Ockham) and chapter 22.3.

732 “Noli foras ire, in interiore homine habitat veritas” (Swieżawski 1998: 47). “Return to within yourself; truth dwells in the *inner man*” (St. Augustine, *On True Religion*, 39, 72).

dependence (“weak Spirit” in Eriugena’s terms) on man. Now man needed to be convinced⁷³³ to open his heart, in which the Creator wished to write a new letter. Jörg Villwock identifies the effort of “granting primacy in the conditions of dependence” (of spirit on the body and God on man) with the basic device of rhetoric, or even the “perfect form of persuasion;” rhetoric does not make sense in the conditions of total dependence or unconditional superiority.⁷³⁴ A mechanism, which serves to resolve the dilemma of the primacy of the “weak Spirit,” is the “union conditioned by grace,” whose revealed form is recapitulation (*anakefalaiosis*); Saint Paul’s “union under one head,” which is at the same time “rule without violence” (Villwock 1992: 120).⁷³⁵ Already Irenaeus expressed this in the following terms:

ransoming ... the things which are His own, [God did not do it] with violence, as it ruled over us originally, seizing insatiably what did not belong to Him; but in a way of persuasion, as it become God to take Him what He would by persuading, and not using force.⁷³⁶

It is highly symptomatic that the oldest survived monumental sculpture in the German territory, where the consecrated host was placed, was a crucifix, and that the place, where it was laid down like in a grave, was the head of Christ.⁷³⁷

733 See the earlier quotation of Innocent III: “convincis me, Domine...”

734 M. Carruthers protests against limiting rhetoric to persuasion: “In western monasticism, the craft of rhetoric became primarily focussed not on tasks of public persuasion but on task of what is essentially literary invention” (1998: 11). I omit J. Villwock’s further reflections on rhetoric as a model of “peaceful” interaction between God and man (1992: 120); he further refers to the concepts of *ordo dependentiae* and *ordo eminentiae* in Duns Scotus’ *Tractatus de primo principio* (published by W. Kluxen, Darmstadt 1974, I.4). There is a certain similarity to the conjugated axes of the sacred and subjectivity, mentioned in the end of our chapter 2 (*Anabasis-Katabasis*). We should also remember how strongly the speaker depends on the listener (chapter 14.19).

735 Even if it follows Eriugena’s footsteps, J. Villwock’s simultaneous discussion of both meanings of the term: literal, known from rhetoric (see f. 653 and 687) and figurative, theological, does not seem accurate. Johannes Scotus Eriugena on recapitulation: *Über die Einteilung der Natur*, V 38, Hamburg 1984, II, p. 373 et seq.; qtd. after: Villwock 1992: 120, with a reference to W. Beierwalter’s, “Sprache und Sache. Reflexionen zu Erjugenas Einschätzung von Leistung und Funktion der Sprache,” *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 38/1984, pp. 523–545.

736 *Five Books of S. Irenaeus: Bishop of Lyons, Against Heresies*, trans. J. Keble, London MDCCCLXXII, Book V, p. 450.

737 Gero-Kreuz (Gero Cross), Cologne Cathedral, ca. 975; a 15×15×10 cm *sepulcrum* was cut in the occipital and, as the chronicler Thietmar of Merseburg remarked, as soon as Archbishop Gero placed the “Heavenly Host” there, a miracle occurred: “the Head

After all things we have said about Thomas a Kempis' cento, let us only quote the title of the second part: "Incentives for the inner life," and the sigh: "Blessed are the eyes which are closed to exterior things and are fixed upon those which are interior" (III. 1:1).

These words no longer display the past mood of war mobilization, which led St. Bernard to remind Abelard that "Christ came into the world not only to teach us but also to liberate us."⁷³⁸ Thomas a Kempis already knows that we are not good soldiers when we obediently march in a disciplined formation, because the commander aims at us from behind, but only when the inner conviction drives us into battle. Filling with the Word – the Word that fills others – creates an invincible army. Filling all souls with "the Lord's speech and wisdom" is the essence of recapitulation. Christ becomes the Head precisely because he dwells in every head.

closed itself again as if it had never been opened" ("ipsum vero Caput sponte ita denuo conclusum est, acsi nunquam apertum fuisset") – H. Keller, *Blick vom Monte Cavo*, Frankfurt 1984, p. 41; qtd. after Dünninger 1986: 75.

738 "Christum venisse in mundum non solius instructionis nostrae, sed et liberationis causa." *Tractatus de erroribus Abaelardi*, PL 182, col. 1071 A.

19. Knowledge of the Miracle

1. The aesthetics of recapitulation as an artistic directive aims at multiplying transmission by using as many levels and channels of communication as possible and engaging as many participants as possible (both authors and recipients). For their participation guarantees that the content of the message is correct. In the world of the profane, truth is what the sources of our knowledge confirm as true – not only our Authorities, but also our neighbors.⁷³⁹ Thus, the person who manages to provide others with a source of knowledge is able to co-determine the shape of truth. There is no need to convince anyone how appreciated this role has been.

We shall support this claim with a brief description of the polygeneric message that has grown around a certain Eucharistic miracle. Although it appears only in a manuscript,⁷⁴⁰ it records a variety of material, which brings us to the heart of the issue, namely – the features of the mechanism of collecting and storing subsequent proofs to support a certain truth.

739 “Folklore,” as we may call it, following *Telling Tales: Medieval Narratives and the Folk Tradition*, eds. F.C. Sautman et al., New York 1998: “Folklore connotes the ever-changing knowledge of a given people and refers to a complexity of attitudes, beliefs, rituals, customs, thoughts, myths, legends, theories, etc. Folklore includes both the oral tradition and literacy; it refers to the practices and beliefs of the lower and upper levels of medieval society” (Andreas Klare, TMR 99.02.15). Cf. Lévi-Strauss’ bricolage and the elementary knowledge of the vehicles of the identity and origins of the tribe – this “thin layer of storytelling,” the “traditions producing emotional bonds within the group and laying down foundational principles of social life through a story, which demonstrates the common beginning of the tribal organization, in terms of both biological and cultural existence.” That is how J. Banaszkiwicz (1998:38) summarizes the conception of the religious character of myths concerning ethnic subjectivity, as formulated by H. Wolfram, “Origo et religio. Ethnic Traditions and Literature in Early Medieval Texts,” *Early Medieval Europe* 1994, 3, pp. 19–38.

740 One should rather say: of course, it appears in a manuscript (cf. chapter 4.3 about Christianity as a religion of the codex and about the meaning of the codex as a medium, at least as important as the invention of printing).

The paper manuscript,⁷⁴¹ with 114 pages⁷⁴² with the size of 20 by 13,5 cm, dated on the basis of watermarks to the period of ca. 1500–1540, survived as a subsequently bound codex, which first belonged to the Confraternity of the Holy Sacrament of Nyeuwervaert in Breda and then to the local St. Barbara's Church. A hand from the eighteenth or the nineteenth century has given the title *Liber venerabilis Confraternitatis sanctissimi sacramenti in Ecclesia Romana Catholica Bredae*,⁷⁴³ written over the long sixteenth-century title, but referring only to a part of the story. The original title appears before the table of contents on page VI^r. It consists of the following parts, which we list here in a simplified manner (without the pagination):

History of the Host: finding and bringing It to the parish church at Nyeuwervaert.

Miracula describing host miracles that happened in the period 1383–147.

The translation of the Host to Breda (1449).

Miracles performed in Breda between 1449–1465.

The regulations (1463) of the Confraternity of the Holy Sacrament of Nyeuwervaert (in Latin and Dutch), established to celebrate its feast “each year and always.”⁷⁴⁴ The celebration included performance of the play.⁷⁴⁵

The explanation of the paintings hung in the choir and sacristy.⁷⁴⁶ The rhymed descriptions under the canvases were a guide for pilgrims who watched the paintings.

The drama: *Tspel van mirakel vanden heilighen sacramente vander nyeuwervaert*.⁷⁴⁷

A prayer about the Host from Nyeuwervaert (in Latin and Dutch).

An anthem glorifying the Sacrament.

741 The codex was described by W. J. M. A. Asselbergs and A. P. Huysmans in their edition of *Het Spel vanden Heilighen Sacramente vander Nyeuwervaert* (Zwolle 1955, pp. 5–10); for the description of the content, see pp. 11–58. Cf. also Leendertz, XXXIV–XL. Some new material is presented in a collective study by *Rondom het Sacrament van Niervaart: a Breda's mirakelspel kritisch beken*, eds. J. I. Jsseling, T. van Miert, F. Wetzels, Breda 1994.

742 Two are glued together and some are empty; several pages were torn or cut out and therefore not taken into account in the pagination.

743 The antique is used to highlight the resolved abbreviations.

744 ...ordinancie die ghemaect sijn inde iare van LXIII. (1463) hoe dat men sal houden die gilde vanden heilighen ghebenediden sacramente vander nyeuwervaert ende van mirakel alle iare ende euwelijck (*Spel*.... pp. 96–8, Leendertz XXXIX).

745 Op dat des salicheit sou vermeerden, // Hebben wij van den sacrament gespeelt (lin. 46–7, Leendertz 276).

746 ...figueren die in prochiaens ende sacraments vander nyeuwervaert choer ontworpen sin. Leendertz 466–8 (eighteen couplets of five lines each: ababb and one title couplet).

747 Discussed here in chapters 19.4 and 23.

After several blank pages, there are twenty-four pages of wills and their confirmations by members of the city council, with the Sacrament (= Confraternity) as the beneficiary. On the last page, preceded by three blank pages, a seven-note melody of Ave Maria is written.

2. In a single manuscript, we discover a selection of miracula, historical poems about the miraculous Host, rhymed descriptions attached to a narrative series of paintings, a drama, prayers, and an anthem – all intermingled with historical documents. Indeed, literary and historical matters seem to be conflated here. To be sure, the fact that the miracula contain proper names and historical circumstances, even dates, can be ascribed to the poetics of exemplum. But there is more to it. The descriptions of painted histories illustrate data about particular places and persons, stressing their authenticity. Even the drama created for the confraternity to provide a theatrical representation of the miracles collected in the parish book preserves many details from its source. Not only are participants of miracles called by name but also the mayor and the councilmen bringing the Host, and the local ruler, the Duke of Nassau and his spouse. The anthem refers to St. Gregory⁷⁴⁸ and Hugh of St. Victor, also mentioned in the prologue: “In honor of the Holy Sacrament // Which Hugh of Saint Victor saw in Paris, // We will play for you, in the name of the Lord.”⁷⁴⁹

Thus, we may see how great is the impact of this tradition on the experience of large groups of people: the story circulates among various milieus, the play is performed, the paintings are viewed,⁷⁵⁰ the prayers are said (in both languages),⁷⁵¹ and the Confraternity continues to organize annual celebrations, which include the performance of the drama and the celebration of Masses.

748 The Mass of St. Gregory – Tubach No. 3227; cf. Hans Baldung Grien in: *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, Vol. VI, column 440; also cf. A. Thomas in Vol. II, col. 199–202. H. Wegner in: EK 4, col. 1281.

749 “Den heiligen sacramente ter eeren / Dat Hugo van Sinte Victoirs sach te Parijs, / Zullen wij u spelen, in den naem des Heeren” (8–10). The legend of Hugh’s life, which became part of *The Golden Legend* as preserved in the Middle Dutch version (manuscript 1116 in the Royal Library of Belgium), quoted on page 251 of the 1955 edition: Hugh was terminally ill and asked for Holy Communion. Since he could no longer eat anything, he received an unconsecrated host. Hugh quickly recognized it, but before the true “Lord’s body” was delivered, he only managed to sigh: “May the son return to his father and my spirit to his creator.” The host flew to Heaven.

750 It was possible to listen to the rhymed explanation; it could be written on plates underneath the images, as it is practiced in the shrines.

751 Bilingualism or multilingualism is another important aspect of the aesthetics of recapitulation.

Dozens of donation records stand for a much larger number of small donations, which are meant to express gratitude and hope and concern for preserving the truth of this cult. The cult itself is only a center around which evolves large-scale social communication.

In addition to experience, it is necessary to exchange knowledge. *Liber venerabilis Confraternitatis* is not only a record of the local cult, thousands of which have come and gone in the history of Catholicism. A noteworthy accumulation of doctrinal themes appears in the anthem. The poem is not a simple lyrical glorification or an empty call for praising the Sacrament, but it unfolds the doctrine of the Eucharistic Body and the Transubstantiation; it explains a number of difficult issues by sketching vivid images, for instance: If there is God in the Host, why do we only see bread and wine? – “Mortal eyes cannot even look at the sun, let alone the immortal light.”⁷⁵²

And further on: How is it possible that, if all Hosts were consecrated at the same time, one indivisible God would be present everywhere? That, if we divided the host into pieces, almighty God would appear in each piece?⁷⁵³ That, in the Holy Communion we receive the whole body as it hung on the cross? That this food never disappears? That it cannot be corrupted with impurity and hence even the most sinful priests turn the Eucharist into God and man?

A quick look at Durand’s *Rationale* (IV, 41.16–27) reveals significant similarities between the content of the anthem and the “eleven miracles of the Eucharist” which Durand’s work lists (*in corpore Christi undecim miracula considerantur*);

752 I shall give only this one answer so that the reader can face the questions that the poem explains with bizarre simplicity. In his translation, M. James (1983: 9) quotes a number of similar puzzles from the local Roman breviary in Sarum (Salisbury; the Latin sequence from the Mass for the Feast of Corpus Christi): “Not a single doubt remain / When they break the Host in twain, / But that in each part remain / What was in the whole before.” Or: “Whether one or thousands eat / all receive the self-same meat” (*Missale ad usum... ecclesiae Sarum*, ed. F. H. Dickinson, Oxford 1861–1863, pp. 457–458).

753 Cf. an excerpt from the Corpus Christi sequence *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*: “Fracto demum sacramento, ne vacilles, sed memento, tantum esse sub fragmento, quantum toto tegitur. Nulla rei fit scissura: signi tantum fit fractura: qua nec status nec statura signati minuitur” (“When the Priest the victim breaketh / See thy faith in nowise shaketh / Know that every fragment taketh / All that ‘neath the whole there lies / This in him no fracture maketh / ‘Tis the figure only breaketh / Form, or state, no change there taketh / Place in what it signifies” – see “Thomae Aquinatis Hymnus de Corpore Christi” in: *Lyra Ecclesiastica: Or, A Collection of Ancient and Godly Latin Hymns*, trans. A. D. Wackerbarth, A.B., London MDCCCXLII).

and which, as the editors explain, Durand borrowed from the treatise *Mitrале* by Sicardus (PL 213, col. 129AB). The version of the anthem in the Breda codex (1955 edition, pp. 213–222) contains a lecture on “seven miracles” (“seven wonderen;” lines 47–120), in which we can easily recognize the third, fourth, fifth, and eighth miracle listed in Durand (the other three are different); the stanzas preserved in another manuscript make it possible to identify two more miracles (10–11 in Durand). The list of eleven miracles consists of short subchapters: the formulation of the object is followed by a justification (*ratio*); in the anthem, similarly, a few lines of the presentation is accompanied by an explanation announced as an *exempel* (it usually takes the form of an exemplum); there is a striking convergence between Durand (41.20, p. 448) and the poet’s descriptions of the fourth miracle. It is also highly symptomatic that, after the description of miracles, in the penultimate stanza of the anthem, there is a recollection of the Eucharistic miracles: with Gregory, a doubting baker, and Hugh’s soul flying to Heaven after the Host; in Durand, too, they appear in two subchapters (28–29), following the enumeration of 11 miracles (16–27).

3. It is worth underscoring the “multi-estate” character of the world, which represents this tradition. It complements the previously highlighted multiplicity of stimuli. There is indeed a comprehensive cross-section of society:

- The Host is found by the peasant Jan Bautoen, a peat-digger: all of a sudden, his shovel dug out the Host; when he took it, his hand started bleeding, so he dropped it.
- Two women who were with him notified the parish priest, who arrived with all the people living there (“metten commuyn,” in the miraculum: “metter ghemeynten”) and return as a procession to place the Host in the church.
- Many “pilgrims from afar” visit the Sacrament.
- The Curia of the Bishop of Leodium⁷⁵⁴ learns about the miracle and, doubtful as a result of Satan’s whisper (“Ic hebse doen twijfelen”), sends an inspector.
- Macharius, a lawyer of the Curia, interrogates John, gets suspicious, and decides to examine the Host.
- The lawyer pierces the Host in five places and “many different people” (45: “menigen diverschen man”) see it “bleeding from the wounds.”⁷⁵⁵

754 French Liège (thof van Luyck), in drama and miracle plays: Lu(y)dick(e).

755 “Tsacrament dat lack / Niet dan enckel bloet, dat uut den wonden ran” (43–44). Here, we encounter a popular miracular theme which reflects the understanding of the Sacrament of Flesh and Blood described in theology as Capernaism (from the city of Capernaum, where Jesus spoke; see John 6:22–59). It is a theological mistake which consists in a literal, physical understanding of flesh and blood in the mystery of the Eucharist.

- A Christian knight taken captive by the pagan Saracens at the Prussian Margraviate [!] is saved from being burned as an offering to Mohammed as a result of the intervention of the Host of Nyeuwervaert, to which he pledged to refrain from drinking wine and eating meat until he would be able to pay homage to it in person.
- Children and women are saved from death and disease by the Host; these are the remaining miracula, which were not included in the performance, and which were related by angry devils; finally, good news arrives: water prevents the pilgrims from entering the old church.
- The parish priest of Nyeuwervaert does the honors several times: accepts the discovered Host, explains to Macharius the pointlessness of checking, and assists the knight Wouter in his thanksgiving prayer. On this occasion, he reveals himself as the person who writes down the history of the Host. After the visitation and prayer, he asks the knight to tell him everything because he wants to keep this beautiful miracle in his memory: “Come here and tell me the reason of your joy. / I will write it down in the name of the Lord, / In honor of the Holy Sacrament.”⁷⁵⁶
- Duke John of Nassau contacts with the Bishop in order to move the Sacrament to a safer place in Breda; the drama skillfully stages this scene as a surprise: we are in the Bishop’s palace, who tells his officials that he has just received a letter from the Duke; let us break the seal and read what interesting things we may find there...
- A delegation comprising a confraternity of archers and officials⁷⁵⁷ sent by the Duke takes the Sacrament to a ship and leaves.
- “The whole city” takes part in a solemn procession, which carries the Sacrament to the church in Breda (lines 1281–1287, 1289–1292 of the drama): “The people brought it with joy: / Mr. Henry de Bie and Mr. John Boot, / Mayors, councilors, little and great folks alike, / Archers and ordinary craftsmen, / They carried it to Breda with reverence, / With crosses, flags, and a lot of torches. Even Duke John himself / and his wife and their people / They also marched humbly and joyfully / Following the Sacrament.”⁷⁵⁸

756 “Nu coomt, seght mi al dijn reden met vruegden. / Ic saelt gaen scriven inden naem des heeren, / Den heiligen sacrament ter eeren” (1028–1030). A. Witkowska describes the activity of the “offices for miracles” carried out at the grave of the saint by a parish priest or a special official, e.g. a notary (Witkowska 1978: 185, with a reference to her larger work: “Miracula małopolskie z XIII i XIV wieku. Studium źródłoznawcze,” *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 19.2/1971).

757 “[S]cutten met veel groter clercken,” line 59 of the description of the paintings (Leendertz, p. 467).

758 “Tvolc hevet inne gehaelt soe huegelijc: / Heer Heinderic de Bie ende heer Jan Boot, / Borghermeesteren, scepenen, cleeyn ende groot, / Schutten ende ghemeinde ambachten, / Diet bynnen Breda eerlijck brachten / Met crucen, met vanen, met veel toertsen / Uut den scepe halende // Ja, Grave Jan selve oetmoedelijc / Ende sijn vrouwe ende al de hare / Ghingen oic, met blijden gebare, / Metten sacremente”

Do we need a better exemplification of what people visualized as Corpus Christi?

What reveals itself here is the media character of confraternal activity: a confraternity was set up to maintain the knowledge about the miraculous Host, i.e. to popularize in an open, regular, and permanent way all verified information about the Host in the whole community. Repeated verification acts as proof of the intersubjective character of this knowledge. It becomes rational to take this knowledge into account.

The openness of this tradition to further evidence (there are even blank pages left in the codex) and the clear social anchorage of the whole initiative, which can be described as calculated: the Host was moved to a large city, in which both the Duke and the Church as well as the townsmen had an ax to grind.⁷⁵⁹ We observe in action – and in the form of an open self-presentation – the main forces that inspire theatrical activity: the church and secular authorities. The whole thing was initiated by the Duke, an information suggested also by the scene in which the Bishop, before graciously supporting the idea, orders to read the Duke's request aloud. However, the burden of constant and responsible pursuit of this local cult rested on a separate group of people, the confraternity, which to that end collected funds from donations and legacies. One of the aims of the performance was to attract new members and donors. This “professional” side of the cult should not be underestimated. As we know from a description of the anti-Protestant conspiracy hatched at Norfolk (1536–1537), its engineers were: the subprior at the shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Walsingham, a minstrel, an actor, and an organ constructor. In fact, protestant bans on “playing miracles” had simply taken many people's jobs (Gibson 1989: 41).

Let us note that here, contrary to the cultural circulation, which we used to take as normal, certain value gains supporters and starts traveling, as it were, from the village to the city to acquire a greater range and probably new functions. Did this take place within the framework of the urban “civilizational offensive”?

Describing a somewhat similar shift of an organizational center to the local government in Northern England, Clopper (1989: 128–129) has trouble with answering the question of why large cycles of mystery plays were performed in the streets of the city. If we assume that it served moralistic purposes, we

759 We may assume that the miracle-producing object itself, after being taken from the church, which was undermined and ruined by the water, apparently gained new energy in the new place, as evidenced by the miracles of 1449–1456 (resumed after a twelve-year break; a common phenomenon accompanying the translations of relics of saints).

may contend that the reason behind this was a concern for the illiterate: local governments wanted to show their “images” to their citizens, and because they did not have such spaces as cathedrals at their disposal, they had no other way but to show them in the streets. However, this seems to be a secondary motivation. More important points are: the fact that the entire city space becomes an actualized setting of the sacred history (in other words, it is included into the order of prefiguration and imitation – *imitatio*); the practice of non-liturgical ceremonies with a lower degree of sacredness; and finally, the need to stage the events as real social behaviors, in which Jesus used to participate during his life. The point, therefore, was not only to show them but also to enable as many people as possible to participate in the creation and experience of this truth. Outside the professional circles, it was a statutory obligation to recruit people to an amateur troupe of the confraternity in the preparations and the subsequent presentation. This kind of participation was often a matter of honor, which soon, though not everywhere, resulted in the growth of these spectacles in time and space. In fact, they would have “spilled out” on the street anyway, even without such an aesthetic justification.

4. The drama *Het Spel vanden Heilighen Sacramente vander Nyeuwervaert*⁷⁶⁰ itself is a staging of the story of the miraculous Host, which was stored in a village church for 76 years before its translation to Breda at the Duke’s request. The author of the performance employed a cycle of miracula (based on the series of Eucharistic miracles from 1373–1437) and a chronicler’s note which relates the circumstances of the translation of the Host. All these texts have been preserved.⁷⁶¹ The course of action is determined by four episodes of the story: the discovery of the miraculous Host (about 300 lines of text), its verification (about 230 lines), its miraculous interventions (about 450 lines), and its translation (about 300 lines). The rest is filled up with comic dialogues of two devils, who tell the viewers about further miracles, which they do not see on stage.

⁷⁶⁰ Announced in the table of contents as *Spel van mirakel vanden heilighen sacramente vander Nyeuwervaert*. However, in the main text it loses the word *van mirakel* and appears under a more general title: *Dat es tspel vanden Heiligen Sacramente van der Nyeuwer Vaert*, that is, *Play about the sacrament* (not *Play about the miracle of the sacrament*). The bibliography accepts the second title with the village’s name written together (modernized to Nieuwervaert or Niervaert).

⁷⁶¹ See Leendertz (pp. 456–465) for a reprint of twenty-one miracula from 1373–1437 and the relation of the translation to Breda.

It is not often the case that we find an evident proof of the playwright's use of the narrative basis, which is itself fully preserved.⁷⁶² This allows us to study the peculiarities of the genre of both the source and the target text, and the employed writing technique. However, this is not a place to discuss it.

In the prologue to the play, the author speaks on behalf of the troupe, using the plural and presenting the text in the form of a monologue of the announcer, which summarizes the work, ending with the customary "listen and remain silent" (84). The author extracts the episodes, which will be dramatized ("figuurlijk geopenbaert," 24), and explains that the play shows only one of many "ordinary miracula."⁷⁶³ Noteworthy, the diablérie ("duvelrije," 43) appears in the drama, although it was absent from the "book."⁷⁶⁴ The author justifies this in two ways. First, it is well-known that the devils care the most about human failure, so it is not difficult to infer (meaning: it is free to show onstage) that it was the devils who prompted Macharius to carry out the test, which made him "lose his soul." Their stunts and tricks not only increase the dramatic tension but also provide an allegorical illustration of the difficulties that appear on the path from Babylon to Jerusalem. It is they who start the war to win as many souls as possible.⁷⁶⁵ Second, "we have introduced the devils to prevent all sorrow."⁷⁶⁶

Both these motivations can be derived from the writings of Hugh of St. Victor, who describes the struggle against Satan as the main work of God and insists that play is a human need.⁷⁶⁷

762 Hans Sachs' work provides ten such examples and mentions several earlier German dramatists, such as Rosenplüt and Hans Folz, who had rewritten their own narrative poems into farces. They are discussed in I. Glier (1993: 64 ff); I. Giller, *Rosenplütsche Fastnachtspiele*, in: VL 8, 1990, col. 211–232, the texts reprinted in col. 222–224 and 227–230; eds. Hans Folz, J. Janota, *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, 1980, pp. 769–793; Hans Sachs, *Sämtliche Fastnachtspiele in chronologischer Ordnung*, ed. E. Goetze, 7 Vols., Halle 1880–1887; Glier discusses two examples: no. 83 about a long-nose doctor (Vol. 7) and no. 34 about the hatching of calves (Vol. 3).

763 "[M]iraculen gemeene," i.e. apart from the first one, in which the Host revealed the miracle of transubstantiation to Macharius.

764 That is to say, from the basic material with the miracula. Apparently, it existed earlier.

765 See the assessment of the function of this kind of presentation of devils in the conclusion of chapter 22.

766 "Wij verkiesen / Hier inne duvelije te settene / Om alle swaerheit te belettene" (54–56). The word *swaerheid* is ambiguous; here, however, it does not seem to mean "difficulty," since the presentations of devils' behavior in art usually served to ridicule them, rather than explain some content.

767 See chapters 1.6 and 15.1.

20. Recapitulation and Creativity

1. THE REBUILDING OF SOULS. In the previous pages (chapters 17 and 18), we have joined Gail Gibson in her rejection of the traditional assessment, according to which the visual aspect of religious drama rests on a visualization of verbal content aimed at its popularization. The biblical drama, or mystery play, pursues the aesthetics of the Incarnation in the sense of revealing the mystery of word that became flesh.⁷⁶⁸ The heart of this mystery is God who, at a certain point in history, becomes a Man, physically present among other people, and then returns to Heaven to offer himself to the faithful through the Eucharist. On this basis, Gibson links the meaning of the name of mystery play to the mystery of incarnation, not to the ritual of preaching the word or inculcating the truths of faith (*ministerium*, see chapter 22.1). This approach seems to shift the question of the origin of theatrical forms from the area of liturgical drama to the area of mysteries. Providing a fine explanation of biblical drama, the theory nonetheless fails to explain its emergence alongside other dramatic forms. Specifically, it fails to account for the changes of the stylistic epochs: the incarnational aesthetics could have been at work also in earlier times and we do not really know what connections did it have with later trends. The Incarnation as a driving force and a source of motifs for visual arts is difficult to reconcile, for instance, with iconoclasm, which, after all, was not committed by those who did not believe in Christ's transformation into a body.

Thanks to the incarnational aesthetics, we know the explanation of the shift in emphasis from word to flesh. We have gone even further along these lines to arrive at the extension of the "body" onto a multiplicity of human behaviors that precede or follow the word and act as its living vehicles. It was not some powerful Word, or a planetary intelligence, but a specific divine person who took a historical form in order to build his Church. This Church is to unite all people – and it is always the faithful who have the responsibility to bring all mankind to achieve this goal.⁷⁶⁹

768 "The highest purpose of medieval biblical drama ... was not explication of the word – not preaching or ministry at all – but the sacramental revelation of the mysterium of word made flesh" (Gibson 1994: 402).

769 According to some researchers, the apparatus of salvation has become so complicated, and the obligation to convert others so heavy, that Luther's demand to "free Christians" could find fertile ground (Van Engen 1986: 544, with a reference to the works of Bernd Moeller, Steven Ozment, and Thomas Trentler).

This obligation accrues to man, the host of his own world of the profane. We presented this fact as a consequence of the spiritualization and transcendentalization of the sacred: the departure of God to another (“the next”) world and the limitation of contacts with it to the exchange of the sacraments. There is no shortage of those who prefer to reverse this chronology, arguing that it was man who embraced this ambitious duty of controlling the world and pushed God away. From today’s perspective, this might have been the case, but at the time when people pursued this task in fear and joy, and with the sweat of their brows, the matter was not tackled in this way. This is how we may summarize various reasons behind this: God had to withdraw to a safe distance, so that the pettifoggers would not drag him through the courts, forcing him to act as a witness for one or another party. God had done this, for He was desired and torn by fighting human factions, which later accused Him of partisanship, inactivity, and lack of mercy. And He wished to reappear to all peoples and help them in the pursuit of salvation. However, He could not do it up close by helping small groups which hated one another.

Theology employs the term “recapitulation” to describe the work of building the Church with Christ as its Head. Accordingly, we have used the term “aesthetics of recapitulation” to designate the whole realm of reflection on creation, ceremonies, religious practices, and everyday behavior (see chapter 18). It reunites the whole spectrum of religious forms and behaviors, explaining their consequences and coexistence in time, and linking them with the common efforts to create in every head an image of Christ, that is, a model of conduct that guarantees the salvation of the soul.

It is thus within the framework of the aesthetics of recapitulation that the matter of visualization of the sacred and the function of imaging, so emphasized by the incarnational theory, receives a historical, concrete, and individual dimension. If we treat an image or theater as a rubber knife given to an actor instead of a steel one – that is to say, if we consider them as substitutes for the true sacred, compensating for the lack caused by the physical inaccessibility of God (who went away to the spiritual world), or, in general, as an audiovisual means which serves to help man rebuild his soul in the image and likeness of God – then it follows that once all people have this image in their heads, the physical image turns into an unnecessary idol, while theater becomes an idolatrous cult (as Wycliff and Protestants believed); of course, that is when idolatry unavoidably begins.

This confirms the intellectual unity of Gregorian spiritualism and the Reformation: the latter can be seen as the radicalization or even consistent realization of the former. The issue of dissent was an assessment of whether all people

had already transformed their souls in the image of God and whether it is a permanent state, and finally, whether they are able, without the tired and tested audiovisual aids, to extend this reconstruction onto future generations and other nations (*in partibus infidelium*). Since less than the whole Church agreed that the reconstruction of souls had taken place, irreversibly, or could be achieved and confirmed with all certainty, the Reformation's breakthrough could never become so widespread as, for instance, its sacramental predecessor.

2. MEDIATION OF INDIVIDUAL MINDS. What are the relations between the components of a religious system, and what are the relations between spirituality (theology), the ontological status of the sacred, forms of devotion, and the aesthetics of recapitulation? We collect the main threads that we have discussed in the previous chapters. However, we compare different mental constructions, one of which was the program, the second the goal, while the third – the means.

Theology sets the goal by defining God; forms of devotion constitute the ways to reach the goal; aesthetics governs the current of social communication, which is to confirm the truth of religion, the possibility and necessity of achieving the goal and the rightness of the indicated path. The goal is an individual salvation. Thus, it is nowhere else but in the “immortal soul” that we find a juncture of threads, an intersection of thought constructions, or, somewhat figuratively speaking, this transmission gear, converter, clutch, or interface – a device which enables contact between information systems and in which the processing of the contribution of one into the action of the other occurs.

Hence the importance of the cognitive aspect of religious life, which means that it is necessary to accept the absolute mediation of the individual mind – imagination with its particular equipment – using a distinct projection apparatus. Already medieval thinkers reckoned with this mediation of the cognitive phase, when they described the spiritual or inner man. To know an object is to grasp it with the mind, i.e. put its image in memory or, more precisely, to create its representation in one's conceptual network. First, one has to recognize words, objects, behaviors, and code them as a certain knowledge (a system of correct or credible predications; in fact, that is the seed of all future interpretative differences in the specifically established constellation). Second, they are recorded in a metaphor, an iconographic motif (which is merely a wrapping).⁷⁷⁰ From now on (or perhaps

770 This psycholinguistic approach is confirmed by real practice in the monastic teaching of the fifth to twelfth centuries, as presented by M. Carruthers (1998): it concerns “thinking with images,” which are remembered not because their content is “real,” but because they are “cognitively useful” – necessary to create and structure all thoughts (Cassian, p. 72).

from the very beginning), it becomes necessary to check this knowledge, for it implies and generates certain interpretations (here, commonly recognized truths, rituals, and grammar emerge; the rest inevitably falls down to the abyss of variety, idiolect, individualism). Thus, lies and intrigues,⁷⁷¹ which express the difficulties and traps of cognition, become inseparable motifs of artistic production.

Cognition – experience – individuation. We may already discern the field of essential tension between the social and individual realms. They are connected by different lines of forces, and discharges jump over, striking sparks of separate souls (individuation). Each of these phases: cognition, petrification, usability testing, assumes a constant externalization of the cognized content, separated into perceptible segments, which we shall define as objectivization. The aesthetics of incarnation concerned imaging, but it remained at the stage of cognition of religious content and devout experience. The aesthetics of recapitulation, in turn, is linked to the construction of the “inner man,” i.e. to the process of individuation. The creation of subjectivity is manifested by the subtle dialectics of subjectivity and objectivity: the objects of cognition co-create the subjectivity that recognizes them (Ong 1967). This is not a vicious circle, since the subjects in question are plural and continue to cooperate.

We may put this in terms of a theory of civilization by saying that the nexus of figurations of different subjects in their milieus makes them provide each other with more and more objects for objectivization; it is possible that this momentum produces something like a hunger for new objects; it is the same hunger that prompts children to keep asking adults: “Why?” Objectivity is created (called into existence as an object for the subject) by way of choice made by a certain subjectivity, but this subjectivity is empty, hungry, and dies if deprived of external stimuli, that is, if there is no “continuous externalization of content.”

This creates a broader context for Erwin Panofsky’s (1957) reflections on the scholastic background of Gothic architecture:

Where the humanistic mind demanded a maximum of “harmony” (impeccable distinction in writing, impeccable proportion, so sorely missed in Gothic structures by Vasari, in architecture), the Scholastic mind demanded a maximum of explicitness. It accepted and insisted upon a gratuitous clarification and function through form just as it accepted and insisted upon a gratuitous clarification of thought through language (Panofsky 1957: 59–60).

771 A significant accumulation of motifs of this kind can be found in my index of motifs for the *abele spelen* corpus (Dąbrowka 1987: 341 and 388–389). Cf. also D. Maddox, *Semiotics of Deceit. The Patelin Era*, London 1984.

One of the consequences of such expectations toward the form was its objectivization, i.e. the revealing of the structure by splitting it into perceptible elements and showing their relations (we have already described it as “articulation and actuality”). Panofsky explains this by pointing to the influence of the scholastic method:

A man imbued with the Scholastic habit would look upon the mode of architectural presentation, just as he looked upon the mode of literary presentation, from the point of view of manifestation. He would have taken it for granted that the primary purpose of the many elements that compose a cathedral was to ensure stability, just as he took it for granted that the primary purpose of the many elements that constitute a *Summa* was to ensure its validity (Panofsky 1957: 58–59).

A technical condition for this method to work in such a way that it could generate such certainty was the “membrification” of an edifice or text, which enabled the observer to “re-experience the very process of cogitation” (Panofsky 1957: 59) that led to the creation of the work. It was a kind of “visual logic.” All details of the edifice, isolated and revealed to the eye, meant “a self-analysis and self-explication of architecture much as the customary apparatus of parts, distinctions, questions, and articles, was to him, a self-analysis and self-explication of reason” (Panofsky 1957: 59). We have already invoked (chapter 18.4) the Anselmian program for the application of logic, which was supposed to make it possible to build theology with the forces of human reason. The didactic dimension mentioned by Anselm might have played a certain role also in the field of architectural engineering, which too was a matter of some people teaching others in a more or less effective way. Its extension was the aspect of control.

There was a well-known controversy about the construction of the Cathedral in Milan, when the solutions of successive builders – Italians, Frenchmen and Germans, including Heinrich III Parler of Ulm – were challenged by other architects (Białostocki 1988: 326–329). The adoption of the principle of exposing the constructional elements (“visual logic”) made it easier to control the process of construction, resolve doubts and disputes between the client and the contractor, determine the stage of construction after a break or exchange of foreman, and divide tasks within the three main areas of construction: architectural design, assigning building materials to the structure, and the very erection of the building, which were not always – or perhaps only sometimes – carried out by the same contractor; moreover, the corporate clients were also not always the same, they could change their personal composition from one term of office to another and, as a result, they could change

their initial position. The Milan dispute, in which the proud words “practice without theory means nothing”⁷⁷² were uttered, proves the formation of a scientific approach to construction, competing with a knowledge based on experience and passed on in the course of joint work, and thus suspected of being less objective, perhaps even secret (“Freemasonry”).

Thus, the field of technology provided an image illustrating the civilizational dimension of Panofsky’s scholastic self-explication of Gothic architecture: the need to reveal principles, to apply objective, reproducible, and controllable procedures in order to reveal or exclude errors (subsection 18.5, Bacon), which is the condition of their fruitful application.

3. ON A HUMAN SCALE: A SEGMENT AND A THEME. As the main form of objectivization, visualization is subject to the principle of spatial and content-related fragmentation of the continuum of reality, i.e. of bending this continuum to the possibilities of perception: it results from a purely technical necessity of portioning, quantifying all actions into acts of individuals. Local discontinuity is confronted with the continuity of linear time and a globally seen social process. Thus, too large areas of reality are not reflected if they cannot be seen.⁷⁷³ A composition never employs too many motifs – e.g. one hundred-hour symphonies are not composed, tenement house-sized paintings with thousands of figures are not painted, even though there are no technical obstacles; each discipline has its own averages in different times and places. Crossing these boundaries is more like a provocation or play, the fruit of which fills the pages of a book of records rather than the history of art. This applies to other forms of objectivization of thought such as texts or engineering. But does it also apply to this area of reality, which we call the sacred? (Saints of the Lord; sacraments; a Mother of God in every third parish⁷⁷⁴ – it all resembles Panofsky’s “membrification”).

It is human cognitive abilities and practices that provide the ultimate basis for these simple systemic compulsions. They also act in the form of other factors. We

772 Jean Mignot, one of French site managers from a later period (1399–1401); the debate is discussed, among others, by J. Ackerman, “Ars sine scientia nihil est. Gothic Theory of Architecture at the Cathedral of Milan,” *The Art Bulletin* 1949, 31.

773 See Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1451a (concerning the appropriate length of the dramatic plot).

774 “They have called him [Jupiter] Victor, Invictus, Opatulus, Impulsor, Stator, Centumpeda, Supinalis, Tigillus, Almus, Ruminus, and other names which it were long to enumerate. But these surnames they have given to one god on account of diverse causes and powers, but yet have not compelled him to be, on account of so many things, as many gods” (St. Augustine, *The City of God*, in: *St. Augustine’s City of God and Christian Doctrine*, trans. P. Shaff, New York 1890, p. 213).

may recall the example of artists applying the exegetic procedures of typology and allegoresis as artistic principles (see chapter 10.4).⁷⁷⁵ From the cognitive point of view, they can be considered as manifestations of active observation, which makes partial use of ready-made material. However, no recovered material is “ready.” Because everyone is entangled in the processes that gave birth and momentum to the material, each new use of it requires its extraction from these processes – like a brick from an old wall, before it is put into a new construction.

Erich Auerbach (2003: 111–116)⁷⁷⁶ described the process of removing certain materials from their microhistory, which preceded their use in the new one, as “the process of rigidification and reduction which late antiquity underwent,” resulting from the primitivization of Christianity in the face of the fallen and barbaric nations (2003: 126–127). This is evident in the stereotypization of Old Testament events used in typological imaging without taking into account their original ties. In literary narrative too – as shown in the interpretation of the Old French Legend of Saint Alexius from the eleventh century – the continuous history is broken down into a series of independent images, which are threaded as corals on a string, without concern for continuity and progress of the story. There is no space between the episodes. “Scenic snapshots” focus attention on the meaningful gesture. The figures resemble allegories:

The figures – as on the sarcophagi of late antiquity – are placed side by side paratactically. They no longer have any reality, they have only signification. With respect to the events of this world, a similar tendency prevails: to remove them from their horizontal context, to isolate the individual fragments, to force them into a fixed frame, and, within it, to make them impressive gesturally, so that they appear as exemplary ... It is easy to see that such a procedure permits but a small, extremely narrow portion of reality to assume visual plasticity ... It is precisely in the isolated pictures that the germs of a revival are to be found (Auerbach 2003: 116).

This task was facilitated by a contrary process, thanks to which the context of events was not completely overlooked. It is possible that this process gained momentum when barbaric nations began to look into and listen to Scripture

⁷⁷⁵ In turn, the justification or even source of these procedures was also the liturgy. According to M. A. Mayeski, “typology, especially as nuanced by liturgical reading of the texts, helps to form the theological basis for understanding the biblical text within the specific context of one’s own life and history.” See “Reading the word in a eucharistic context: the shape and methods of early medieval exegesis,” in: *Medieval Liturgy. A Book of Essays*, ed. L. Larsen-Miller, New York 1997, pp. 64; qtd. after Y. Hen, rev. in *TMR*, 97.11.04.

⁷⁷⁶ See the second part of chapter 5 in Auerbach 2003. See also P. Gradon (1971: 126).

more often. In some paintings and episodes, this process brought about an accumulation of those periods of history which were not intended for presentation. As a kind of summary, however, they found their way into such paintings and episodes which thereby conveyed a little more than they could show. Sheingorn and Bevington (1985: 134) described this mechanism as the principle of recapitulation.⁷⁷⁷ The authors of mystery plays, but also painters who depicted selected scenes from the Bible, tried in various ways not to lose the essential context; attempts to recreate the context of the history of salvation manifest themselves in prologues added to plays, monologues that bind the essential parts of the Passion cycle, and prosaic passages included between dialogues. In painting, the principle of recapitulation is usually more evident: for instance, a placing of the sun and the moon next to each other to symbolize both the creation and the end of the world, or a representation of Adam and Eve kneeling before Jesus (Sheingorn, Bevington 1985: 135).

We find this technique among the many common principles of composing works of fine arts and drama distinguished by Sheingorn and Bevington: “hieratic ordering, non-illusionistic rendering of space, and a portraiture that is at once personalized and generic.”⁷⁷⁸ All of them assume a peculiar division of the inherited subject matter into smaller individuals, which can be redefined and rearranged into new compositions. We are constantly talking about objectivization; composition is not an art of molding motifs into some amalgam, in which they die without a trace, but it is aimed at revealing the utilized motifs.

The presented fragmentation determines theatrical mansionization and other forms of segmentation; first of all, it enables the work’s composition to be structured around certain themes. “The relevance of the parts is to be found in the theme ... in the realm of exemplary action, a realm where action is not character-revealing, but theme-revealing” (Gradon 1971: 126). The situation will change when the theatre will have to carry out a “total action” that fills a certain plot in a continuous and thus illusionist way (see further on in Kolve 1966). Then there is

777 The authors also use the term “summarize,” e.g. in the sentence: “The saints in paradise ... summarize the history of the Church” (Sheingorn, Bevington 1985: 135–136). Similarly, Hardison observes that Everyman, the protagonist of morality plays, summarizes in his life the ritual model as an individual Christian (p. 289). The concept of summarizing recapitulation appeared in rhetoric; in Aristotle, as *anakefalaiosis*: *Ars rhetorica* III 19, 1419 b 30; in Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* VI 1,1: “rerum repetitio et congregatio, quae Graece dicitur anakefalaiosis;” qtd. after Villwock 1992: 120, f. 27.

778 I have already mentioned the latter aspect in the discussion of the allegorical spectrum (chapter 18.4).

a further shift from a heteronomic to autonomous rationalness (see chapters 12.3 and 18.4). Similarly, before painting became dominated by the law of perspective and modern way of imaging, which assumes “the inner cohesion of representation due to a visual probability” determined by a recognizable place, time, and viewpoint (Jarzewicz 1998: 34), artists could freely compose their paintings like rebooks:

The image field is organized as a visualization of the units of meaning, ordered according to the principle of explaining the assignment or attribution.⁷⁷⁹ The biggest figure was not the most important person, but the person whom the visual statement concerned, “the others were treated as attributes and hence presented as smaller.”

Attribution seems to modify the concept of hieratic order. The equivalent of an attribution in speech is the sentence accent and the assignment of specific segments of a sentence (beginning or end) to what is known (theme, often the theme of the statement), as opposed to new information (rheme – what is said, usually about the subject, predication), which is used in different languages. This division can probably be a model for the predictive structure of an artistic representation (suggested by the concept of attribution).

Segmentation can reach the point in which segments perform different functions at different levels of communication at the same time. Thus, a “multiple head” appears (Edmondson 1981: 130): in drama, the characteristic accumulation of several acts in a single dialogue turn, which, moreover, has its counterpart in social interaction, usually multifunctional and requiring competence to be properly and fully understood. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how it would be possible to create metaphors without releasing the motives and combining them freely. It is possible that this ambiguity of acts of communication has something to do with the polygenesis of the drama. Among several functions of each dialogue or interactive turn, there will be also allusions, quotations, prosopopoeia, the seed of impersonation. There are therefore as many possibilities of the emergence of a dramatic dialogue as existing types of interaction.

4. **STYLE.** The prevailing aesthetics determines what is born as a necessary and proper fruit of creativity. I have already refrained from detailed reflections on the artistic side of the works. At this point, however, I shall briefly consider the

779 “[E]rläuternde Zuordnung, Attribuierung” – W. Messerer’s terms. See “Einige Darstellungstypen in der Kunst des Mittelalters,” in: *Vom Anschaulichen ausgehen. Schriften zu Grundfragen der Kunstgeschichte*, Wien 1992, pp. 21–42 (qtd. after: Jarzewicz 1998: 33–44). See also earlier Panofsky’s “visual logic” and Brikmann’s primacy of meaning.

constituents of aesthetic practice and reflection that determine the unity of the work to return in the next section to the fundamental question concerning the role of devotional aspects with respect to the matter of unity.

Jerome Mazzaro (1998: 499) has the following systematization of the factors which determine the unity of the work: (1) style – formal autonomy; (2) tension caused by anticipation – compositional autonomy, (3) compliance with an external model – heteronomy. Extending this last point, one may follow Hardison (1965: 258) and take into account the most important guarantee of consistency, when the author – as Aristotle’s *Poetics* has it (Chapter 17; 1455a-b) – is able to extract from the material the scheme of his plot, a general outline of the dramatic action, which he subsequently fills with details and episodes, so that their meanings coincide with the presented action. Any contradiction in this regard is considered the author’s mistake. Aristotle lists several examples, he gives a bravado summary of the whole story of the *Odyssey* in less than fifty words (1455b: 18–21). In principle, having a plot is already a manifestation of autonomy (point 1) understood as full compliance with the internal conditions of the material; if we distinguish them as an external model, we will obtain a smooth transition between two poles instead of a bivalent division; autonomy would be equal with no heteronomy. This model is the plot; in the Polish translation of *Poetics* “outline of the plot,” it is also a “universal form” (Hardison 1965: 344).

Very often, the minimal condition for the unity of the work is a style which is consistent due to the repetition of elements, even if they are otherwise inconsistent with each other – as in the case of consequent bilingualism. In this sense, among the factors producing the unity we may count a consistent stylistic dualism, which manifests itself, for instance, through a deliberate distribution of the sublime (*sublimitas*) with the low style (*humilitas*), which Johan Nowé (1989: 64) discovered in a Limburg liturgical drama about Herod⁷⁸⁰ (ca. 1130); a fairy tale song (*Aucassin and Nicolette*) which combines verse with prose, a stichic verse drama incrustated with strophic songs (*Robin and Marion*), a

780 Its probable title was *Ordo Stellae* (the second word in the manuscript is blurry), the *Office for the Epiphany*, preserved in the evangelical friary of the Benedictine monastery in Munsterbilzen near Maastricht, currently in the library of Bollandists in Brussels, Ms 299; published by J. Gessler, *Le drame liturgique de Munsterbilzen*, Antwerpen 1928; Young 1933, Vol. 2: 75–80; J. Smits van Waesberghe, *Het grote Herodespel of Driekoningenspel van Munsterbilzen*, Hasselt 1987 (with a translation and reproduction of the original on pp. 90–92). The diversity of styles corresponds to the dramatic juxtaposition of two worlds: Herod and Christ. See further Knight’s skepticism about styles.

drama whose parts are linked by prosaic parts (*The Miraculous Story of Mary of Nijmegen*; *Courtois d'Arras*), figures in mystery plays speak in verse, evangelists share their gospel in biblical prose (*Historia o chwalebnyim Zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim – The Story of the Glorious Resurrection of the Lord*); probably there were also many other options. Against the background of formal uniformity, some deviations may occur as thematic signals: verse peculiarities, e.g. ceremonial ten-syllable passages against the backdrop of ordinary eight-syllable lines,⁷⁸¹ dialogical parts of equal length as a sign of harmony in the “divine”⁷⁸² world, the use of the couplet rhyme in French farces, stanzas in morality plays,⁷⁸³ longer prayer monologues intermingled with shorter dialogues, devilish three rhymed lines (AAA, as a deviation from the AA distich, often associated with the figures of devils), comic assonances (a higher frequency of slant rhymes, assonance rhymes in farces), antilabic exchanges (the distribution of verse lines between several voices or entities), which often appear in Dutch morality plays.⁷⁸⁴

The impression of unity can stem from an effective relieving of the tension caused by the anticipation and its realization, the problem and its solution, e.g. the Fall and Salvation (“to call a character Savior triggers expectation”). Generally speaking, the main exponent (guarantor, means) of the unity of the composition is the theme. If several works have the same theme, they form a cycle. Attractive motifs representing vital ideas lead to the cumulation of themes into superior themes (artistic group, current) and to the redistribution of great themes in individual works (imitation, popularization). The themes of the Christian tradition emerged mostly through autonomization, i.e. they ceased to be reproduced models.

The simplest, and perhaps therefore the strongest method is compliance with an external pattern: text, social model, historical scheme or, in general, some kind of theory as well as poetics. *Acheiropoieta* would be a zero point of the aesthetics of recapitulation. The archetype or typological model of a work of art as an essential representation of a certain reality – *vera ikon* – deserves to be distinguished: the image of facial features on a cloth is completely dependent on the pattern and owes everything to it. There is no room for the author’s composition

781 Mazzaro 1988: 497 about *Mystère d'Adam*.

782 J. A. Dane (1978: 92) in *Redentiner Osterspiel*.

783 A. Knight 1983: 47.

784 All this can be found in my analyses of the structure of the corpus *abele spelen* and *sotternien*, 1987: 148–66, 1988 and 1990 – here I provide a typology of versificational phenomena developed on the basis of observations of a larger collection of Middle Dutch drama, useful for describing medieval verse drama.

or for considering the style. In the idea of such an image, there is a very cleverly hidden miracle. Every image that does not aspire to such a miraculous origin must use a motif – an objectivized observation processed by the artist. Biblical dialogue may be considered a dramatic equivalent of the *Acheiropoieta*, like the conversation of Mary Magdalene with the angels and the Gardener (that is, the resurrected Christ in John 20:11–18), or the words of angels included in the dialogue *Quem quaeritis*. In fact, drama owes this form mostly to the liturgy.

However, references to an external model can be found mainly in biblical typology – prefigurations,⁷⁸⁵ such as the thirty-four women of the Old Testament as partial prefigurations of Mary – a cycle of *tableaux vivants* in Leuven (Kernodle 1989: 225), or forty-six prefigurations of the Cross (Marrow 1979: 192). Preceded by the *Acheiropoieta* and enriched by relics, typology implicates the viewer into a series of events which appear on the path to salvation. Earlier, I have described the meaning of this series of events as recapitulation. It confers rationality to all activity within the Church, giving knowledge about its effects and supervising people's behavior in accordance with the Church's rules. This does not exclude the original creation in which new metaphors, sometimes as bold as those whose visualizations⁷⁸⁶ occupy Bosch's paintings, take over the role of the figures from Scripture and Tradition.

5. CONSISTENCE IN FOLLOWING THE MODEL. Using Mazzaro's description, we may now pose the most interesting question: Which devotional aspects could have influenced the unity of the work?

In the aesthetics of recapitulation, the heteronomical factor is the strongest one, dominating over the internal aspects of aesthetics, over the realm of artistic values of a dramatic work. That is why the work may succumb to its material to

785 Origen gave the first elaboration of this method (*Principles*, IV, 2, 4; qtd. after Žurek 1993: 49). Relationships between characters are only part of the broader issue of relations between texts that somehow relate to each other. A general typology of such relationships, including all forms of intertextuality ("quotation, alteration, example, parody, travesty, contrafactum, allegory, typology, and others") is discussed by P. Michel (1992: 44ff). The starting point is, of course, the historical relationship between the Old and New Testaments, which the latter initiates, even introducing the concept of type (Romans 5:14; Adam as the type of Christ), which is a metaphor for the Greek *typos*, a mint mark: without it, no coin can be produced, but it cannot be used for paying (Michel 1992: 50, with a reference to H.-J. Spitz, *Die Metaphorik des geistigen Schriftsinns. Ein Beitrag zur allegorischen Bibelauslegung des ersten christlichen Jahrtausends*, München 1972).

786 D. Bevington discusses the issue of "visualization of metaphors" independent of biblical sources, in both painting and drama (1985: 155).

such an extent that the result becomes unnoticeable to a single human being. Mystery cycles lasting hours or even days come close to this line. The second aspect is the dependence on the conditions of realization on different levels – from the composition to the circumstances of performance, such as time, place, and audience. These factors seem to contribute to the consistency of the cycle. This is achieved, among other things, by stressing the parallelism between characters and motifs from different episodes – here we find instances of the so-called parodistic echo, e.g., between the monologues of God and Lucifer (Happé 1998: 84); besides, different characters and motifs are often linked by the permanent presence of a diabolic threat (Happé 1998: 85). At the same time, however, the distinct individuality of some characters (e.g. the allegorical Daughters of God in the scenes of their debate) signaled the lack of biblical-historical origin of a given scene (Happé 1998: 85), prompting a “metahistorical” view of the whole performance – which finds confirmation in the cognitive and communicative nature of this form of theatre (see chapter 25).⁷⁸⁷

The inconsistency of style and weakness of composition emerge as the reverse side of heteronomy. It is not some iron law but simply a matter of choice between the formal and content-related consistency of the work and its correspondence to the truth of the source, which often renders the internal needs of the work less important.

Inconsistency has many aspects, marking various combinations of forms and genres from different places and times. It is successfully used in philological and historical analyses. Particularly fruitful has been the study of the relationship between drama and works of art, which we have already discussed, citing several examples.⁷⁸⁸

787 See also chapter 14.16 on the necessity of meta-level for the functioning of language. For a broader discussion of the application of typology in religious drama, see H.-J. Diller, “Typologie in den englischen Fronleichnamsspielen: wann liegt sie vor und was bewirkt sie? Zur Verwendung des Begriffs in der Forschung” in: *Paradigmata: Literarische Typologie des Alten Testaments*, ed. F. Link, Berlin 1989, pp. 103–114.

788 F. P. Pickering devotes a chapter to Religious drama and representational art (1970: 161–167), in which he argues mainly against E. Mâle’s theory of “the renewal of painting by mystery plays.” L. van Puyvelde devotes a three hundred pages dissertation to this thesis, warning in his conclusion not to overestimate the influence of representations on painting, but also not to exclude it easily, as “each case must be considered separately” (1912: 266–267). Edwards pointed to the cycles of miniatures as the source of the Monte Cassino mystery play. A. H. Toubert pointed out many miniatures as an indirect or even direct source of the scenes of the *Donaueschingen Passion* (see the introduction to his edition of *Das Donaueschinger Passionsspiel*, Stuttgart, various

Paradoxically enough, the loss of consistency of the work due to its succumbing to the model is immediately compensated by a gain in authenticity. The scale of this “profit” is determined by the authority of the model. This factor influences also the frequency with which the model is used.

The relativity of the aesthetic loss and profit balance results from the drawing of boundaries between the work of art and the whole of social communication. Since the whole seems to be a more important – perhaps, the only, or at least a superior – form of organization, all smaller forms come to be perceived as if they were organs of a larger body, obliged to provide functional services to the system, which excludes independence, i.e. internal consistency. Given the multi-channel quality of theatrical communication,⁷⁸⁹ the degree of integration of a spectacle made up of quotations depended on the accuracy of their selection and such a

editions). P. J. Collins goes even further: “I want to propose that it is the traditional selection of biblical episodes in the pictorial art of the Middle Ages which best accounts for the subject matter and chronological pattern of the later English mystery cycles;” he analyzes the iconographic programs of the *St. Albans Psalter* and frescoes from two English churches. For an account of the links between the scene of mystery plays and German architecture and painting, see A. Springer, *Ikongraphische Studien*. 3, *Die dramatischen Mysterien und die Bildwerke des späten Mittelalters*, “Mitteilungen der kaiserlich-königlichen Zentralkommission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale” 1860, 5, pp. 125–134. K. Tscheuschner, “Die deutsche Passionsbühne und die deutsche Malerei des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts in ihren Wechselbeziehungen,” *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 17/1904, pp. 289–307, 430–449 and 18, 1905, pp. 35–58. Ramakers 1996: 176 (with further literature) discusses the only documented example of a contrary action in the Netherlands: *tableaux vivants* from 1458, recreating a polyptych of the Ghent Lamb’s Adoration. The link between the late medieval cult of Jesus and mystery plays, also in terms of iconography, is discussed by J. W. Robertson, “The Late Medieval Cult of Jesus and the Mystery Plays,” *PMLA* 1965, 80, pp. 508–514. Illustrations of the drama of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries were studied by M. Herrmann (1914: 273–524). C. Davidson (1992: 1994) coordinated a series of systematic research on the iconography of theater, for which he established in 1978 a journal devoted to the early history of drama in an interdisciplinary approach: *Early Drama, Art, and Music Review*.

789 See Lewański 1966. “Theatrical plays and their examined fragments should always be seen as structures ... composed of elements of various systems of expression of ideological-artistic content, i.e. linguistic-intonation, musical-vocal, plastic-spatial content. Our research therefore concerns certain facts organized as conscious and deliberate mixed public communication, i.e. using various systems of communication simultaneously (linguistic, musical, visual).” Apart from the research tool, which is descriptive, it is also an interpretative tool (Lewański 1966: 11, f. 6).

composition of music, words, and visual elements which allows them to complement each other and make up a certain whole. When assessing the depth of this integration, we must constantly take into account the counteraction of the aesthetic principle of “visual logic” (Panofsky), which – in the name of the self-explaining of the work of art through “details revealed to the eye” – prevented the applied material from losing its distinctiveness.

An analogy with the process of separation of an individual from the community comes again to the fore. It is only this secession that renders it necessary to “make the soul consistent;” and all the way round, making consistent enables and deepens the secession – that is the whole dialectics of the civilizational process. It is also a question concerning the relationship between the overcoming of stylistic inconsistency and the process of reaching the consistency of thought (Scholasticism). Thus, we face the cognitive task again.

6. COMMON KNOWLEDGE. The rooting of the cognitive aspect in social interaction (multiple subjects) determines the cultural character of religion. This, in turn, explains the universal if not total range of the aesthetics of recapitulation, which, let us recall, creates forms, opportunities, duties, and the compulsion to constantly observe and articulate the values which prove the reality of the religious system. The more people know and recognize a certain value, the more permanent, constant, objective and sometimes even more “sacred” it is. The aura of sacrality surrounding a value is the result of the recognition of its great importance for the group and increases its chances of survival.

It is difficult to find an area which would provide a fuller, more explicit, and therefore more efficient articulation of values (standards), i.e. realization of this cultural task, than a theatrical performance. This is also the area where such aesthetics is most clearly at work. One may risk putting forward a statement contrary to it: wherever there is a need to efficiently articulate the values of a given culture, drama and theatre appear. In monastic – closed and elite – subcultures, whose members did not differ fundamentally in terms of behavior and state of knowledge, there was no need for this kind of articulation; a community of imitative practices (orthodoxy and orthopraxy), achieved through the use of methods of transmitting knowledge and creative skills, which Mary Carruthers describes as “the aesthetics of *mneme*,” was sufficient given its main didactic and creative principle to include the command of “remembering Heaven” (1998: 60–115). The aesthetics of memory ceases to be sufficient when large and diverse groups of people enter the religious life and culture in general: various milieus, spheres, masses. Their “memory of Heaven” could not be the same – otherwise it would have to be instilled and maintained. Despite this variety of paths, however, religion had to remain the same.

Chapter 19 presented an example of the rooting of a dramatic text in the spectacular tradition sustained by collective efforts in the parish environment, and more broadly – in the social environment; this tradition could be maintained by being part of another, broader tradition, namely – a cult lasting in a certain shrine. The nucleus of this local tradition was knowledge of the miraculous influence of a certain Eucharist. This is in line with the self-confirmation of the system as a principle of religion (Geertz).

Appreciating the cognitive aspect of culture, one can look at theatre in a different way. We may notice that those who create theater are guided by the concern for its effectiveness as a means of communication and the will to organize knowledge to secure its further transmission. Without considering this factor, it is impossible to explain the enormous ambition in undertaking the work of writing a great cycle and the unimaginable effort necessary to sustain in the movement of the great machine of festivals of morality plays or mystery cycles. Figuratively speaking, we may say that each of these great genres of medieval drama has produced its own, morality play encyclopedias and, of course, multimedia. In order to do justice to the theatrical side, we can compare festivals and cycles to great military maneuvers or parade demonstrations of military skills, while the encyclopedic repertoire – to arsenals.

Mystery plays, in turn, were a kind of historical encyclopedia, where man meets God in history; an example of great multi-day passion cycles every year, let alone multi-year cycles, such as the Marian cycles in Brussels (fourteen-year cycles of single plays exhausting the theme: seven joys and seven sorrows).

The legendary encyclopedia of miracle plays gathers the experience of a man who learns about the scope of the available world of the profane and the boundary between this world and the transcendent one; that is why metaphysical themes prevail in miracle plays; the exemplary form emphasizes the strength and effectiveness of prayer as a means of crossing the boundary; the large French corpus from the mid-fourteenth century *Miracles de Notre Dame* is an exemplary instance; even a cycle of legends is described as a form of drama.⁷⁹⁰

The ethical encyclopedia – man meets himself; French and Dutch festivals of morality plays are a case in point: they show the art and difficulties of a good sacramental life.⁷⁹¹ The exemplary form emphasizes the power of the sacrament.

790 K. Bjelland, “Defining the South English Legendary as a form of drama,” *CD* 22/1988, pp. 227–243.

791 In chapter 5, we mentioned “encyclopedic” iconographic programs, e.g. a cycle of reliefs on the pedestal of the bell tower of the Florentine Cathedral (f. 190 and 332).

Depending on the theme and the scope of the field of vision (whether it is a sacrament or a whole system), the share of human and personal motives may vary. The emphasis on the legitimacy and importance of the sacramental system reduces the range of individual decisions of human characters; man learns here about the sacramental sacred in history, so his place in this history is increasingly reduced (like in mystery plays), while his role becomes schematized.

The encyclopedia of evil (anti-encyclopedia) – man meets other people; German carnival farces or French sotties show a variety of shameless scoundrels who appear on the occasion of carnival festivities. The encyclopedia of evil also includes satires such as *Hexe*, in which human evil is opposed by human vigilance. The novelistic form emphasizes the power of evil, but sometimes also the power of a Christian believer.

Miracle plays and farces come close to each other in that they share a cognitive domain: in both these forms, things happen in the real world (the outer time and space) of man. The world of the miracle play looks as if God had just left it to man who ineptly seeks to find his way in it; when he accidentally leads himself to a blind alley, he cries out for help and receives it. There is no more hope in the farce, evil and stupidity are provocatively prevalent; provocations are supposed to arouse opposition in the audience, which is sometimes built into the structure of the intrigue: man – a conscious host – is called to actively oppose wickedness (in *Hexe*, two neighbors expose a witch through provocation and punish her).

Both miracle and mystery plays have a strong historical accent: some characters from Scripture are protagonists in miracle plays, giving them a biblical-historical character; other characters (saints) are already part of the history of the Church, they are not part of the sacred history. Perhaps, it is thanks to this that miracle plays had a stronger influence than morality plays on later development of drama (Wasson 1982: 322). We have seen an example of well-documented Eucharistic miracles: Are we allowed to deny the historical character of this material, which consists of documented facts? At the same time, there are also legendary and fictitious miracles. In this case, people did not care much about their precise time: what was important was the fact that a miracle occurred in response to intense prayer.

Each of these currents was influenced by different external factors (such as the size of the center, politics, church organization) and internal factors (effectiveness of a certain formula, its applicability as a recipe for a work), which determined the ability to seize as many opportunities as possible to demonstrate standards. The expansion of works and themes was just an additional benefit of their attractiveness – we already know this mechanism from oral literature organized by the captivating features of its protagonists. Apart from purely personal

decisions by an author, what we perceive as a mixture of genres is a consequence of the inseparability of the main cognitive domains, specific to each of the distinguished types. It is difficult to present any of these areas in isolation from the other: even God's revelation cannot succeed without the participation of man, his morality, limits, and the characteristics of his world. This, in turn, facilitates the work of an organizational factor, which manifests itself in the fact that certain types of spectacles produced by certain environments in the course of their blooming period may absorb an ever-increasing array of materials specific to other types of spectacles and include them within their own type. In each case, the generic affiliation of a text is determined by its theme (God's intervention as a solution to a crisis, devils persuading man to choose evil), not by the means it employs (miracle, allegory, comedy).

The Italian *sacre rappresentazioni* of the fifteenth century "could be mystery, miracle, or morality plays, or even mixed forms with a more or less edifying or religious elements;" "they often came close to secular drama, especially comedies, and for this reason they were criticized already by the contemporaries" (Hess 1977a: 663). Until the sixteenth century, the Spanish (Castilian) auto⁷⁹² was actually a synonym for "drama," initially concerning short, one-act plays, both secular and religious; another such synonym was "farce" (Hess 1977a: 664).

This phenomenon is clearly not limited to the Middle Ages. The leading author of the auto sacramental genre, Calderon (1600–1681), developed the genre to cover the whole problematics of religious drama, not only by employing virtually all existing motifs but also skillfully maintaining the framework of the genre as a whole. Calderon could achieve this precisely because he understood that the Eucharist concentrates all of the most important principles of the Catholic faith.⁷⁹³

Finally, we have a number of unusual forms of suprasegmental communication. A dual cyclicity of corpuses – like *abele spelen* combined with

792 The most important collection from the second half of the sixteenth century, *Código de autos viejos*, contains 96 mystery texts, miracle, morality, and numerous Eucharistic plays: L. Rouanet, *Collectión de autos, farsas y coloquios del siglo XVI*, Vol. 4, Barcelona 1901; qtd. after: Hess 1977a: 666.

793 Leszek Biały quotes the exemplifications and presents the classification of the corpus of Calderon (p. LXXII, f. 922) after the Spanish editor, A. Valbuena Prat, the introduction to: P. Calderon de la Barca, *Autos sacramentales*, Madrid 1972, Vol. 1, pp. XXXVIII–XXXIX. Calderon's generic views on the auto were reconstructed from remarks scattered in the works of A. A. Parker, *Los autos sacramentales de Calderón de la Barca*, Bachelona 1983.

sotternie – manifests itself at the level of the text; as distinct from interludes, these farces are served as a “dessert.” In terms of realization, the meistersingers achieved a characteristic level of unity in diversity by perfecting their favorite genre (*Fastnachtsspiel*), which has become a particular form of social communication. The genre has been developed to include an increasingly wider range of themes, including seemingly alien elements (e.g. a play about the Antichrist). This is a normal phenomenon in any kind of media.

7. TIERS OF SACRALITY IN THE SPECTRUM OF DRAMATIC GENRES. In what follows (Part V), I shall provide a slightly broader survey of the traditional types of drama from the viewpoint of the aesthetics of recapitulation, which is closely related to the view of religion as a cultural system. The point of view developed here allows us to see in these genres certain forms of articulation of values characteristic of different levels of sacrality, and at the same time a proof of the existence and impact of the sacred in the changing human world.

It may be convenient to order these values according to the tiers of sacrality, which impose a net of smaller distinctions on the phases of transformations in the ontological status of the sacred (spiritualization that culminates in transcendentalization). Tracing the distribution of the tiers of sacredness and secularization in dramatic (in general, literary) genres could result in a more comprehensive theoretical classification. I will try to find Becker's spectrum in the well-known classification, which I have already started describing in the previous section (encyclopedias). In conclusion, I shall argue that Becker's classification does not run afoul of the traditional generic scheme but makes it possible to specify this scheme from the outside.

Thus, we obtain:

- 1) demonstration of the reality of the holy, omnipresent and continuous sacred: mystery plays prove the authenticity and the central role of the Incarnation in the history of salvation (Chapter 22);
- 2) demonstration of the occasional sacred, an interaction between the world of the sacred and the world of the profane: miracle plays prove the operation of the sacred in the world of the profane through miracles (Chapter 23);
- 3) demonstration of the punctual sacred which manifests itself in sacramental life: morality plays prove the self-sufficiency of a religious man, the effectiveness of self-creation, with God in heart; having learned the rules the man takes his salvation in his own hands (Chapter 24);
 - 3a) the sacramental sacred proves its legitimization in revelation (not only in the catechism, liturgy or canon law); the Incarnation tends to be presented as the settling of all previous accounts and the opening of

a new way toward the salvation of the whole human race, a new one, which had been transformed into the mystical body of the Church; recapitulatory drama; in this case, a generally social, communal, and not only Church-building aspect of the sacraments is stressed (institutional morality play); the aim is to confirm the factuality of the system and to socially control the “legality” of individual attempts at salvation (Chapter 25);

- 4) the demonstration of sacrality belonging to the lower tiers and secularization: farce, other genres, “external” motifs in genres 1–3, which reveal instability, futility, wretchedness or the criminal nature of the actions of a man who ignores the sacred (Chapter 26).

There is a certain parallelism between the stages of spiritualization of the sacred and the institutions of life – at the scale of both whole society and small groups. However, dealing with this parallelism requires separate skills and leads too far. In Part V, then, I shall limit the discussion to tracing the process of shaping subjectivity, which follows from an interpretation of the typology of dramatic protagonists.

Part V. Spirituality and Subjectivity in Drama

21. The Forms of Devotion and Drama

1. THE WILL OF HUMAN SUBJECTS. In the conclusion of Part Two, we saw a correlation emerge between the transfer of the sacred to the metaphysical realm and the descent of the individual soul from the higher regions to a separate body. In one direction there happens an individuation of the spirit, while in the opposite the transcendentalization of the sacred (*katabasis-anabasis*). In the first process, the individual furnishes its interior with external norms and truths – the divine and the imperial – while, in the second process, the sacred leaves the earthly sphere and retains only a few but accessible points of communication with this world (the sacraments).

We cannot elaborate this process in all the literature. Moreover, to limit the purely psychological thread of further investigation – which will hopefully receive other specialized studies in the near future⁷⁹⁴ – we restrict our interest to the characters of drama. Let us confine ourselves to the simple auxiliary criterion of the dramatic, which is distinguished from the two other great modes by both the compositional dominant and the specific application of language.

- The epic is formed by a story about events, the cases that happen to the protagonists; the language describes the world of the story, which speaks to us with its own logic and fullness of space-time illusion.

794 As an entry point, we may use the work by Kemp, *Cognitive Psychology in the Middle Ages*, Westport 1996, who elaborates the psychological views of Augustine of Hippo and the broad reception of Aristotle in the works of Averroes, Avicenna, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, William of Occam, and others. Also confer *The Body and the Soul in Medieval Literature*, eds. P. Boitani, A. Torti, Woodbridge 1999; E. R. Harvey, *The Inward Wits: Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages*, 1975. In Poland, the matter was tackled among others by S. Swieżawski, *Dzieje filozofii europejskiej XV wieku* (Vol. 6: *Człowiek*, Warszawa 1983), and Z. Kuksewicz, *Filozofia człowieka. Teoria duszy*, Wrocław 1975. Noteworthy, one should also consider the several dozen theses gathered in the dissertation of M. Chmielecki (Chmielecius), *De locorum affectorum cognitione generali*, Basel 1586 (Bib. Jag. Cim 5208). In the context of literacy and orality, also see P. W. Thorndyke, “Cognitive structures in comprehension and memory of narrative discourse,” *Cognitive Psychology* 9/1977, pp. 77–110; G. M. Olson et al. 1981; D. R. Olson, *The World on Paper. The Conceptual and Cognitive Implications of Reading and Writing*, Cambridge 1994; D. C. Rubin, *Memory in Oral Traditions: The Cognitive Psychology of Epic, Ballads, and Counting-Out Rhymes*, Oxford 1995.

- A lyrical piece is an utterance of a subject which perceives and objectifies its state; the language co-creates this image, while the semantic relations of words sometimes exhaust the entire content.
- The drama focuses attention on the subjects who manifest their will and try to influence the behavior of others, especially with their own behaviors, mainly linguistic.⁷⁹⁵
- In other types of writing, which we abbreviate as cognitive, subjectivity does not matter; what sometimes surfaces from the object of learning that the subject constructed exists in the same way as the default subjectivity of the one who constructed the utterances of the literary type.

In accordance with this pragmatic and interactive understanding of drama, we will observe the evolution of subjectivity as *an increase in the scope of will* of the human subjects who – with the increasing levels of subjectivity – will be able to do more but should want something else. All of this matter used through the acts of will of dramatic figures fills the lower levels of sacrality. However, the increase in the scope of will of the human subjects happens at the expense of God's will, and proceeds according to the above scheme of *katabasis–anabasis*, which describes the ways of manifestation of the holy sacred at subsequent levels of transcendentalization.

Therefore, the holy sacred predominates in drama genres (see below 1–3), in which there already appear dispersed elements of the sacred 2–8 (on Becker's scale) and even – as exemplifications of evil – the behaviors placed by Becker's scheme on the next four tiers of secularization. The religious system in question included all tiers of sacrality because it was cultural. This does not change the fact that there is a point in time when the lower tiers of sacrality – especially secularization – cease to depend in their definition on the religious system. For our concept of drama, this means that over time the whole area outside of the holy sacred becomes the main domain of dramatic creativity, which also no longer requires a source religious context for its definition.

Nevertheless, we have achieved a “uniform theory of drama” that does not bend the medieval typology to the contemporary as the only true one⁷⁹⁶ – as in

795 This is a summary of the idea elaborated more broadly in my own paper from 1983. Now I see its similarity to the idea of J. Kleiner in his “Rola podmiotu mówiącego w epice, w liryce i w poezji dramatycznej,” *Studia z zakresu teorii literatury*, Lublin 1961; for a summary also see T. Michałowska 1998: 315.

796 A. E. Knight (1983) refers the unfortunate effects of these attempts in the first chapter of his book.

various synthetic approaches – but reveals factors invisible today; however, these factors were indispensable in the past, like the first stage of a rocket that carries a satellite into space. The essential context for understanding medieval theater – even seemingly secular forms – is religious life. The scheme proposed below combines the forms of piety that we distinguished at the beginning as the types of man's relationship to God (ch. 5) with the scope of His will, which man learns.

- 1) Biblical piety of the pre-scholastic period communes with the sacred, which has a continuous nature: universal, dispersed, pre-logical. The typical genre for this kind of piety was *the mystery play*, in which God in action is perceived by people as a human race, not individuals; there, people learn God's will in its fullness (Chapter 22).
- 2) Folk piety communes with the occasional sacred; most often in the cult of saints. The genre of the *miracle play* shows how the sacred directly manifests itself in the interest of the just, often wrongly accused (Chapter 23). "God manifests his will in the miracle or in the work of a saint" (A. E. Knight 1983: 38). With time, the presence and action of God increases in the sacraments like the Eucharist and baptism. The relations with God assume a contractual character according to the principle of *sacrum commercium* (merit, quid pro quo).
- 3) Sacramental piety communes with the sacred that is literal, spiritual, and discontinuous; crystallized in the sacraments. We see in *morality plays* how people learn God's will not in direct revelation or miraculous intervention, but instead through a dialog with sacramental values. God – if he appears at all as at the beginning of *Elckerlyc* (in which he uses the mediation of Death anyway) – is beyond an ontological boundary. God's will does not affect the course of action (Chapters 24 and 25).
- 4) There are genres in which divine will – any kind of sacred – is ignored, neglected, or combated by the wicked (the ungodly, strangers), while it should be (and sometimes is) defended by the good (the pious, "ours"). This is the main theme and message of *farces*, whose action is happening in the sphere of secular behaviors covered by the lower tiers of the sacred and by secularization in Becker's scheme (Chapter 26).

Moreover, the piety forms addressed in drama types 1–3 is mostly celebrated through the liturgy and liturgical drama.

2. THE LITURGICAL DRAMA is a vast and fluid repertoire of scenes – artificially isolated in the nineteenth century from the thicket of medieval religious literature – stemming from certain places of the liturgy that required or suited

visual presentation.⁷⁹⁷ At least from the ninth century, the younger clergy sang and played liturgical drama in monastic, then parish churches in the costumes “from the sacristy” (Young 1933, Vol. 2: 401). The role of these scenes in the history of the theater was emphasized and, at the same time, obscured – first by the fact that they were distinguished as a separate object of research, then by the theory of the liturgical origin of the rest of religious theater, and finally of the secular theater. Chambers (1903) contributed the most to creating this theory, while Young developed his work (1933, vol. 1: 178–197) and shifted the emphasis from the liturgical structures onto a certain dialogic section of the scenes. Young’s idea of the development of a certain trope – sung once a year after Easter or before the morning mass – into the drama *Visitatio Sepulchri* (The Visitation of the Tomb) made the four lines of dialog that begin with the Angel’s question to women who visited the tomb of Jesus, “Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, o Christocolae?,” find their way into the history of drama for a long time, in which they serve as customary explanations or provoke criticism. Tadeusz Kowzan (1969: 392) aptly used these lines as an argument for his general theory of the performing arts:

since many want to see the germ of the medieval European theater in a few fractions of the Christmas or Easter liturgy from the ninth and tenth centuries, in a few sentences uttered by a priest and a few passages from one place to another – [why not treat the church service] as a product of the performing art?⁷⁹⁸

797 See Scherb 1995/1996; Gibson 1991; Lewański 1991a, 1966; Paterno 1989; Z. Modzelewski, “Estetyka średniowiecznego dramatu liturgicznego,” *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 1.12/1964, pp. 5–69; Marshall 1951; H. Brinkmann, “Zum Ursprung des liturgischen Spieles,” *Xenia Bonnensia*, Bonn 1929, pp. 106–143; J. Schwietering, “Über den liturgischen Ursprung des mittelalterlichen geistlichen Spiels,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 62/1925, pp. 1–20; Kretzmann 1916. The editions of texts by Chambers, Young; W. Lipphardt, *Lateinische Osterfeiern und Osterspiele*, Berlin 1975–1990, Vol. 1–9; the edition of selected Polish liturgical dramas was prepared by J. Lewański in *Liturgiczne łacińskie dramatyżacje Wielkiego Tygodnia XI–XVI wieku*, Lublin 1999.

798 Let us remember that already Hugh of Saint Victor counted them among the spectacles in his *Didascalion* (b. II, ch. 28): “They sang glory to gods in temples during festivities.” The scholars who support the liturgy as source of liturgical drama, and against the trope of *Quem quaeritis*, are V. de Bartholomaeis, *Le Origini della poesia drammatica italiana*, Bologna 1924, pp. 90–98; P. Toshi, *Le Origini del teatro italiano*, Turyn 1955, pp. 655–663; M. S. De Vito, *Lorigine del dramma liturgico*, Mediolan 1938, pp. 172–174; qtd. after Sticca 1980, pp. 288, 307, ft. 72. The full problem is also considered by T. Stemmler, *Liturgische Feiern und geistliche Spiele. Studien zu Erscheinungsformen des Dramatischen*, Tübingen 1970.

Indeed, Young's theory⁷⁹⁹ diverted attention from the great theatrical potential that linked the liturgy and liturgical drama and formed soil for the theater that was no less important than all the dialog texts, not only the conversation of one single group from *Visitatio sepulchri*, which attracted too much interest.

The "theatrical" values of the liturgical drama boil down to the broadly developed spectacularity: the gestures, singing, and processional movement of characters in specific places and space; the paraments, that is robes⁸⁰⁰ and liturgical objects; the light effects like lightnings; the sound effects like thunders; the fragrances like incense; infrequent non-liturgical props like the tombstone, the shroud, short tunics, soldier's costumes, the star, the flaming sword, the spear, the crib, and even a living donkey.⁸⁰¹ All these elements are largely independent of the text.

Even dialogicity present in the entire mass and daily office or liturgy of the hours – best known from the responsories of two voices or choirs (for instance, in the Hallelujah psalm) – can stem from the separate voicing of antiphons and hymns, and even from music itself. In music, the most important will not be the accompanying text but the structure of musical works, mainly the spiritual dimension of music that Hildegard of Bingen captured: "Sic et verbum corpus designat, symphonia vero spiritum manifestat" (Scivias III 13.12, p. 631). For Hildegard of Bingen, music is a sign of divinity while the word is the humanity of the Son. The presence of voice and song gains an additional dimension thanks to the text. The text fills the deficit of meaning, which makes music manifest the spirit, but precludes music to name this spirit by its name. The same applies to the functioning of symbols with unclear motivation (ch. 8). If one explains the liturgical context, then the musical work or material symbol that is part of the liturgical drama can effectively co-perform its main role: the rooting of a simple action depicting the Gospel events in the "biblical Judeo-Christian metaphor" (Marshall 1951: 40).

In terms of form, dialogicity is similar to the iconicity of living pictures from later street theater, whose relationship with theater plays is like that of photography and film. Just as in the case of a difference between a series of states and a process, in order to make a living picture move and become theater one must

799 According to O. B. Hardison (1965: VIII), the position of E. K. Chambers and K. Young relies on a methodical imposition of a boundary between religious ritual and drama. Hardison proves with his whole book that there was no such delimitation.

800 About the change of costumes in liturgical drama, see D. H. Ogden, "Costume Change in Liturgical Drama," *EDAM*, Spring 21/1999.

801 For a more precise elaboration of the matter, see M. H. Marshall (1951: 36–39).

shift it from the iconographic and discreet time⁸⁰² to the dramatic and continuous one. The former generated a series of meaningful states, while the latter must fill with meaning the space between the turning points. This filling with meaning is the main task of the playwright and director. They implement it on various levels, especially by enriching the characterization of protagonists (Kolve 1966: 199).

The variety of liturgies and liturgical dramas along with the fluidity of their boundaries means that one should not expect to find any regularities such as stronger dependence of dramatic texts on the liturgy or the independence of theater forms owing to stage traditions. One should only remember the specificity of the textual message in relation to the sphere of the “bodily truth:” behaviors, interactions, and exchanges.

3. NOT LITURGY, BUT FORMS OF DEVOTION. Active observation as a stage in acquiring models undermines the very concept of origins that assumes an organic source. Hence, we should not speak about the organic emergence of an artistic form. Hardison proved that the European drama did not stem from the *Quem quaeritis* trope into the great text corpus on the same principle as from an acorn may grow an oaken forest after several hundred years. We could not discern this, even if it was the only form of dialogic communication of a ceremony or expression in all culture; even if it preceded other dramatic forms in time. After all, this was not the only dialog present in the liturgies of various monasteries. The fact was noticed by Grace Frank (1954: 43) who generally defended the sources of medieval drama in the liturgy: its “germs remain entirely visible from the beginning to the end, and their development can easily be traced.” This approach offers a modification of the organic theory: it allows polygenesis (more acorns) and allows a metaphorical understanding of these embryos.

The theory of the liturgical genesis of the secular drama – understood either as the evolutionary emergence from the *Quem quaeritis* trope or a gradual secularization of the liturgical drama – currently has few supporters, even though the rival theory of separate evolution of liturgical and secular drama (Hardison 1965) has no universal acceptance.⁸⁰³ Let us stress that by “separate” Hardison

802 About the supposed “iconographicity” of the gesture in liturgical drama, see M. H. Marshall 1951: 38; Marshall means there the formal stylization of gestures. See our chapter 18.5 about “historical improvisation” and chapter 24.3.

803 G. Klawitter speaks about O. B. Hardison’s book as controversial and offers examples of studies that undermined many of its conclusions about the origins of *Quem quaeritis* (Klawitter 1991). For instance, D. A. Bjork shows that *Quem quaeritis* was not a trope but a shortened part of a much larger ceremony, the so-called *collecta* procession

does not mean “independent of the liturgy,” but only “independent of the liturgical drama.” “The modern drama of the West is a product of Christian, not pagan culture” (Hardison 1965: x). The vernacular drama began “branching off” from the liturgical tradition⁸⁰⁴ “before the liturgical drama developed its typical complex forms” (Hardison 1965: 257). Without the mediation of the liturgical drama, the relationship with the liturgy may remain just as essential: “The Gregorian responsory⁸⁰⁵ is more than the source of a few verses in vernacular art (*Mystère d'Adam*). This is the outline of all this art” (Hardison 1965: 260). With his book, Hardison opposed nineteenth-century anti-clerical anthropology, crowned by James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. Frazer treated religion as a collection of “barbarous superstitions,” and described Jesus as a moralist teacher, who – thanks to a happy coincidence – gained with his execution the crown of not only a martyr but also God (qtd. after Hardison 1965: 14). Chambers' work is the fruit of such approach: he explores religious drama by excluding religion from view; Chambers' readers must conclude that “drama was born against Christianity, not thanks to it” (Hardison 1965: 16). Chambers treats all dramatic elements in religious dramas as a rebellion against religion, not as an attempt to express it (Hardison 1965: 18), nor – in literary terms – as a way to drama.

(1980: 3); which suited many contexts (1982: 11); also cf. S. Sticca 1980: 292. It means that the tradition may have been older than the dialog, which was one of O. B. Hardison's arguments: that the presentation ceremonies were known before the oldest manuscript of *Quem quaeritis* (VIII). The scholar who recently considered the relationship of drama and liturgy was J. M. Gibson (1991). Norton overviews the whole discussion by analyzing the hundred-year-long attempts to order the text delivery of the *Visitatio Sepulchri*.

- 804 Elsewhere, O. B. Hardison weakens this view by arguing that, in mid twelfth century, there happened a bifurcation of the LITURGICAL DRAMA: “the liturgical drama branched off in two directions. The first direction led to the complex Latin plays of the thirteenth century such as those from Fleury, Rouen, Klosterneuburg, and Benediktbeuern.... The second tradition led to the *Mystère d'Adam* and the *Resurreccion*” (1965: 281). *Mystère d'Adam* (*Ordo representations Ade*, created before 1174, MS from the thirteenth century) in critical edition by P. Studer, Manchester 1949; English translation by E. N. Stone, “Adam, a Religious Play of the Twelfth Century,” *Washington University Publications in Language and Literature* 4/1928, pp. 159–193; elaboration by Frank 1954: 76–84. *La Seinte Resurreccion* (written ca. 1175, the oldest MS ca. 1275), critically edited by T. A. Jenkins et al., Oxford 1943; Frank: 86–92.
- 805 The first of the seven responsories from *Liber responsalis* for the Sexagesima Sunday, PL 78, col. 748–749, 52 lines.

This controversy lost its importance for several reasons. On the one hand, due to a broader view of the liturgy, while on the other, of drama. Should we go beyond the schemata of strictly ritualized mass and include, say, the daily office, or *officium divinum*⁸⁰⁶ – especially the occasional rituals, festivals, and processions – then the boundaries blur between them and the so-called liturgical drama and the former more easily merge with the spectacles and ceremonies coming from the court culture and occasional city festivities. The reason why we should critically scrutinize this problem again – a matter that we will not undertake in this book – is conveyed in the question: is interaction and exchange not the sufficient common ground that naturally and necessarily connects the liturgy with drama and creates the appearance of a genesis?

Let us not even try to settle this matter, but only consider the reverse question: could the mysteries originate without such a form of liturgical drama as a rhythmic and rhymed *officium*?

Could we find among the authors of mystery plays one who – even if unaware of the liturgical dramas – would be free from the theatrical suggestiveness of the liturgy?

If not, then such problem of genesis becomes obsolete. According to Grace Frank (1954: 215), the model of dramatic representation in the liturgical drama was available to every medieval author. Religious dramas were created as a certain spectrum and reflected the spectrum of sacrality and forms of devotion, sometimes becoming one of them, and sometimes ceasing to be that. Everything depends on the definition and the scope of liturgy and theatricality. We should not forget here the thorough – if not hermeneutic – difference of medieval theater, which stems from its extreme proximity to other contemporary ways of learning literature and its presentation: almost always oral (Frank 1954: 215), personal, and therefore fundamentally actor-like declamation. This makes us look less rigorously at the “negligence” of theatricality consisting in filling dialogues with authorial commentaries and descriptions,⁸⁰⁷ or with insufficient separation of

806 R. Edwards (1977: 156) writes about the development of the structure of the *officium* in the direction of drama. Whereas S. Sticca (1980: 299) describes the evolution from the liturgical drama to the vernacular one and points the Italian *planctus* in the Latin *Passion* from Monte Cassino as its first manifestation (cf. Edwards 1977). J. Lewański differentiates between the *officium* with dramatic dialogs (still ritual) and proper liturgical drama that lacks fiction (1996).

807 J. Lewański (1968) critically analyzes authorial commentaries and descriptions in the elegiac comedies of the twelfth century, which leads him to appreciate Geta's text as a very good drama. Let us remember that Aristotle's *Poetics* ascertains that tragedy retains its influence even without staging and actors (1450b, 15–20). The theatrical

dialogue from stage direction; cf. the so-called sung stage directions in liturgical drama. Giaccherini even speaks of the late medieval birth of the modern theater from omnipresent theatricality (1997: 97). Before that, theatricality was realized in other forms, which we perceive today as entanglement in other genres. That is why we may agree with Hardison (1965: 29) when he accuses Young of using twentieth-century ideas about drama to select and evaluate liturgical sources.

Moreover, the shape of the mass was not always strictly fixed, and the mass was often staged as a part or preferably the finale of dramatic plot.⁸⁰⁸ Regular sermons embedded in the drama are not infrequent. For example, in the miracle play in verse *La Nonne qui laissa son abbaie* (edited by Wilkins 1972: 17–19), a priest delivers the sermon in the chapel and from the pulpit; Greban's mystery play includes prayers, which are to be spoken together with the public: *Ave Maria* in several of the prologues and *Te Deum* at the end of *Passion* (Plesch 1994: 482, ft. 69). Gibson draws attention to the defense of the theatrical medium embedded in the mystery play: Jehan Michel includes in his *Mystère de la passion* a sermon about the Word that was made flesh. The offertory prayer of the mass explains that "the Body of Christ signified "the peace and unity" of the church, the sacral society which was Christ's mystical Body" (M. James 1983: 10).

The presence of a dramatic load during the mass requires no explanation.⁸⁰⁹ After all, who is it who says "this is my flesh?" And why did the medieval celebrant pray with the anamnesis *Unde et memores* with arms wide open?⁸¹⁰ We may multiply such rhetorical questions. However, what is equally important to the moments of impersonation and dialogicity is the multitude of the courses of action conducted by several centers: priests in the presbytery and in the

aspects in the narrative works of Chaucer are studied by J. M. Ganim, *Chaucerian theatricality*, Princeton, New York 1990.

808 L. R. Muir, "The Mass on the Medieval Stage," ed. Davidson, Stroupe 1991.

809 Y. Hen assumes the presence of the dramatic load in the pre-Carolingian period and even speaks about a catharsis (1995: 80); here, cf. Hardison (1965: 32–40) equalling the experiences of the audience of a medieval Passion play, and that of *Oedipus Rex*. K. Young analyzes the Mass along with the officium in chapter 3, "The dramatic element in the liturgy," Vol. 1, pp. 79–111; O. B. Hardison 1965: 35–79, chapter "The Mass as Sacred Drama." The 1976 congress in Viterbo was devoted to the matter of the dramatic element in medieval liturgy: *Dimensioni drammatiche della Liturgia Medioevale*, Rzym 1977.

810 R. Niparko, "Anamnesis" III, EK 1, col. 512, emphasizes the "fragment of the Eucharistic prayer that reflects on the death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ said after the transubstantiation."

choir – sometimes halved – along with musicians and believers attending the mass. The precise coordination of these actions means a great effort of directing.

Young (1933, Vol. 1: 492) explained the late development of the passion play with the dramatic power of the mass. As Edwards (1977: 47) subtly notes, this view also explains why the passion play should never come to emerge at all, as the mass never lost its dramatic element. We should apply the same to the liturgical drama, whose dramatic element – even more pronounced than in the liturgy itself – should all the more satisfy the “need for theatricality” and delay the emergence of independent forms of drama. Meanwhile, its own qualities made it appealing for many experienced authors with great achievements in the sixteenth century. Gil Vicente in 1519 did not hesitate to use the Office of the Dead as a structure for the last, celestial part of his eschatological trilogy *Auto da Barca da Gloria* (The Play about the Barge to Glory [Heaven]), hence separating it with a certain hieraticism and static character from the previous two,⁸¹¹ but at the same time enabling Vicente to express the uniqueness of the Heaven (Hess 1977a: 680).

Catherine Dunn (1995) indicates the instances of impersonation in the dialogic parts of the daily officium (responsories and lectures) – most developed in lauds (*matutinum*) – by focusing mainly on the Christmas period. She assigns a special role to the dialogized readings of the lives of saints as a model for hagiographic miracle plays (Dunn 1995: 365–370), two-voice antiphons (pp. 370–372), and various forms of dialogicity in responsories (pp. 372–376).

We move on a step further when observing examples of “paraliturgical ceremonies,” such as the English Prophets of Palm Sunday, a devotional ritual of welcoming Christ shaped at the periphery of the church procession of that day, and often performed by children. On the one hand, it visibly borrowed and alluded to the liturgy – the singing of the same hymn *Gloria laus* – while on the other hand, it offers its dramatic structure to the passion plays, thus allowing “to achieve certain artistic effects ... [while] liturgical ceremonies themselves could be reaffirmed while their historical roots were explored.”⁸¹²

For Hardison (1965: 46), the participation of the people in the palm procession is an example of a theater game based not on impersonation (as for Young

811 *Auto da Barca do Inferno* (The Play about the Barge to Hell, 1517) and *Auto da Barca do Purgatório* (The Play about the Barge to Purgatory, 1518).

812 V. I. Scherb 1995/1996: 482, 488; Scherb also references the study of M. C. Erler, “Palm Sunday Prophets and Processions and Eucharistic Controversy,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 48/1995, as well as by J. Dutka, *Music in English Mystery Plays*, Kalamazoo 1980.

1933) but identification: the carriers of palm branches do not impersonate the Jerusalem crowd of that time, do not pretend to be those people, do not create the impression that they are those, but they identify with them.⁸¹³ Moreover, the most important interpretations of liturgics from many centuries describe “[t]he Mass [a]s a rememorative drama depicting the life, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ” (Hardison 1965: 44).

The occasional officium had a looser construction and greater momentum; one of the abovementioned, by De Mézières, vividly reminds us of the expressionist plein-air mass theater. The aforementioned association of hagiography with the officium was traced by Ruth Steiner who states the exact use of the life of Saint Benedict in the officium on the day of his feast: not only the readings, but each of the twelve responsories of lauds has its equivalent in a chapter of his vita (1986: 319).

We should not forget about long dramatized ceremonies like the aforementioned repentance described by Durand,⁸¹⁴ but also of those non-liturgical like the monastic ceremonies explored in connection with the drama by Klawitter (1991).

Interestingly, the intensity of these performances did not automatically result in the flourishing of drama. As Clopper argues, processions and liturgical dramas prevailed in towns with a clear domination of the Church and religious confraternities; for instance, the popular procession on Saint Anne in Lincoln was accompanied by a marginal tradition of vernacular drama (*Corpus Christi* and *Pater Noster*; 1989: 128). The established processions lasted, even if later people attached plays to them; the plays remained separate and were played at the end, in the evening or on the next day; the processional plays were often postponed until the second day (Clopper 1989: 126). Alan Knight (1983: 117–140) devoted much attention to the processional context of the drama. Following earlier authors⁸¹⁵ who found a theatrical context of the mystery play cycles in the

813 J. Lewański (1991a: 17) interprets the inscriptions of the palm procession in a similar way by arguing for “the theatrical identification of the celebrant with Jesus” and notes a “stronger theatricalization of the ritual” of the mass in the fifteenth century (p. 18).

814 The scholar who considers earlier forms of the ritual of reconciliation (eight century) is A. Nocent, “L’expression dramatique dans la liturgie de la Reconciliation,” *Dimensioni drammatiche della liturgia medioevale*, 1977, p. 139ff; qtd. after Sticca 1980: 280.

815 For more, see works related to the matters of theater in different scope: M. L. Spencer, *Corpus Christi Pageants in England*, New York 1911; M. Pierson, “The Relation of the Corpus Christi Procession to the Corpus Play in England,” *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters* 18/1915; O. Sengpiel, *Die Bedeutung der Prozessionen für das geistliche Spiel des Mittelalters in Deutschland*, Marburg 1932;

Corpus Christi processions, Knight regards the latter as one of the most common means of expression of social rituals and celebrations; “a kind of an overarching dramatic genre that we must see as such in order to place the medieval theater in its proper social perspective” (1983: 118).

Bart Ramakers (1996) confirms Knight’s view in the extensive and fruitful study of the Flemish processional culture of Oudenaarde.⁸¹⁶ In chapter 6 of his book, Ramakers attempts to situate anew the known texts of drama in the context of the customs of the procession theater and tableaux vivants, which sheds a different light on the genres of drama, until now defined on purely literary foundations.

The border between the various forms of monologue, dialogue, and drama is similarly fluid. It would take us a long time to enumerate the multitude of narrative forms of dialogue and dramatic nature that one rightly may count among the possible precursors of drama. Here, we should at least mention fabliaux and the dramatic monologue, especially the dialogized one.⁸¹⁷ Content and formal similarities between the English short story from the mid thirteenth century, *Dame*

N. C. Brooks, “Processional Drama and Dramatic Procession in Germany in the Late Middle Ages,” *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 32/1933; F. G. Very, *The Spanish Corpus Christi Procession: A Literary and Folkloric Study*, Valencia 1962; V. A. Kolve 1966; N. Z. Davis, “The Sacred and the Social Body in Sixteenth Century Lyon,” *Past and Present* 96/1981, pp. 40–70; E. Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, Princeton 1981. H. Zaremska, “Procesje Bożego Ciała w Krakowie w XIV–XVI wieku,” ed. Geremek 1978: 25–40, presents the role of the Cracow confraternities in the Corpus Christi processions that lacked the elements of drama; general review for the Polish Commonwealth: A. Dąbrówka, “Anything But a Game: Corpus Christi in Poland”, in: “*Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*” 7, 2002 p. 245–270. The Dutch processions in the late Middle Ages are studied C. M. A. Caspers, *De eucharistische vroomheid en het feest van sacramentsdag in de Nederlanden tijdens de late Middeleeuwen*, Leuven 1992. M. James (1983: 6) refers to the cognitivist take on the matter by M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols. Explorations in Cosmology*, 1970, pp. 65, 70, who argues that the human experience of the body upholds a certain perception of perceiving the society which – vice versa – limits the ways to describe the body. P. Travis, “The Social Body of the Dramatic Christ in Medieval England, *Early Drama to 1600*, ed. A. Tricomi, *Acta* 13/1986, 13, pp. 18–36; M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*, Cambridge 1991. See below for my elaboration of an article by C. Dunn.

816 G. Kipling (1998) shows the relations between theater, liturgy, and ritual in the context of the town visits of rulers. The spectacularity of public feasts is being analyzed by the articles from the collection *Festive Drama*, ed. M. Twycross, Cambridge 1996.

817 Cf. E. Faral, *Les jongleurs en France au Moyen Age*, Paris 1911; especially the role of the monologues, later foregrounded by A. Knight, as well as K. Schoell, *Das komische Theater des französischen Mittelalters*, 1975; B. Rey-Flaud, *La farce ou la machine*

Sirith,⁸¹⁸ and the earliest comic drama in English, *Interludium de clerico et puella* (the preserved fragment comes from before 1325), urge Enrico Giaccherini to suppose that *Interlude* is only an alteration of *Dame Sirith* (1997: 98).

Scholars even mentioned exempla – due to their oral nature – among the prose genres that could have influenced the formation of farce.⁸¹⁹ We may suppose that even if the exempla were only read in manuscripts – which we should not forget – some of their variations could still exert the discussed influence through their suggestive dialogicity, as many of them simply convey a short scene. In his monograph *L'Exemplum*, J. T. Welter distinguishes about seventy texts described as exemplum prosopopée; per about 660 references in thirteen not entirely disjunctive categories (1927: 527–528). Especially the prosopopoeic exempla combine the factors that usually appear in individual genres: dialogicity, orality, literariness, an ecclesiastical (preaching) framework. Of course, this is not about any theatrical evolution of the exemplum, but about creating a model for representing and experiencing reality.

We should mention here Hrotsvitha's dramaturgic experiments in the tenth century. Her *Abraham* is mostly a series of disputations and reporting dialogs, but she does not forget about the theatrical convention. For example, when the hermit Abraham goes to the city to search for his fugitive pupil Maria, he remembers to dress up as a knight and even hide the tonsure under the helmet because, as his friend admits, “the most important thing is that no one will recognize you” (“Hoc maxime opus est, ne agnoscaris;” Langosch 1957: 66; cf. 40–89).

The idea of religious theater as a model, a non-genetic phase in the development of the secular theater, appeared quite a long time ago in the Netherlands.⁸²⁰

a rire: théorie d'un genre dramatique – 1450 a 1550, Genève 1982. Among others, Hüskén 1987: 13–52, is the one to overview the different approaches to this matter.

818 M. W. Walsh, “Performing *Dame Sirith*: Farce and Fabliaux at the End of the Thirteenth Century,” *England in the 13th century. Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod, Woodbridge 1985, pp. 149–165.

819 Hüskén 1987: 18; qtd. after Rey-Flaud, op. cit., p. 116, ft. 841.

820 Jonckbloet 1855: 510; afterward J. van Mierlo, *Geschiedenis van de oud- en middelnederlandsche letterkunde*, Antwerpen 1928, p. 232; idem, *De letterkunde van de middeleeuwen*, 1939, ²1949, p. 37; idem, “Het middelnederlands toneel,” *Jaarboek De Fonteyne* 8/1950, pp. 5–20; a similar position was taken by G. Frank, 1954: 215; J. Frappier, *Le théâtre profane en France au Moyen Age. Introduction – XIII^e et XIV^e siècles*, Paris 1960, pp. 26, 34; K. Schoell; a review of these positions is done by Hüskén 1987: 21–22, 47, ft. 42. J. van Mierlo added to the “analogous forming” the influence of the Latin comedies and miracle plays as an intermediary link; about the possibility that many factors influenced the emergence of drama wrote G. Knuvelde, *Handboek tot de geschiedenis der Nederlandse letterkunde*, 's-Hertogenbosch ⁷1978, Vol. 1, p. 179.

We could define this in cognitivist terms as a transition from learning to application; this phase of the transfer of abilities is not limited to a simple imitative repetition, since freshly acquired skills accumulate with the earlier ones.

We have the same typological problems with the dimension of staging: where do the dramatic recitations end and one-man performances begin? If many performers do not play but only recite without interacting with each other – is this a theater? Or, if one speaker performs (genuinely plays) dialog parts?

Geörgi Szönyi (1991) described the dramatized sermons in the Hungarian tradition. The famous preacher Pelbárt Temesvári published the script *Prophetæ* with extensive stage directions in the collection *Stellarium* (Hagenau 1498: 134), in which he instructs the “performer” or preacher when and what should he point to (the cross or the image of Christ), what to say at that time, and what effect to achieve.⁸²¹ In another Hungarian collection, *Sermones Dominicales* from mid-fifteenth century, one of the Easter sermons is “a particularly long scenario of a passion play consisting of sixteen scenes” (Szönyi 1991: 134). The ceremonial side of sermons in Polish Bernardines was described by Kantak (1933, Vol. 1: 136).

The Polish poem ‘Master Polycarpus’s Conversation with Death’ (fifteenth century) includes a description of the interlocutor’s behavior at the beginning of the dialog, which was “something unprecedented in the poetics of medieval dialog” (Lewański 1978: 254).

As the uniform liturgy settles (missal, Durandus), the field of theatrical freedom grows wider. The growth of theatrical forms as part of the liturgy was perceived as violating the gravity of the service and prompted the Church to delimit the borders of the liturgical canon. The liturgical framework must have drawn part of its authority from universality and immutability. Only beyond this framework one may accomplish what is already impossible to achieve in the field of the variety of local churches, narrowed in the result of the normalization of the liturgy.⁸²²

821 “Ante omnia potes ostendere crucis lignum quasi cruentatum, cum orationem dicis ad crucem loquendo sic: »O, crux, ave, spes unica« et cet., ut per talem ostensionem commoveantur corda.” For more about the relations between preaching, literature, and theater, see G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, New York 1961. An example of the later Polish dramatized passion sermons is offered by A. Serjewicz, *Dyalog albo Komedya Męki Iezusowej, w Siedmiu Scenach lub Kazaniach reprezentowana y zgromadzonemu słuchaczowi na Pasyach wtorkowych w Lublinie ogłoszona*, Lwów 1738.

822 We touch here upon the matter of the culture-forming or even civilizing role of liturgy, which obviously is part of the religious contribution to the cultural system.

However, people must have necessarily manifested the locality because, in the end, it had to be rooted in each person's surroundings and fulfil the cognitive structures (the snow, the blue, the spring, the river, the mountain, the forest, this green meadow, this crowing cock). Nevertheless, not only people must convert, but conversions must happen to things, significant buildings, places, travel routes, even travel destinations, and important dates.⁸²³ Happé (1998: 83) notices the intention to strongly link texts with the closest environment in the great English cycles: aimed at an immediate contact with the audience, but also reflecting the contribution of locals to the performance.

This may explain, on the one hand, the persistence of local non-canonical traditions, and on the other, the known problem with chronology: the dramatic forms appear much later than the liturgical forms. This is due to the fact that the direct transmission of the observed methods does not happen here, but they must have first settled in the conceptual and cognitive apparatus so that they could be translated, invented, and transferred in their own way in contact with a new task.

For this reason, in the mid-twelfth century, there emerges the historiosophical and political play *Ludus de Antichristo* (Kahl 1991), which was something very specific and – in fact – distant from the form of the liturgical drama⁸²⁴ in which it appears, because there was urgent need but not appropriate form yet.

The scholar who pointed to this fact was Y. Hen 1995 (see the chapters 5.4 and 18.2 of the current book) who noted two similar articles from the collection *Medieval Liturgy. A Book of Essays*, ed. L. Larsen-Miller, New York 1997. The first article, by G. Macy, "Commentaries on the mass during the early scholastic period" (pp. 25–59), analyzes seven influential commentaries to the Masses from eleventh to thirteenth centuries: Jean Belet, Isaac of Stella, Richardus Praemonstratensis, Robertus Paululus, Stephen of Autun, Sicard of Cremona, Pope Innocent III, and the anonymous author of *Speculum de mysteriis ecclesiae*. They all were to "instill in their readers a deeper awareness of the moral demands which the liturgy places on the Christian" (p. 41). About the creative (thus cultural) role of the Corpus Christi feast wrote M. James 1983. Also see Falvey 1991 about a confraternity consolation ritual.

823 M. Carruthers (1998: 56) writes about the "conversion" of the Roman Pantheon in the seventh century – turned into the church of Saint Mary and the Martyrs – and the change of the pagan urban procession (robigalia) into the Easter Great Liturgy along with the date of April 25, the penitent goal, and the route. See J. F. Baldovan, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, Rome 1987, p. 155.

824 However, we must mention here the Limburg *The Three Magi Officium* in which Herod becomes a true Antichrist due to the efforts of the author (cf. Nowé 1989: ft.

A clearer demarcation of the liturgy does not mean a reduction in the role of the religious factor. The mass remains an “archetypal symbol” which “affirmed and created the symbol of social body, which was the Body of Christ” (James 1983: 9). With this approach, we will give justice to the dramatics of church services without Hardison’s insistence on the definition of mass as a drama, even a ritual drama. We may notice elements of tragedy in the mass or we could generally perceive its entire outline as comedy because its course is governed by *tristitia* and *gaudium* (Hardison 1965: 83). However, the whole load of symbolism in the mass is so large that nothing could compose it into a drama – as we have defined it – that would distinguish it from the lyric and epic as actions of subjects that want something from each other. The lack of these separate subjects stands in the way. Let us assume after Hardison that the people participating in the mass identify themselves with the Jerusalem crowd, then with the shepherds, then with the witnesses of the Way of the Cross, maybe even with the soldiers (1965: 46). That the bishop, the celebrant, the host, the cross, the altar, and even the censer represent Christ in different moments of the mass (Hardison 1965: 47). These are sections of certain actions suggested by a constellation different at each time.

The problem of this theory is the continuous change of roles by all participants. Moreover, the repertoire of motifs is not self-explanatory but created by an external decision, while its understanding requires previous knowledge. In this sense, the repertoire is incidental, though designed for non-incidental people, places, and times, for the specific internal use of an institution: the celebrant and believers must meet many conditions, the mass cannot happen anywhere or anytime as, otherwise, the ritual would be invalid.

The “non-ritual” drama explains its structure from the inside and does not require any special knowledge to understand it, only the ability to trace dialogues and interactions. It has aesthetic consequences: the requirement of detailed argumentation, actualization, and excessive information. In this sense, the repertoire of motifs is necessary, so that the work is not only available to incidental people but also understandable for everyone. To “consuming” of the work – its ontological appearance – precisely consists in understanding and nothing more; intended for public use, it can take place almost anywhere and anytime.

Moreover, the ritual is single, complete, and unique. We cannot remove it from its specific order without breaking a rule, nor divide it into episodes, or “transmit twice.” The non-ritual performance can be postponed to another day

48, 802, 1071). See chapter 23.4 about another drama by Hildegard von Bingen, which we should call pseudo-liturgical.

and it may not be the same as the one that did not happen, but it does not matter if there will happen only one or a few; and although they differ from each other, it is not in an important way.

According to Hardison (1965: 79), the use of objects and liturgical interiors outside the rite is possible, provided that they are remembered for their consecration. However, this trait results in the essential asymmetry of both spheres: the cult objects may cross beyond their domain, but not the other way around; no theatrical prop, even if it completely resembled a liturgical object, may be interchangeably used in the service; it is not “kosher.”⁸²⁵

However, we do not have to look for drama in such forms, since we have it in a completely pure form; for example, the entry of “mother with a child” on a donkey to a church that is under search by soldiers (ch. 25.3). This was understandable as a theater without any theory. Considering the chronology, the beginning of theatricality in the early symbolic parts of the liturgy without story can be compared to the elements that later served to create the centon. In this spirit, Hardison concludes his chapter on the mass as a sacral drama, by arguing that celebrating Mass contains all the elements necessary in secular performances (1965: 79).

As we try to show in this chapter, even more elements of future theatre were to be found outside of the Mass and church liturgy – in the numerous forms of piety. Sandro Sticca (1973: 69) reminds us about including the influence of piety on drama by requiring to consider all forms of spirituality: the canonical (sacramentalism?), the ascetic, the mystical, the monastic, and the folk one. The perception of the genesis of medieval drama in the key moments of its spirituality was simultaneously initiated by Catherine Dunn (1973) and David L. Jeffrey (1973). Whereas Clifford Davidson linked the types of early drama with a system of behaviors: recreation, instruction, and assistance in devotion (1980: 14). The precise correlation between the early dramatic repertoire and the liturgical year was conducted by Paul E. Kretzmann (1916). Finally, Julian Lewański (1966: 19) described liturgical dramas as “a form of religious life alive in certain dioceses.”

Dunn points to many aspects of the presence of medieval popular devotion in religious drama, mainly in English mystery cycles in fourteenth to fifteenth

825 Helpful pairs of notions are heteronomy and autonomy, conglomerate and organism, a plant and an animal, an animal and human (Plessner). Earlier (in our chapter 13) also obedience and reliability. We must give justice to the modern drama and remember that it lost almost all interest in the human subject, which may now be foregrounded nearly tangentially. The necessity in the shape of repertoire gives way to serendipity, to which authors relinquish part of their competencies.

century. Although the cycles do not constitute the body of dramas that left the church to be secularized on the marketplaces during pageants, the nucleus of the cycles is always associated with classical Latin liturgical drama, while the liturgical (canonical) character of devotion reflected there was permanent and not subject to any secularization (against Young).⁸²⁶ Until the sixteenth century, they remained the “mirror” of the Church year during feasts and penitential measures (Dunn 1973: 61). The “biblical texture” (Dunn 1973: 57) reflects the educational and catechetical purposes that prompted the use of the Bible instead of written texts, dangerous in interpretation (the Lollards; p. 58). This ensured the intensification and indirect control of the devotion of participants of the preparations, which was also supported by the interpreting voice, always somehow present in texts either as a separate *Expositor* or one of the figures like shepherds or prophets (p. 62).

For the origin of the vernacular drama Sticca considers the laudas, in which the biblical narrative meets popular devotion of Franciscan inspiration (1980: 299). Another proof of the influence of long-term practice of devotional support is the relation between the passion plays and the ritual of consoling convicts (called *conforteria*). *Conforteria* was developed by the Italian confraternities of mercy that cared for the prisoners in the fourteenth to sixteenth century, which created their own rich tradition of religious drama, especially about passion and martyrdom (Falvey 1991: 33ff). The penitential and humanizing aim was to transform the brutal court event, the public execution into a ritualized and very real staging of the death of Christ or a martyr. Certain elements from a well-preserved Bologna textbook for comforters⁸²⁷ left marks in the *Passion of Revello*⁸²⁸ and in the *Feast and History of St. Catherine, Above All Others Devout and Beautiful*.⁸²⁹ The purpose of the ritual was partly also civilizing, in the sense of

826 Cf. Hardison 1965: 29, who argues that the cycles testify to a return to the liturgy of the Great Fast and considers their dramatic shape as the effect of a fusion of staging techniques from the vernacular tradition with the ritual forms of the Latin religious drama (Hardison 1965: 285).

827 Now Pierpont Morgan Library MS 188; elaborated in a detailed study by M. Fanti, “La Confraternia di S. Maria della Morte e la Conforteria dei condannati in Bologna nei secoli XIV e XV,” *Quaderni del Centro di Ricerca e di Studio sul Movimento dei Disciplinati* 20/1978, pp. 3–101; the main elements of their contents are the basis of Falvey’s reflections that I describe below.

828 The preserved text comes from about 1479–1490, *La Passione di Revello: Sacra rappresentazione Quattrocentesca di ignoto piemontese*, Published by A. Carnagliotti, Torino 1976; qtd. after Falvey 1991: 44, 55.

829 K. Falvey (1991: 45, 55); MS I.II.33, 12–45v, Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati, Siena.

enforcing certain behaviors. That is, the tasks of the comforter include separating the condemned's attention from the environment so that he does not notice any relatives in the crowd or hear the verdict, because hearing an unfounded accusation could incite his anger and shouting at the notary in public, like "You are lying like a dog," which would cause a great scandal (Falvey 1991: 42). Therefore, this form of a pious ritual was meant not only to alleviate people on their final path but also protect dignity of the law. Schild (1980: 162) summarizes the role of tortures in the court investigation procedure: "in essence, they were supposed to strengthen the judge's subjective belief, calm his conscience, and enable him to authenticate the trial. People were tortured in the interest of the court, not the truth."

Incidentally, there was a secular element of theatricality in the form of court behavior: not only the "exercise of office becomes performance" but also the whole life at the court, full of intrigues and condemning to constant vigilance so as not to fall out of the ruler's favor, which provided a kind of education in acting: "the ability to detect subtle shades of meaning and expressions of intention and sentiment in the most minute gestures" (Jaeger 1985: 13). When discussing the "liturgical environment" of early European drama, Salvatore Paterno does not omit the coronation rites of emperors (1989: 106ff). Aleksander Gieysztor places even the much later Polish royal coronation between the poles of "spectacle and liturgy," encouraging to perceive its whole as "a dramatized performance that expressed certain social experiences with a set of symbols" (1978: 21); "Although the mystical and esoteric content along with the charismatic and the religious weathered, all this royal theater has long acted on the sensitivity of actors and spectators, even in the Early Modern era" (p. 22).

Summarizing, we should emphasize that the official liturgy, the liturgical drama, rituals and devotional customs along with mystery plays jointly create a truly hermeneutic circle of mutual translations, borrowings, and reinforcements. We will achieve nothing by disrupting this circle. Therefore, we should wish that what was once distinguished as liturgical drama was restored to the history of theater, albeit not as its ancestor, but as part of the spectrum, providing patterns that nevertheless reflected and co-defined a wider range of devotional behaviors.

4. CONCERN FOR THE TRUTH. In the first subchapter (21.1) we presented a correlation between forms of piety and the four main types of drama. Mystery plays are rooted in biblical piety, miracle plays – in folk devotion, moralities – in sacramental piety, while the farce shows a world of impious people. The will of God fades along with the transcendentalization of the sacred while human subjects are gaining increasingly more space. Here (21.4), we will go through the four types again, this time observing the self-presentation visible in the lines

of people's relation to God, other people, and oneself. Following the gradual emergence of the self – from the entity disconnected from the homogeneous set, through subsequent levels of internal integration to the human individual – we will notice the will and effects of individual choices everywhere: an inevitable conflict that causes the cognition and relativization of the choices of others. The increase in subjectivity is an increase in responsibility: it reveals the agents that took responsibility for something. That is why we wrote about processualization as a “historicization;” that is, the rooting of individual facts in longer interactions, which explains the farce's interest in intrigue, lie, and cheating. This reveals the area of concern for the truth. We should call this second, personal, and ethical notion of historicity – as defined by Fischer and Ravizza – microhistorical, so that we do not mistake it with “macrohistoricity” of the history of salvation, which fills the encyclopedia of mystery plays (1998: 182; see ch. 2.7). This will allow us to define the truth as the accordance of microhistory with macrohistory.

- 1) In mystery plays, God is the truth. Here, there is no room for the problems of people who have no subjectivity. Nothing is required of believers as destiny and, perhaps, fate is settled in God's womb.
- 2) In miracle plays, God knows the truth, the human truth is insufficient (ch. 23.7), human subjects are dependent and rely on the sacred. Although they do exhibit independence in individual actions other than caring for salvation, but it leads them to failure, from which they may only be saved by the favorable will of God (*deus ex machina*, or rather *ex coelo*).
- 3) In morality plays, people were shown the way to the truth. In personal morality plays,⁸³⁰ independent subjects are responsible for their own and their neighbors' salvation, which they achieve through sacramental life, not a miracle. In institutional morality plays, there prevails the concern for the state of various organizations, structures, and aspects of social life, which realizes certain earthly values that fall within the scope of the sacred of the lower tiers. The subjects responsible for the group must repair the threatened institutions.
- 4) In farce, people do not know the truth and are cheated by the “truths” of other people, usually inspired by the Devil. Farce subjects are as free as they are irresponsible, deprived of all the moral brakes (*sine nauta navis*), utterly

830 A. Knight (1983: 68–75) distinguishes between personal and institutional morality plays; the protagonists of the former are people, of the latter – other beings such as the three estates, reason, or the Church.

neglecting the sphere of the sacred. The plot implies or exemplifies the dire consequence of such disposition.

When developing this outline, we will invoke the theory of Luc Ferry (1993) who combines in a joint structure a somewhat similar range of issues, especially explaining the development of subjectivity in aesthetic categories. The texts I quote in this part will only exemplify my ideas and not form any kind of history of medieval drama.⁸³¹

831 A condensed overview of the most important texts is offered by R. W. Vince, *Ancient and Medieval Theatre. A Historiographical Handbook*, Westport 1984.

22. The Mystery Play

1. THE MYSTERIES OF FAITH. Mystery plays did not have a strictly specified content, although they usually related to biblical motifs, as reflected by appropriate terms like *scriptural drama* in English. About one million lines of mystery plays were preserved to this day; we know about one hundred authors from 1400–1550. Formerly, scholars divided the repertoire into three cycles: the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the lives of saints; which Alan Knight continues by treating all as historical genres. In the Middle Ages, people sometimes applied the term mystery play to performances of political history and not the history of salvation, like the siege of Orléans or the destruction of Troy. However, the genology of the time was not a cohesive system, so the facts of unusual usage of certain terms should not exclude their usefulness; for instance, the term was prevalent in France while, in England, miracle play meant all religious plays.

For this reason, to retain some usefulness of the term in differentiating the repertoire of religious arts, we should better limit it to the most common understanding: the works that use biblical content, also apocryphal, but mainly elaborating the “mystery of faith.” What decides about the differentiation of the mystery play from other genres is the location of the represented world: it must be the redemptive reality of the true sacred history, revealed or – as with the Last Judgment – conceived and meticulously complemented in later treatises, visions, revelations, iconography, and literature.

The term “mystery play” – later than the phenomenon itself – derives from the Latin *ministerium*, which turned into the French *mystère* and Middle English *myster(ie)*, which means (1) a profession, (2) craft,⁸³² finally ministry or (3) service, especially (4) pastoral care. The first two of meanings and executive circumstances justified the commonly accepted view that – in the theater – the word signified plays performed by guilds or confraternities, and that its meaning developed without the influence of the Latin word *mysterium* (secret). The latter always functioned in the religious literature, which still used the word

832 E. K. Chambers (1903) dated the first theatrical usage of the word “mystery play” for 1402 in the French statute of the Parisian confrérie de la passion granted by Charles VI (Gibson 1994: 399); the French *mystère* appears in the sources from Rouen in 1374 (Hess 1977a: 657).

ministerium (service) mostly as “devotion” but also as “being a believer” (see below for the words of Jesus: “Qui mihi ministrat”).

The inclusion of meanings (3) and (4) would explain several other circumstances: the close relationship of early performances with the Church infrastructure and institution, which remains a fact even if we reject the theory of liturgical origin of mystery plays. Moreover, the performances allowed the faithful to exhaust their excess of devotional commitment: there finally was a way to legally participate in the prohibited “priesthood culture.” We cannot rule out the interaction of these two fields of meaning because they partly mutually confirm each other, shaping a more cohesive whole: the action (*ministerium*) and the orientation (function) of activities. The scholar who suggests the possible connection between “ministry” as “the repetition of the liturgical service transferred to *theatrum*” was Maria Adamczyk (1972: 144), who simultaneously insists that “mystery” be used for the performances that “depict the matter of the Holy Scriptures and the lives of the saints” and still recognizes “mystery” as “the basic and first essence of mystery plays” (p. 148).

2. THE KNOWLEDGE OF MYSTERIES. Gibson (1994) observed an earlier use of the term “mystery play” by De Mézières (see chapter 17.1), which made her re-associate it with the “God’s mysteries” instead of *ministerium*. The former phrase is sometimes used by ancient writers as a stereotypical definition of religious content (Fijałek 1997: 12); it usually refers to God’s plan for people, namely the part of the plan associated with the New Testament; it is not presented as a new plan, but as a newly revealed mystery (Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:7; the Epistle to Ephesians 1:6–9, 14–19 defines the plan as recapitulation); this mystery is the Word of God (Colossians 1:26) or simply Christ (Colossians 1:27; 2:2; 4:3). Each of these meanings suffices to define the subject matter of the plays, while the latter would present mystery plays as about Christ.

There is something more important than the possible meanings of “God’s mysteries” and their presence in the name of the genre, but equally important as the aesthetics of incarnation and biblical or liturgical allegoresis. The parable of Jesus as the sower (Matthew 13:1–23, Mark 4:1–23, Luke 8:4–18) itself clearly validates the use of parables; that is, it validates literary creation and fictional imaging as necessary supplementation of the direct learning of the “mysteries of the kingdom of God.” Direct learning is only available to the apostles who from then on became the stewards of these mysteries (1 Corinthians 4:1).

We should treat the creative efforts in which the working of the aesthetics of incarnation manifested – “the tendency to transform abstract and theological content into personal and concrete” – as only half of the task, a descent and preparation of a springboard. The second half appears from a leap into equally

vivid spiritual truth, into the mystery. The mystery of faith is the possibility of the spiritual encounter with God, offered by the spiritual content of the word, the sign. It is the spiritual content that animates the sign, otherwise dead. Lothar of Segni (Pope Innocent III) put it in a concise manner: “Dicitur ergo mysterium fidei quoniam aliud ibi cernitur, et aliud creditur” (*De sacro altaris mysterio*, col. 880A).

We will say, then, that the mystery of faith is when we recognize one thing and believe in something else. We recognize the type of bread and wine but believe in the truth of the body and blood of the Lord. What we have called here the mystery of faith, others call spirit and life. Because the spirit is a mystery: “for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” (II Corinthians 3:6). Faith is life, “as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17). This is why the Lord said: “the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life” (Jn 6:63).⁸³³

This was the broader allegorical and metaphorical background for the theory of the sacramental sign. Lothar of Segni remarks that we must distinguish three components in the sacrament: things, actions, and words; each of the components displays own specificity, similarity, and interpretation.⁸³⁴ William Durand clarifies this open approach a hundred years later in the fourth part of his classic sacramental compendium to liturgics: *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*.⁸³⁵ He distinctly assigns the three aspects of the sign to the task of recapitulation:

- a) the sign as a visible form or action;
- b) the function of this visible form that points to Christ and His Passion;

833 “Justus ex fide vivit” (Rom. 1). “Hinc ergo Dominus ait: Verba quae locutus sum vobis, spiritus et vita sunt” (Joan. VI). *De sacro altaris mysterio*, IV, Ch. 36, PL 217, col. 880A.

834 Caput XL. *Quod sacramentum consistit in tribus, in rebus, factis et verbis*: “Sacramentum vero consistit in tribus, rebus, factis et verbis, secundum proprietatem, similitudinem et interpretationem” (PL 217, col. 882AB).

835 E. C. Dunn (1995) refers to a Venetian print from 1572 and also to the *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* by John Beletus (used by Durand), PL 202, CCCM 41 A, ed. by H. Douteil. The work of Durand is considered to be the “liturgical synthesis of the Middle Ages *par excellence*” C. Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, Washington 1986, p. 15; qtd. after E. C. Dunn 1995: 375; likewise, one of the editors of the *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Thibodeau, wrote (1992: 152): “Durand a réussi à rassembler toute la tradition allégorique médiévale: on a ainsi la l’expression médiévale de là liturgie plus complète et la plus achevée, une oeuvre inégalée par les contemporains de Durand et ses successeurs”. The work appeared forty-four times until 1500 and 111 times until 1899 (Albaric 1992: 183).

c) the reference to the body of the Church, whose head is Christ.⁸³⁶

The theory applies to the characters used in the liturgy. However, given the range and spectacular character of the liturgical ceremonies of the time, we cannot ignore the influence of this theory that has generated and bred such a significant practice. Moreover, the practice was not completely devoid of tradition, both in the creation of new texts to express religious truths (Lactantius,⁸³⁷ Prudentius) and the defense of literary creativity as a source of other kinds of truths (esp. Bernardus Silvestris, d. 1167?).⁸³⁸ The scheme of four levels of meaning of the revealed word by John Cassian⁸³⁹ – one literal and three spiritual: allegorical, tropological, and anagogical – forms the basic tool of medieval allegoresis, which Dante Alighieri translated into poetry (Sarnowska-Temierusz 1985: 269) with disregard to the skepticism of his theological master Thomas Aquinas. The latter

836 IV 42, c. 25ff, fol. 117r. This is the way how R. Suntrup refers it in his *Die Bedeutung der liturgischen Gebärden und Bewegungen in lateinischen und deutschen Auslegungen des 9. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, München 1978, pp. 42ff; qtd. after Pochat 1986: 143.

837 Lactantius' poem *De ave phoenice* tells the story of the Resurrection with the imagery of pagan mythology, which he explains in his introduction: *Lucii Coelii Lactantii Firmiani Opera quae extant*, ed. by S. Gallaeus, 1660, p. 904; qtd. after Fichte 1980: 30.

838 In the introductory part of his commentary to the Martianus Capella's *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, Bernardus Silvestris distinguishes two types of "lecture with images" (*involutrum*): allegory that always hides beneath "the historical story" and "suits divine content," as well as *integumentum* that "hides the proper meaning under a fairy tale" and suits "philosophical" content (Brožek 1989: 105).

839 *Johannis Cassiani Conlationes* XXIII, 14, 8 in CSEL XIII, 405, 13–20; qtd. after Fichte 1980: 29. M. Carruthers thoroughly discusses this work as she considers it the foundation of monastic rhetorics (1998: 61). H. De Lubac explains the matters of exegesis in *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, Vol. 1–2, Paris 1959–1964; also see G. W. H. Lampe, K. J. Woolcombe, *Essays on Typology*, London 1957; H. Brinkmann, "Die Zeichenhaftigkeit der Sprache, des Schrifttums und der Welt im Mittelalter," *ZdPh* 93/1974, 1, p. 1–11; F. Ohly, *Schriften zur mittelalterlichen Bedeutungsforschung*, Darmstadt 1977, especially "Vom geistigen Sinn des Wortes im Mittelalter." The typological phenomena in medieval literature are debated, among others, by: P. Michel, *Alieniloquium. Elemente einer Grammatik der Bildrede*, Bern 1987; *Geistliche Denkformen in der Literatur des Mittelalters*, eds. K. Grubmüller et al., München 1984; *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie*, ed. W. Haug, Stuttgart 1979; Ch. Meier, "Überlegungen zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Allegorieforschung. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mischformen," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10/1976, p. 1–69; H. Freytag, *Die Theorie der allegorischen Schriftdeutung und die Allegorie in deutschen Texten besonders des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts*, Bern 1982; W. Helmich, *Die Allegorie im französischen Theater des 15./16. Jh.*, Tübingen 1976.

insisted on the fundamental difference between the word of God and of man; by denying human writing the possibility of containing the wisdom of God, Thomas Aquinas “allowed” only for literal meanings that could be expressed directly or metaphorically.⁸⁴⁰ One can see in this constant concern of Thomas Aquinas for a transparent separation of the world of the sacred from the profane and admittance of a peculiar, though modest, sovereignty to the latter: “The thing of poetic art is to mark the truth of things with some imaginary similarities.”⁸⁴¹

As for the drama, we have already quoted a fragment of De Mézières’ officium from which Gibson drew apt conclusions about the aesthetics of drama. Noteworthy, despite the overwhelming opinion to exclude liturgical drama from the reflections on the genesis of the theater, the entire text by De Mézières appears in the collection of sources for the history of medieval theater (Meredith, Tailby 1983).

We find the struggle to uncover God’s mysteries or graces as the motivation of real theatrical practice. The already quoted invitation to the Antwerp Festival in 1496 proposes the following rules of the competition:

Whichever rhetorical association will perform the best, wisest, and most artful play that will present the most fruitful and greatest mystery or grace that God has established and destined for the salvation of people; [a play] that contains characters from the Scriptures and understandable ideas in a new verse, with new content; never played before, with the best pronunciation and the least number of errors.⁸⁴²

In the opinion of contemporary actors, participants, and viewers, the performance means learning and uncovering (articulation, observation) of God’s

840 Thomas Aquinas called the latter *sensus parabolicus*; *Summa Theologica*, pars I, q. I, art. 10; qtd. After Fichte 1980: 31. Reynolds pronounces the continuity of literal reading, considered sufficient to understand satire on the basis of the reception of Horace in the twelfth century, in his *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text*, Cambridge 1996. Reynolds (esp. ch. 10, cf. p. 131) notices a rivalry of sorts between grammar and rhetorics: the teaching of the former emphasized the literal meaning, whereas the latter promoted the allegorical reading.

841 *Disputationes quodlibetales* VII, 9, 6, a. 16. Above (in ch. 12.3), we rephrased the clear elaboration of Thomas Aquinas’ views on allegory by Umberto Eco (1994: 112–117).

842 “[W]at geselschappe van rethoriken d’beste t’verstandelijckste ende constichste spel Spellens sal, deducerende daer mede d’oirboirelijckste ende meeste *misterie oft gratie* die godt tot des menschen salicheijt geordonneert ende verleent heeft ende dat bij schrifturen figuren ende naturelijcke redenen nieff dicht nieuwen sin nooit gespeelt sijnde best gepronuntieert ende minst fauten” (van Autenboer 1978: 144; qtd. after Coigneau 1993: 128).

design. What serves this purpose are the artistic means of theater and drama used to express the deepest truth, while anchored in the Scriptures and displaying novelty. Historical poetics will have a hard time to disregard this manifesto proclaiming newness as an aesthetic imperative.

More important than the purely artistic aspect of novelty was the recognition of the need to create a new way to learn the sacred in its new transcendent form. This new path was imagery: metaphor and allegory, which Innocent described as *mysterium fidei*, while simultaneously pointing to the path of another transcendence: meaning (*aliud cernitur, et aliud creditur*). Let us notice the difference – and also a certain continuity – in the motivation in comparison with the time when it was necessary to oppose the young Christian religion to the old Hellenic Bacchic mysteries. Even then, Paul the Apostle, when ordering to include singing and music into the language of worship, emphasized their spiritual function (Sticca 1973: 73): “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5: 18–19).

The continuity lies in the principle of creating a collective through mutual exchange and common singing, whereas the difference in the contrast between the old attitude to reception (“be filled”) and the new permission to develop and use what constitutes the layers of spiritual meanings, hidden under literal meaning. On a purely formal level, this approach also formed a model and way to familiarize oneself with the ontological boundary; which becomes one of the main functions of the miracle plays (ch. 23).

We see the proximity of this concept to lyric, in which there opens a peculiar space of language, understandable without defining ontology. According to Mary Marshall (1951: 39), what expresses the “lyricism of the liturgical drama” is not only song but also a multitude of lyrical inclusions that enrich the emotional load of the drama, as the later opera arias do, “only simpler.” Can we put the same lyricism of sacramentalism among the causes and motivations of amateur literary creativity in confraternities?

Simultaneously, the early tradition of translating the Greek *mysterion* into the Latin *sacramentum*⁸⁴³ – still present in the period of the “closing” of the doctrine

843 ODCC 1435a, s.v. *Sacrament*. The use of *mysterion* as “allegorical content” appears in the humanist dramatist Wilhelm Gnapheus: “Nunc exprimemus ludicra actiuncula / Cuius sub involucro habes mysterion;” *Acolastus* (1529), ed. by P. Minderaa, Zwolle 1956, p. 58; qtd. after Parente 1987: 72.

of sacramentalism in the twelfth century⁸⁴⁴ – indicates the potential of cult initiation that lies in the “mysterium of Christ.” We could describe it as creative, because it means imposing permanent demands on followers rather than intermittent repealing of taboo or single sacrifices as in pagan mysteries.⁸⁴⁵ In short, the difference between them is the transcendence-transgression opposition.

At this point, we must refer to the position of Haug (1990c), who notices the problem of the ontological boundary, but sets the relationship between the two worlds as did Pseudo-Dionysius and Eriugena, hence according to the customs of the first millennium: “In his transcendence, God remains invisible, elusive, unspeakable. Therefore, everything that is said about him is metaphorical, symbolic, figural.” Without fully polemicizing with Haug here,⁸⁴⁶ let us ask a simple question: What about Christ, who was visible and touchable in the world, and before returning to Heaven, he talked to many, then even more people spoke about him and wrote literally? This forgetting about the divinity of Christ – and thus negating Christianity – is not something unique: Umberto Eco (1996: 112) distinguishes the “two concepts of God” that appeared in the history of mankind by speaking of the personal God but only the one who “summarizes all the qualities that a person does not have;”⁸⁴⁷ the other God is “the one who is not.” It may be worth recalling the classic phrase by John of Damascus (675?–749?) in his treatise *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*:

Therefore, to give form to the Deity is the height of folly and impiety. And hence it is that in the Old Testament the use of images was not common. But after God in His bowels of

844 Peter Lombard must begin his explanation of sacramentology from a consideration of this meaning: “we do call ‘sacrament’ a holy mystery... but now we elaborate the sacrament to the extent that it is a sign” (“Dicitur tamen sacramentum etiam sacrum secretum, sicut sacramentum divinitatis, ut sacramentum sit sacrum signans, et sacrum signatum; sed nunc agitur de sacramento secundum quod est signum;” IV 1.2; PL 192, col. 839).

845 Cf. later remarks on the theory of R. Warning (1974: and 1997) who refers the sacrifice of the Cross not to the Judaist burnt offering (*holocaustum*) but the pagan ritual of the scapegoat.

846 Haug introduces many new concepts and builds a construction not easy to review. It is possible that Haug changed his mind after editing of a collection of articles about innovation (Haug, Wachinger 1993), in which Krolzik’s observations about the new understanding of the matter of God’s image and likeness along with a generally new and highly practical approach to reality, e.g., of Hugh of Saint Victor, contradict W. Haug’s exaggeration (1990c: 521) of the intellectual significance of Neoplatonism and Eriugena (“the twelfth century was the century of the rediscovery of Eriugena”).

847 Cf. the definition of subtractive anthropology by R. zur Lippe (1987), our ch. 17.3.

pity became in truth man for our salvation, not as He was seen by Abraham in the semblance of a man, nor as He was seen by the prophets, but in being truly man, and after He lived upon the earth and dwelt among men, worked miracles, suffered, was crucified, rose again and was taken back to Heaven, since all these things actually took place and were seen by men, they were written for the remembrance and instruction of us who were not still, hearing and believing, obtain the blessing of the Lord.⁸⁴⁸

Perhaps it is true that Suger of Saint Denis, as a depositary of the legacy of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and John Scotus Eriugena, “created the Gothic cathedral from the spirit of Dionysian–Eriugenic metaphysics of light” (Haug 1990c: 517), but Suger used Neoplatonism with different goal in mind: to prove the faithful that the existence of the visible world depends on God. This was the matter that Pseudo-Dionysius proved to pagans and Eriugena probably as well, although in the twelfth century no one doubted this fact anymore. Haug (1990c, 521) claims that Suger needed the emphasis on transcendence and Dionysian metaphysics of light to provide an ontological metaphor for the Heaven and not for this world; that is, to equate the Heaven with theophany, an ontological metaphor of God. The way in which Suger experienced the light to affect him in his cathedral – he felt carried to a higher world – justifies the conclusion that, figuratively speaking, he wanted to create in the church the illusion of Heaven, present its foretaste rather than bring mystical experiences of divinity here and now. This is how Suger presented the final effect of construction works in his report *About what was done under his management*:

Delight for the beautiful house of God and the splendor of the many colored gems sometimes made me forget about my worldly cares; and devout meditation moved me to reflect on the differences among the holy virtues by directing my attention away from material to immaterial things.⁸⁴⁹ I seemed to see myself as if I were dwelling in some strange region of the earth, partly in the filth of the earth, and partly in the purity of

848 Joannes Damascenus, *De fide orthodoxa* IV, 16, PG 94, col. 1158 ff. The fragment in the translation of Rev. S. D. F. Salmond (Aeterna Press 2016). Nearly equally unambiguous is Paul the Apostle in his *Epistle to Romans* (1:19–21): “because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”

849 Here, J. Białostocki (1988: 211, ft. 14) notices a parallel to the position of John of Damascus that we mentioned earlier (ch. 17.3).

heaven, and that I was capable of being transferred, by the gift of god, from this lower realm to a higher one by the anagogical method.⁸⁵⁰

We have already reflected on how the transformation of images of the ontological status of the sacred developed in the opposite direction than the one suggested by Haug. The entire aesthetics of the Incarnation made superfluous a Neoplatonism that persuaded the faithful with suggestive illumination that God pervades the world. Christ came down to people from Heaven not to be their earthly king but to lead his believers back to Heaven, “the house of eternal bliss.”

The introit of the third Sunday (*Laetare*), “Let us go into the house of the Lord” (Psalm 122:1),⁸⁵¹ expresses the essence of the last, modern era in the interpretations of the epochs of human history as the seven days of creation and the seven Sundays of Lent. Already the early Christians begin the tradition of presenting this moment as a return to Heaven from exile to this world; they model this on the Hebrew “we remembered Zion” during the Babylonian captivity (Psalm 137:1). Mary Carruthers (1998: 67–68) used examples of such Christian allegorization to show how the Jewish remembrance of Jerusalem and Zion turns into a vision of Heaven and a moral directive:

This “remembering,” affective ... and goal-oriented, bears only partial resemblance to the familiar model of memory as the mind’s storehouse of things that we have experienced in the past. “Remember Jerusalem” ... is a call not to preserve but to act – in the present, the future.... Though it is certainly a form of knowing, recollecting is also a matter of will, of being *moved*, pre-eminently a moral activity rather than what we think of as intellectual or rational.

This transformation enables not only admonition (*memento mori*) but also direct voicing of the “memory of Heaven” or the “memory of Hell.”⁸⁵² However, more importantly, it breaks the clear separation of memory and imagination based on

850 *Sugerii Abbatis Sancti Dionysii Liber de rebus in administratione sua gestis* 1, 33, from *Selected Works of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis*, transl. and eds. Richard Cusimano and Eric Whitmore, Washington 2018, p. 106.

851 Küster 1989: 167 refers to H. Scholz, *Glaube und Unglaube in der Weltgeschichte. Ein Kommentar zu Augustins De civitate Dei* (Leipzig 1911) and liturgical compendia of Rupert of Deutz, *De Divinis Officiis* IV, PL 170, col. 91, Durandus’ *Rationale*, VI, 53, 5 (the Lyon edition, 1605).

852 *De memoria paradisi, De memoria inferni*; the titles of chapters in the treatises by Boncompagno da Signa, *Rhetorica Novissima* 8.1, ed. by A. Gaudenzi, Bologna 1892; qtd. after Carruthers 1998: 69.

the fact that the first concerns real matters, while the second unreal.⁸⁵³ “Heaven for medieval monks, was real ... but it was certainly not “of the past”: if it were, one would have to admit some version of a real transmigration of souls” (Carruthers 1998: 68). And we know that its only orthodox and orthopraxis-based form was the following of Christ.

3. THE FOLLOWING. As a result of the reconstruction we made in part 4, the doctrine of the recapitulation arose from the acceptance that God instituted Christ the head of the Church; the imitation of Christ by the faithful was at the center of educational activities and self-control duties: “Be ye therefore followers of God” (Ephesians 5:1). But which God: the invisible, the elusive, or the inexpressible? We mentioned the words “Follow me,” which meant how Christ assumes leadership of the Church. Among the various sermons by Bernard of Clairvaux, there is one that verbally performs this moment, Sermo 62 “Concerning John 12:26:” “*Anyone who ministers to me, let him follow me, that is, let him imitate me. For what benefit? Where I am, he says, there also is my minister. And so the benefit of this imitation is an eternal dwelling of blessedness.*”⁸⁵⁴

One should not imagine this following as too cheerful, for it results from later sermons, which explain who and when precisely imitates Christ and who does not. However, Sermo 120 “Concerning a threefold ministry” (*De triplici ministeriis*, PL 183, sp. 743A) expounds that the ministry of charity (*ministerium charitatis*), which is a sacrifice of love and devotion of mind (*mentis devotio*) that happens in cheerfulness (*fit in hilaritate*). Although the latter term does not mean “hilarious,” it confirms Mary Marshall’s (1951: 33) opinion that “the characteristic emotion of the liturgical drama is joy,” as well as what Dunn writes about “thematic joy” woven into the narrative line and dramatic conflict in mystery plays. Their “joyful vitality” derives neither from comedy nor the spirit of fun;⁸⁵⁵

853 Here, M. Carruthers polemicizes with the view about this “key differentiation” present in the Western thought “at least since the Enlightenment” that M. Warnock presents in *Memory*, London 1987. Earlier, we mentioned the remarks about the distrust of imagination in medieval philosophers; it is possible that Carruthers explains the discussed broadening of memory onto the things of the future (in the paragraph entitled *Remembering the future*; Carruthers 1998: 66–69).

854 *De varia et vera sequela Christo*, “Qui mihi ministrat, me sequatur (Jo XII. 26), id est me imitatur. Quo fructu? Ut ubi sum ego, inquit, ibi sit et minister meus (Jo XII. 26). Fructus itaque hujus imitationis mansio est aeternae beatitudinis”. *Sermones de diversis*, LXII, PL 183, col. 686B. After Bernard of Clairvaux, *Monastic Sermons*, transl. Daniel Griggs, Colledgeville 2016.

855 E. C. Dunn disagrees here with the ludic interpretation of the Feast of Corpus Christi introduced by V. A. Kolve (1966: ch. 2, 6). Indeed, Kolve raises doubt with

religious joy is pre-Trentian: it opens the perspective of a trouble-free affirmation of faith through different forms of satisfaction, contentment, and happiness that result from experiencing the history of salvation; “the entire body of the mystery plays is linked by the rhythm of returning joys that overcome loss and sadness.” Larissa Taylor proves that the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was not a period of existential fear, and even Lutheranism failed to revive the fatalistic mentality of the old times (1992: 232).

The establishing of a separate feast of Corpus Christi – a collective feast and not an individual church service – was one of the greatest achievements of “medieval devotional aspiration” because it did not commemorate the Eucharist on the day of its establishment (Holy Thursday is very close to Crucifixion) but after the Resurrection and the Pentecost (Dunn 1973: 67). This is confirmed by the opinion of Nerida Newbigin (1991: 91): “the paradoxically joyous aspect of the Last Supper” was the common consumption of a meal, which was an easier symbol of the sacrifice of the Body than Crucifixion. Hence, from 1360 (Florence), the refectories of confraternities display murals with the Last Supper next to the scene of the Crucifixion, while the character of the three feasts is clearly joyful. Noteworthy, they form a cycle that links Holy Thursday through Ascension to the Pentecost (Newbigin 1991: 100) accompanied by a separate repertoire of Pentecostal and Ascension plays.⁸⁵⁶ It is quite a logical closure of the Passion cycle in the sacramentalist spirit, but also something more. The deferment of the Passion restores the correct proportions of events because the Passion was not a goal but a means: redemption happened and the God-human established a new bond on earth. His return to Heaven (spiritualization) first means that, henceforth, the communion occurs through the Eucharist, but simultaneously focuses attention again on the safety of the Kingdom of Heaven (see ch. 22.5) and – above all – on divinity. According to Peter Travis (1993: 147), this aspect distinguishes the Passion part of the *Chester* cycle; contrary to other cycles, *Chester* does not stress the themes of God’s grace, or common guilt of the Passion’s spectators, but demands from them a collective confirmation of the

his presentation of scenes when people make fun of Christ as “play and game” (p. 198, 204), maybe even “serious” but not acted “in earnest.”

856 N. Newbigin refers them in the Italian literature in her book *The Word Made Flesh: The rappresentazioni of Mysteries and Miracles in Fifteenth-Century Florence, w: Christianity and the Renaissance*, Syracuse 1990, pp. 361–375.

faith in the divinity of Christ, and in the truth⁸⁵⁷ of those historical events they see re-created on the pageant.

To arouse and sustain confidence in a leader with whom one could connect only spiritually required much effort, not to mention the feat of gathering under a single banner his following that would go to Heaven; the following whose real form is first the parish liturgical procession.

4. WILL. Human figures in mystery plays cannot want anything from each other, they may only learn the Truth. Therefore, the situation is somewhat similar to the cognitive genres of literature (see ch. 21.1), only the truth they seek differs. Here is how the situation is presented by a historian of subjectivity on the example of science:

Like it or not, the solution to a math or physics problem is not a matter of individual or majority opinion, and the relativism appropriate to other domains disappears in science for the good and simple reason that it represents the last remains of our relation to objectivity. It's in encountering science that the child comes up—perhaps for the first and last time—against a *theoretical universe* which resists his *subjectivity*, since it manifests itself to him in the shape of norms that he, at least at his level of learning, cannot contest. It may be the case that the natural sciences are the outcome of the “metaphysics of subjectivity.” Then we must admit, if we don't want to stick with clichés, that they defeat individual opinion as does no other sphere of intellectual life.⁸⁵⁸

This is the path of the process of replacing God in natural sciences, as exemplified by the Neoplatonic concept of nature as ultimately mathematically conceivable; the first step was taken by Thierry of Chartres (d. 1155),⁸⁵⁹ a systematic lecture given by Grosseteste (d. 1253) in his cosmology of light, followed by

857 It is not surprising that this emphasis on faith goes hand in hand with reducing the motives of human martyrdom that characterizes Protestant piety. As C. Davidson states, the Anglican Church “denying the sacrificial element of the Mass ... reduced the physical connection between the blood of Christ and the Eucharist,” followed by the Calvinist denial of transubstantiation (1997: 439). This emphasizes another aspect of the unusual character of the Chester cycle: its shift to the period of Pentecost (Davidson 1997: 458, ft. 84); it is not surprising in the context of these considerations.

858 Ferry 1993: 13. I italicize some words because we will return to them.

859 “Convinced that the world can be grasped as a universum governed by strict logical and mathematical laws, he undertakes the task of explaining it as a well-functioning mechanism, using the categories and messages used in the physics of its time” (Kuksewicz 1973: 100–101).

Galileo, Kepler,⁸⁶⁰ and Descartes, whose physical laws gradually replaced the earlier Neoplatonic spiritism (Crombie 1960, Vol. 2: 146).

“Individual opinion” not only persists but also determines the essence of free will decisions. Ockham made contingency and indifference to pressure the essence of human freedom (ch. 13.2). Freedom bases on will, because only will can decide against own inclination: “Within the decision-making process, intellect’s function is restricted to the introduction of matters to be decided, while will has the freedom to decide whether or not to follow reason’s suggestions.”⁸⁶¹

In fact, autonomous will does not play any role in mystery reality. Even the most spectacular participation of people in extended apocryphal or literary biblical scenes cannot change the course of events recorded in the body of motifs of the sacred history. All generic and realistic motifs, even comic motifs (e.g. in shepherd plays) are only means of foregrounding the Truth of God – including Incarnation – and in general: strengthening convictions about the truth and materiality of the Revelation that happened among people like me and you, the feeling that “history happened only for them” (Elliott 1968: 22–23). Since “the victory of God’s power always ends the course of events” (Dunn 1973: 67), both authors and actors must put a lot of creativity into their work to shape it for the audience in the most convincing and – especially – interesting way. Dorothy Castle (1990: 166) finds that the author of the morality play *Mankind* utilizes the technique of defamiliarization (*ostranenie*) only discovered and described by the twentieth-century structuralists, W. Shklovsky and R. Barthes: “The Christian doctrine, so well-known to the medieval audience, is presented in creative ways to overcome homeliness and attract attention again.” This approach allows you to absorb every dose of the most anachronistic motifs, generously weaved into Christmas or Passion scenes. This explains why *diablérie* or witty genre scenes do not stand out⁸⁶² or why there is no measure in the scenes of Christ’s humiliation: we all know how it ends.

860 J. Hübner, *Die Theologie Johannes Keplers zwischen Orthodoxie und Naturwissenschaft*, Tübingen 1975. M. H. Illmer, *Die göttliche Mathematik Johannes Keplers. Zur ontologischen Grundlegung des naturwissenschaftlichen Weltbildes*, St. Ottilien 1991.

861 Fichte 1980: 91; with reference to Guillelmus Ockham, *Quaestiones super quatuor libros sententiarum*, III q.10D, I d. 10.q. 2, and *Quodlibeta Septem*, IV q. 6.

862 Also see some remarks on the segmentation, narrative complementation, and fictionalization in I. Janicka, *The Comic Elements in the English Mystery Plays against the Cultural Background (particularly art)*, Poznań 1962; M. Gutowski, *Komizm w polskiej sztuce gotyckiej*, Warszawa 1973.

The will of learning drives the sense of responsibility for the world of profane after assuming control over it. The obligation to monitor standards and to keep track not of them only but of the whole reality – serves to recognize and subordinate it to the Truth; without this, the task to guard the current state of possession would be impossible. Observation does not exclude trivial creativity limited to interpolation because it always comes back to the main thread. The next step is associated with the miracle play giving more space for human creativity: bold interpolations of hagiography seem more like new parts of a building than a filling of an openwork structure.

5. MACROHISTORY. In his examination of the cultural background of the twelfth century Passion mystery play from Monte Cassino,⁸⁶³ Robert Edwards (1977) states that the comprehensive cultural efforts of the Benedictine authors aimed at recreating the reality of the Gospel: “Rewriting and creating works about the Holy Land, acquiring relics, and innovating the liturgy indicate an attempt to regain the biblical past.” It is about all the “biblical” relics associated with the life of Jesus, above all from the Paschal period (cross, thorn, dress).

They are not symbolic in the sense that they represent something else. The relics are themselves portions of Christian history; they are direct evidence for the events recounted in the gospels and commemorated in the liturgy.... Thus by the twelfth century, the abbey possessed relics for the major events of the Passion. In the observances of the Holy Week, these relics would assume a special prominence as objects of commemoration and worship. They would offer an historical basis for rituals that had grown up later to celebrate the Passion and Resurrection (Edwards 1977:78).

Edwards describes all these efforts to extend and preserve the time when Transcendence intersected in specific space with History as the aesthetics of recovery.⁸⁶⁴ We mean the liturgical forms that gave rise to the Paschal mystery play. As we mentioned earlier, the mystery play is a historical encyclopedia: a demonstration of the reality of the holy sacred as omnipresent and continuous, a proof of authenticity, and the central place of the Incarnation in the history of salvation. One of these evidences found its place in the Creed: Pilate appears

863 Ed. by Dom M. Inguanez, “Un dramma della Passione del secolo XII,” *Miscellanea Cassinese* 18/1939, pp. 7–35; qtd. After Edwards 1977: 97; also available in S. Sticca, *The Latin Passion Play: Its Origins and Development*, Albany 1970, pp. 66–78. K. Falvey studies some similarities with the Perugian Passion lauda from mid-fourteenth century *Singnore scribe* (1982, with reference to the edition of the text published in his dissertation *Scriptural Plays from Perugia*, Stony Brook 1974, pp. 50–103).

864 Edwards offers an outline in his chapter *The Aesthetics of Recovery*, pp. 57–85; he uses the keyword in several meanings: as recreation, restitution, return, and retrieval.

there not for people to wonder what he actually does there, nor to indicate the guilty one, but to permanently root the story of Jesus in the real history of the Roman Empire.

One cannot deny the search for these proofs needed methodological diligence that characterizes science and pragmatic technology. Characteristically, the undeniable indisputability of engineering principles somehow escapes the grasp of the historians of science, who begin with “true” scientific knowledge from Descartes.⁸⁶⁵

The architecture of the rebuilt St. Martin’s basilica of Monte Cassino Abbey combined two separate styles and two Church traditions: the Western construction and the Eastern, Byzantine ornamentation (Edwards 1977: 74–75). Descriptive works visualized the space of the Holy Land, while ceremonies materialized past events, which provided a mimetic element in the work of recovering Christian history (Edwards 1977: 79). Similarly, the playwright’s intent was to reconstruct events faithfully, almost as a documentary; hence the numerous elements of the judicial procedure.

This example allows us a thorough retracement of the emerging mystery theme after Edwards. The Passion in theology and liturgy is a unique event in history and is transcendent; its course was based on the Gallican cathedral tradition of mass as a game – Honorius’ *duellum* – in which the Passion is the triumph of Christ (Edwards 1977: 50). In mystery plays, the Passion is an event “remaining in time,” one expressing aesthetic, social (Edwards 1977: 193), and contemplative goals (Sticca 1973). This is how dramatic forms transfer transcendence to the here-and-now (Edwards 1977: 52), which is their most important function: to create access to the mystery of faith (Pope Innocent III). Already the liturgical drama “*implicitly* teaches” through “emotional experience” the “literal story” and feelings it arouses thanks to the “centuries of associations” – all this “feeds and confirms faith” (Marshall 1951: 31). The liturgical drama achieves it by “recreating with physical impersonation” the “elementary episodes of the Gospel, which support the faith in the divinity of Christ;” hence, this is not a

865 J. Kaye studies the appearance of scientific thought (in natural sciences) in the context of economy in the book *Economy and Nature in the Fourteenth Century: Money, Market Exchange, and the Emergence of Scientific Thought*, Cambridge 1998. O. Langholm describes the heritage of scholastics in the economic reflection in the works *The Legacy of Scholasticism in Economic Thought: Antecedents of Choice and Power. Historical Perspectives on Modern Economics*, New York 1998; O. Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools: Wealth, Exchange, Value, Money and Usury according to the Paris theological Tradition 1200–1350*, Leiden 1992.

ritual but rather a “Christian mythical drama” (Marshall 1951: 33; cf. Auerbach’s “bodily contemplation” and “pedagogical theater” in ch. 17.4). Once again, we encounter the principle of creating the aura of factuality from Geertz’s theory of religion but expressed in other words. Marshall (1951:35) even writes about the evidential nature of liturgical dramas: they all show witnesses of the Incarnation and Resurrection – like the Three Kings or the three Maries – illustrate the power of faith, and testify to the Divine power.

The spread of an encompassing historical panorama also includes the filling of cognitive structures so that they embrace the understanding of the entire created world. Here, pilgrimages fulfill a special task, as their cognitive effect is obscured by the penitential purpose; even though the latter may variously support the former. The distant journey changed a person who personally witnessed the existence of the sacred places on the other end of the earth; more importantly, during that journey, the person met people of different cultures, languages, and social estates who all believed in the same Creed, which confirmed the universality of one’s faith.

Medieval authors created an entire literature and theatrical repertoire associated with religious practices. The growing body of literature must generally remain conscious of its orthodoxy, so it uses liturgical structures only to later apply apocryphal, legendary, and poetic motifs (Dunn 1973: 59 about the layered structure of cycles). Sticca (1973) discusses the contribution of various writing genres in drama, such as hagiography, exempla, mystical literature, homiletics, or poetry.

Apart from all other reasons, the collectivity of theater productions better secures from doctrinal error. The creators of the time were probably rarely aware of this, but we can call it a well-functioning mechanism of objectivity control or rule observance in the process of “subjectivization,” that is, the distribution of the Truth. Here, we witness the application of the timid suggestion by Edward Sapir from 1917: “may not objectivity be defined as the composite picture gained after laying a number of subjectivities on top of one another?” (qtd. after Rodseth 1998: 62). Lars Rodseth (1998: 56) finds in this though an alternative to the essentialist treatment of cultural phenomena as unified and stable objects; Rodseth counters essentialism with a distributive model, which allows him to view cultures as variable and interactive populations of meanings, which are historically separate and internally differentiated.

In the *Alsfelder Passion* – the only German mystery play preserved with a director’s notebook – there is nearly no scene without a song (a feature of the liturgical drama). Eight guilds supported the producers of the play,⁸⁶⁶ participation in

866 See R. Blasting about the role of German confraternities in the preparation of

the performance was a matter of honor, and the roles were assigned in accordance with the social position and reputation.⁸⁶⁷ Many interpret this as a reflection and modeling of the current social hierarchy, but what seems no less important is the validation of this distribution, through which the respected citizens gave the enterprise as much prestige as they received in return.

The justification in the form of catechetical purpose and penitential intent guards Italian dramatic laudas and forms of officia (*devozione*) that preceded mystery plays and hagiographic miracle plays called with the common term *sacre rappresentazioni*.⁸⁶⁸

6. MICROHISTORY. Having learned the Truth and will of God, *humanum genus* recognizes the historicity of the whole world, of mythology, literature, the underworld, and demons.

This utter redefinition of cognitive structures is recapitulation. That is, recapitulation is – above all – a coordination of the most important cognitive domains in accordance with the Christian image of the world; these domains being time, space, existence, or cosmos. The liturgy provides the pattern for recapitulation;⁸⁶⁹

performances: “The German Bruderschaften as Producers of Late medieval Vernacular Religious Drama,” *Renaissance und Reformation* 13.1/1989, pp. 1–14.

867 L. E. West describes the matter in the introduction to his edition of *Alsfelder Passion*, 1997, p. XXVIII.

868 S. Sticca (1973: 76). Franciscan laudas – monophonic hymns; polyphonic from the fifteenth century; preserved in about 200 songbooks called *laudari* – formed the repertoire of the *laudesi* confraternities, then *canto penitentium* of the flagellants, only to transform from lyrical songs toward dramatic officia; their further development toward full theatricalization is outlined by C. Barr (1991); “Vernacular drama blossomed in the circle of these secular confraternities in late medieval Italy” (Falvey 1982: 63); also see K. Falvey (1991), S. Sticca (1980), the collection of articles from the conference *Le laude drammatiche umbre delle origine*, Viterbo 1981; for a broader artistic context, see G. Pochat, *Theater und bildende Kunst im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance in Italien*, Graz 1990. V. De Bartholomaeis prepared the edition of laudas and mystery plays in *Laude drammatiche e rappresentazioni sacre*, Vol. 1–3, Firenze 1943; *Nuovo Corpus di Sacre rappresentazioni fiorentini del Quattrocento*, ed. N. Newbigin, Bologna 1983. Bibliography: A. Cioni, *Bibliografia delle sacre rappresentazione*, Firenze 1961; K. Falvey, “Italian Vernacular Religious Drama of the Fourteenth through the Sixteenth Centuries: A Selected Bibliography on the Lauda drammatica and the Sacra rappresentazione,” *RORD* 26/1983, pp. 125–144.

869 “Since the activities of Christ culminated the history of salvation, Christ somehow recapitulated everything that prepared his coming; what the Gospel says, as well as whatever flows from his salutary activity until the end of the world. Hence, the Eucharistic Anamnesis updates the entire history of salvation. It recollects everything

as in the grammar of a language, the rules defining the identity of the system petrify within this pattern.

Alan Knight made historicity the basis for distinguishing the genres of drama by assigning to it mystery and miracle plays. The former recapitulate history with biblical content and secular historiography, the latter use hagiography, exempla, and fiction.⁸⁷⁰ We should also include in the concept of historicity the cosmological dimension: here, the Church literature faced other religious and mythological systems, which made it constantly demonstrate the control of both worlds by the power of the sacred even after the announcement of Church victory: the baptism of this world and the otherworld.⁸⁷¹ Aleksandra Witkowska has detected this motivation for registering miracles in the prologue of the collection of *miracula* by Szymon of Lipnica (c. 1437–1482):

The emphasis in the notes lies on informing competent people about the miracle, which aims not only to propagate the cult [of the saint], but ... “the transfer of memory about the visible signs of God’s omnipotence and the holiness of his intermediaries to posterity.” Apart from the popularizing function, the theological function of the miracle remains.⁸⁷²

We may witness the struggle for the recapitulation of the cosmos in what Rainer Warning (1974) finds in the mythical and archetypal motifs of religious drama as the influence of the renewing pagan-dualistic principle. Warning argues with Haug (1982a) by citing Ohly’s opinion⁸⁷³ that the Church silently tolerated many things which bordered on heresy and paganism; the cosmological representations could only occur as metaphors for the Christian history of salvation.

Attempts to diversify religious plays by their attitude to this issue lead us to point at the theme of the Resurrection (*Osterspiel*) as the closest possible cosmic projection (renewal), but it is difficult to place here the Passion itself. Possibly, the passion mystery may have appeared as an alternative: to prove the historicity

that the Lord has done in the history of humankind, beginning with the creation of the world as a theatrum for the drama of salvation, ending with the ephapax [εφάπαξ; Hebr 10:10] of Christ’s act” (Nadolski 1992: 15). Anamnesis is an element of the memory celebrated in mass, called *memoria*; “the content of cultic anamnesis is Christ’s death and victory, death, resurrection, and Parousia” (Nadolski 1992: 14).

870 In this context, K. Schoell (1996: 191) states the advantage of the Roman history.

871 I offer an example in the discussion of the allegorical Dutch art about winter and summer in chapter 24.

872 *Miracula beati patris Simonis Lypnicensis*, MS Archiwum Prowincji Bernardynów (Cracow) I-e-1, f. 2v. (Witkowska 1978: 187).

873 A review of R. Warning’s book in *Romanische Forschungen* 91/1979, pp. 111–141.

of Salvation against the possible mythological interpretation, including the persistent view of the cruelty of the Crucifixion as the “return to the archaic ritual of the scapegoat.”⁸⁷⁴

Rainer Warning’s crown argument for the hermeneutic dissimilarity of the mystery plays is the – unknown to us – scope of theological knowledge at the disposal of the audiences. Therefore, Warning seems to assume that the “archaic ritual of the scapegoat” happened in every parish more often than sheer church attendance. Further objections come from André Schnyder: should these pagan deviations from orthodoxy, “if they are not complete illusions of contemporary interpreters, not trigger extensive Church repressions?” Theologians well understood the danger of “cosmic harmonization with the omission of the cross” (*unter Hintanstellung des Kreuzes*) and juxtaposed it with “the radical historicity of the salvational act of Christ and the personal decision of every believer” (Haug 1982a: 266).

The decisions of “every believer” did fit in the religious system, which means that historicity is the redistribution of Truth and orchestration of individual, subjective, hence microhistorical truths (coherence). This is how accomplished historicity manifests itself: we learn about the fact that historicity happened from the fact that – in the most vital matters of given community – everyone receives own molecule of the same truth, all have the same knowledge and a consensual opinion. Subjectivity does not exclude consent but precedes it: only those who have their own opinion may find consensus. In society, “particularity implies participation,” the model of such participation is the Eucharist, understood as the mystery of unity; that is, participation in the Body of Christ that obliges to “peace” (James 1983: 9–10).⁸⁷⁵ Peace underlies penance and the sacrament of

874 R. Warning (1997: 40; in which he develops his ideas from 1974: 229ff). A. Schnyder (1995: esp. ft. 76) advises Warning to search for the missing argumentation in the documentation published by M. Schulz, *Die Oster- und Emmausspiele und das Himmelfahrtsspiel im Debs-Codex. Zur Ambivalenz christlicher und paganer Traditionen*, Göttingen 1993. See later (ch. 24.3) for remarks about fertility myths as the material for the genre of the dispute of Summer and Winter and a discussion of its results by V. Plesch (ch. 25.3).

875 “Thus, according to the Sequence for the Mass of Corpus Christi Day, just as social particularity involves social participation, so each fragment of the consecrated host shares in the wholeness of the Body of Christ.” The condition to uphold the whole is, of course, peace: we read this in the lesson for the octave of the Feast of Corpus Christi in the breviary of Sarum (Salisbury): “Who has received *the mystery of unity*, and does not hold to the bond of peace, does not receive the mystery for himself, but as testimony against himself.” *Breviarium ad usum... ecclesiae Sarum*, ed. by F. Procter and Ch. Wordsworth, Cambridge 1879–1886, Vol. 1–3, t. I, col. 1101; M. James (1983: 10).

the Eucharist – this is expressed, for example, by the prayer that the comforter offers to the condemned in the rite of *conforteria*, which expresses “the desire to heal moral illness and be incorporated into the Mystical Body of the Church, the bride of the Eternal Father” (Falvey 1991: 53). When people agree about things greater than each individual, is it not the victory of spirit over the dead letter? Not for everyone:

The blank slate, the subject’s capture by himself as the only absolutely certain principle, radical constructivism—these are the three moments which define, in its principle, the advent of philosophical modernity... where in the world of the “ancients” ... it was the cosmic order of *tradition* which established for man the validity of values and thus set up between them a possible space of *communication*, the problem, beginning with Descartes, becomes one of knowing how it is possible to establish, starting out *exclusively from oneself*, values equally valuable for the others (God’s intervention though not yet excluded, itself becomes mediated by the subject’s philosophical reflection and is thus, in this sense, dependent on him). In a word, the problem becomes one of knowing how it is possible to establish, within the radical *immanence* of values to subjectivity, their transcendence, for ourselves as for others (Ferry 1993: 15–16).

We gave an answer to this problem earlier: the values may be equally valuable for the others, if they come from the distribution of objectivity. In any case, at least three (II, III, IV) out of the four rules of Descartes’ method⁸⁷⁶ reflect the distributional path of building subjectivity:⁸⁷⁷ (II) proceeding analytically to divide all the examined difficulties into the smallest possible parts; (III) to conduct thoughts from the simplest objects to the most complex; (IV) to assure universality and completeness of divisions, enumerations, and reviews so that “nothing is left out.”

We have previously (ch.13) discussed the various aspects of “mediation through the subject” as a plurality of predictability; the shape of sacramental piety is based on mediation – the will of subjects – and even miracles did not enforce faith (ch. 23.1).

An important part of objectivity is formed by Tradition. Its order is cosmic only partly and in relation to the sources, but it does not remain this way as its becoming historically unique was the essence of Incarnation and recapitulation.

876 René Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method*, transl. Ian Maclean, Oxford 2006, p. 17.

We omit the first rule that speaks of an obvious thing: “to include nothing in my judgements other than that which presented itself to my mind so clearly and distinctly, that I would have no occasion to doubt it” (Descartes 2006: 17).

877 Cf. the previous point for the remarks about the distribution of Truth and the distributional approach to culture (Sapir, Rodseth).

It is the “complete” thinking subject who attempts to obtain a “clean slate” in the procedure of doubt; after cleansing oneself of “all inherited prejudices” of all tradition⁸⁷⁸ (first phase), the subject then seeks support to “rebuild the structure of scientific and philosophical knowledge” (second phase). One does not have to look far, but just think a little:

As we know, it is in the cogito that, finally, Descartes finds the means to escape generalized doubt. It is, therefore, *third phase*, on his own subjectivity, on the absolute certainty the subject has of seizing himself through his own thought, that the complete *system* of knowledge is built (Ferry 1993: 15).

But where did this solid, rock-like support come from? Did it survive this great purge? It did not wonderfully emanate from the grammatical form of the first person cogito, didn't it? Tellingly, the subject seemed to Descartes so obvious that – when cleaning his slate in the first phase of his procedure of doubt – he forgot to wipe it as well. If Descartes retained a grain of salt about his subjectivity – when doubting – he then could at most conclude that there is *some doubt*, while the only ensuing conclusion could be the fact of *some thinking*, not his *own existence* or the fact that “*I am thinking*” or “*I have to be something*.”⁸⁷⁹ This subjectivity is just as inalienable and precedent for thinking and social action as is language. Like language, subjectivity is “indelible” and burdened with all “prejudices” that today we call cognitive structures.

This whole Cartesian procedure is an effective trick that one cannot conduct without accepting the existence of a completely inviolable subject that conducts the procedure in the first place. *I doubt*: already this “I” states existence to which Descartes only added further unnecessary steps. Descartes cleaned the slate that did not even turn out to be a magic mirror; so he could just as well pinch himself.

878 Ferry interprets Descartes' goal in this manner, as elaborated in the first rule of the “provisional moral code:” “to obey the laws and customs of my country, and to adhere to the religion in which God by His grace had me instructed from my childhood.... For, having begun already to discount my own opinions because I wished to subject them all to rigorous examination, I was certain that I could do no better than to follow those of the wisest” (Descartes 2006: 21). “Descartes failed to complete a final moral code” (Wojciechowska: 27, ft. 78). Did he lack the time?

879 “But no sooner had I embarked on this project than I noticed that while I was trying in this way to think everything to be false it had to be the case that •I, who was thinking this, was •something. And observing that this truth I am thinking, therefore I exist was so firm and sure that not even the most extravagant suppositions of the sceptics could shake it, I decided that I could accept it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking” (Descartes 2006: 21).

But he did not really clean the slate, he only stood in front of an ordinary mirror and alternately closed and opened his eyes.

Ferry claims that the three moments of the Cartesian method model the process of the “subjectivization” of the world “according to which modernity is defined” (by “Hegel, Heidegger, and a few others;” Ferry 1993: 15). If we should understand subjectivization as the transfer of objective values onto objects, then we must reverse the hands of the clock of modernity by a few centuries. Moreover, such case makes it difficult to seek something less, more, or “the most subjective” in the subject (Ferry 1993: 19). Subjectivity can only then be “the most subjective” when it is simply subject-less. Hence disappears the basis for all aesthetic taste, recognized as “the very essence of subjectivity.”

Subjectivity – from the time we can talk about it – simply is, and it holds among its elements no further “essence.” The essence of subjectivity is everything that created it: its setting, relative completion through the distribution of objectivity, and continuous functioning in feedback with the external world.

We should not worry too much about the Nietzschean slogan of worldlessness (*die Weltlosigkeit*). This world does not disappear because it repeatedly reflects in countless mirrors.

Happy that this time around we will avoid the guillotine,⁸⁸⁰ let us summarize the encyclopedic aspect of the mystery plays. The historicization of Salvation went toward the historicization of the whole world, including the mythological one, which it disrupted and invalidated as a cosmological theory. To include neighboring rival traditions in own history is a normal mode in the encounters of cultures, along with the inherent colonization of territory. A generalized expression of concern for the fullness of this power appears in the elementary geographic dimension: conversion is a constant action in all contacts between Christians and non-believers. The conversion of the infidels often assumes the form of a showy convincing of doubters (in miracle plays; e.g. *Saint Valentin*).

After all, Christianity occupies the entire cosmos, including the afterlife, the entire world of all possible spirits, thus transferring historical time everywhere, even to Heaven (so much for the “desacralization of time”). What probably explains this compulsion to fill the white spots in the knowledge of historical Christ is the process described by Marrow (1979: 198) as the identification of

880 I allow myself this quip provoked by the following fragment by L. Ferry: “the procedure of doubt that [Descartes] adopts ... provides the archetype for the subjectivization of all values what finds its most eloquent political expression in the revolutionary ideology of 1789” (1993: 15).

“passion narratives” with “ordinary historical facts.” In a similar manner, the long-transferred *imagines agentes* (ch. 25.3) and some of the motifs in “pedagogical stories” (ch. 24.3; Carruthers 1998) were embodied as real facts.

Medieval thinkers must have secured eternal life for every trusting soul, for the concept of the soul to be accepted as an anthropological theory. Therefore, it was necessary for them to guarantee full power of “our” God in the transcendent spiritual world.⁸⁸¹ The mystery and miracle plays were tasked with the role of proving this fact. Herod’s power in the *Chester* cycle expresses not his vanity – does not serve moral condemnation – but his strength, so that his defeat in the battle with God will be so much greater. Kathleen Ashley (1993: 50) explains with the same intent – to emphasize divine authority and not the humanity of Christ – the more abundant usage of Jesus’ miracles than in other cycles. The critical moments of Greban’s Paris *Passion* present the appearance of Satan, as “the joy and depression of the evil spirit subversively accompanies the tragedy that ends with the triumph of the righteous;” one of the manuscripts explains the presence of the Devil with the necessity of “showing the difference between his sins and the sins of man and explaining why the sin of man has been the only one redeemed” (Frank 1954: 184 and ft. 2). This is a clear renunciation of the doctrine of apocatastasis that is too forgiving of the fallen angels. It is the devils in Jan Smeken’s eucharistic miracle play that do everything so that no one can reach the Host. “The enemy, knowing the great good and the healing power of Holy Communion, tries as much as he can by every manner and means to hinder and keep away the faithful and the devout” (Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, IV 10.1).

Nobody should hold illusions about the intentions of the Devil, but everyone should know his abomination, so that no one allows his seduction and starts imitating him.

Christ’s descent into Hell is very non-canonical, yet perseverant and persistently ubiquitous in tradition, because it is the expected glaring victory of the God the hero over demons. The salvation of the prophets and the first parents from the abyss was a sign of encompassing with history even the earliest past, which Christ had changed even though he came later. With the change of the past, the evidence was born that there is no one stronger in the whole world than God, so only He can save you.

That is why a consistent spiritualization was necessary to occupy the entire ontological space; maybe it was more important than total Christianization?

881 Cf. K. M. Ashley about divine rule in the cycle from *Chester* (1993; ch. 26.6).

That is the reason why the Son of Man “returned” to Heaven to overcome the demons that threatened people, and to arrange there for people an edifice of eternal joy. This was the only way by which Christ could assure people that no force threatens the eternal life of their souls.⁸⁸²

882 This certainty was vividly expressed by the folk rite of “lifting the figure of Christ in the church on the day of the Ascension and later throwing down from a top of the figure of the devil.” Such was the ceremony when the King Władysław II Jagiełło visited Poznań in 1402, but it was well known in the sixteenth century as well; this is evidenced by the aggressive reminiscence in Mikołaj Rej’s *Postylla* (1557, p. 201). Another proof has been preserved in the brochure by Piotr Skarga, *Upomnienie do Ewanielików* (1592), in which he commented on the destruction of the Evangelical temple in Cracow by the participants of the rite of throwing the devil down the tower of the Church of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven; when the participants wandered with the devil’s effigy on the streets, they attacked the Protestant chapel of Bróg (I refer after Windakiewicz 1902: 112–113).

23. The Miracle Play

1. REASSURING. When discussing the mystery plays, we stated that the historicity of the world must be translated into individual beliefs and experiences. The condition for the persistence of these beliefs is the constant confirming of revelation, already after the shift in the ontological location of the sacred. What most clearly reflects miraculousness is the fact of the concrete recognition of the new status of the sacred. No preparation is necessary to distinguish a work of art that is rooted in a miracle, nor is it necessary to understand the essence of its uniqueness. However, the functioning of miracular motifs does not stem from complete spontaneity or randomness. In a represented world in which miracles occur, some people see and recognize them while others do not.

The profane was something entirely different from paganism, as it stems from the belief that holiness remains within reach even after the division. One of the proofs for this was the miracle. According to the views of the Augustinians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries – the most influential school at that time – the miracle was “a sign inviting, urging, but not imposing faith” (Rusecki 1991: 116). Scholastics following Thomas Aquinas inclined to overestimate the miracle as proof, perhaps somewhat paradoxically, as they usually stressed the rationality of the religious system.

Henry of Ghent (d. 1293) proclaimed that God manifests Himself in miracles, but the purpose of miracles is not to demonstrate divine power but bring people into personal contact with God. The miracles do not allow one to ascertain divine intervention in history, but rather experience it and adhere to a supernatural reality or, speaking in our categories, immerse oneself in the “aura of factuality” by reconciling microhistory with macrohistory. In this sense, miracle becomes a form of revelation and its actualization.⁸⁸³ This is quite close to the function of miracle that results from the progress of transcendentalization: the miracle showed that God watches over every soul, even though he has become unreachable; that is, not readily available for one’s beck and call.

883 I refer the views of Henry of Ghent after *Summae quaestionum ordinariam*, q. 2 a 9, ed. J. Badius, Paris 1520; qtd. after Rusecki 1991: 105. Badius (Ascensius, Assche) published Henry’s other works: *Doctoris solemnibus Magistri Henrici Goethals a Gandavo... disputationes quodlibeticas*, 1518.

According to Perpeet (1977), the genre of the dramatic *miraculum* (miracle play), based on the interference of the miracle in everyday reality, served to foster the awareness of God's vigilance, and especially of his saints.

We shall describe the miracle play as a school of transcendence, in which people learned about the ontological boundary. As understanding spiritual meanings requires competence, so does identifying the ontological boundary; one enabled the other, both needed training.

In the English mystery plays, the need for ontological articulation of the difference between the worlds of the stage and the audience grew over time (Diller 1986, also 1989). Hummelen (1994) writes about the games played on the verge of the stage and audience. These phenomena may prove that the understanding of the distinction between the sacred and the profane is well established and that the latter is internally divided between true values and pseudo-values.

The Portuguese morality play by Gil Vicente, *Auto da Feira* (1527?), introduces crude peasant women who want to buy earthly goods at the Christmas market at the stalls set up by the Devil and Seraph. The Seraph lectures them about the futility of earthly things and the value of virtues (Hess 1977a: 678).

What is interesting from the point of view of literary theory is the distinguishing of fictional motifs from the historical background of miracle plays.

The Dutch miracle play *Mariken van Nieumeghen* shows this most vividly. Mariken was seduced by the Devil but converts thanks to her watching of the mystery play *Masscheroen* presenting the Heavenly Counsel between Satan the Mascaron and Christ. The manner of the staging – theatre within a theatre – emphasizes the essence of miracle play: the coexistence and specific hierarchy of two worlds: Heaven and Earth. The other world is symbolized by the procession stage that suggests an ecclesiastical context. Heaven does not appear to the heroes as such, through the miracle, but it is already metaphorized. They perceive it mediated as theatre.⁸⁸⁴ However, they actually hear the words of Christ, which they memorize by heart: “I would rather suffer the Passion again, / Than see a single soul lost, / Think about it, human” (*Mariken van Nieumeghen*, lines

884 This metaphorical mediation seems a medieval beginning of the early modern process of attributing to the theatre an universal role in creating a language to discuss things of highest order: “rearranging of history and politics not as transparent representations of incontestable realities, but as allegories.” I discuss this idea of Walter Benjamin (*Gesammelte Schriften* 1.1:260) in the Epilogue to *Pogranicza teatralności. Poezja, poetyka, praktyka*, ed. A. Dąbrowka, Wyd. IBL Warszawa 2011, pp. 158–163. There, I follow Samuel Weber, *Teatralność jako medium*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2009, transl. J. Burzyński, p. 184.

854–857). It is precisely this Word of God, changed by the poet into verse, which suffices for Mariken's conversion. Only when the heroine decides to break free from Satan's power under the influence of God's goodness does the Devil try to stop her and Mary intervenes in a way typical for a miracle play.

What educates about the possibility of resurrection and the existence of afterlife is the narrative genre called *die Jenseitsschau*, in which "both worlds touch each other." The saints and people who returned from the afterlife exemplify the fact (Gurevich 1988: 181), the most outstanding example being *Visio Sancti Pauli*.⁸⁸⁵ This indicates that the problem of the border of the two worlds closely relates to the stability or uncertainty of faith (see part 3). The element of anticipation for the entrance to the afterlife after death appears in tombstone representations, whose ontological status causes such problems to art historians. Apart from the existential experiencing of two worlds that are separate, or entirely ontologically different, what prevailed was an artistic experience in the form of allegory that evoked a coexistence of "simultaneous realities."⁸⁸⁶

2. PARTICULARIZATION, MICROHISTORY. What is important in Perpeet's idea is the dialectic of society and individualization: even one's smallest gesture can have a salvific effect on that person and the community; a miracle merited by an individual connects not only Earth with Heaven but also privacy with the community. To effectively pray a miracle manifests ("objectivizes") successful socialization.

Why is it always the poor widow or a child who discovers a miracle?⁸⁸⁷ This is their only possible contribution to the community. Even the weakest (that is, any) individual can communicate with a group via a miracle; the miracle triggers universal social communication and creates a state of absolute agreement among all. What is this miracle is the very fact and effect of such communication. Let us not be surprised by how much effort went into ensuring that these moments – not so frequent in a society – last as long as possible.

We see again that the cult has a parallel addressee – not only in Heaven but also on Earth⁸⁸⁸ – the saint is the carrier or emblem of a parish or group identity projected on this patron, to whom people attribute an ever-increasing power and influence (Terpstra 1995: 206). We may imagine an utterly private worship

885 Ed. by Th. Silverstein, London 1935. One of the versions is quoted by J. Sokolski (1994: 15–18, with literature on pp. 14–15) who discusses the issue in several places.

886 The concept of C. Erickson (1976).

887 Described by N. Terpstra (1995).

888 See chapter 13.2 about foundations and wills.

of God by tireless hermits, but such a cult directed toward a saint would seem strange. One may invoke a saint as an inspiration for action, but the cults of saints are strictly collective affairs. Such cults manifest the existence of a group not as a mass but as a communicational community.

The abundant hagiographic iconography and literature proves the growth of belief in the spiritual existence in Heaven not only of the Divine Persons but also of saints. Simultaneously, it expresses the belief in the existence of a constant circulation of information along with possibly even a permanent potential presence of saints in every corner of the world of the profane. On the other hand, the “democracy” or populism of miracles performed by saintly persons but concerning also the little ones among their believers reflects the common expectation that ordinary people are indeed destined for holiness. Just as the mystery play was to bring the proof of God’s rule over the entire supralunar world, now – in the miracle play – his vigilance is also to assure people that God’s reign over the demon world continues. This message mainly aims at the unbelievers. What testifies to the fact that this was not at all a trivial or easy task are the results of efforts made in this domain by the people themselves.⁸⁸⁹

3. CONVERTING, UNBELIEF. The classification of hagiographic pieces as historical (A. E. Knight) requires the assignment of a different range than the holy history. Something more than chronology decides here, the theme is different: the Old Testament included the prehistory of the Church, the New Testament – the circumstances of its founding, while hagiography – the history of a (now human) work of converting. What distinguishes them is the order of reading in the Office of canonical hours. For each of the three nocturnes in Lauds (*Matutinum*) there were appropriate fragments of the Scripture (nocturne 1), patristic or hagiographic texts (nocturne 2), and a homily to the text of the Gospel (nocturne 3). There were three fragments in diocesan churches or four in monasteries. “Throughout the year, *historiae* or Scripture readings traversed the entire Bible (excluding the Gospels)” (Harper 1997: 101). Thus, the reading program also distinguished between three textual traditions, simultaneously having an encyclopedic character.

The saints were the most vocational teachers in the work of conversion. The fact that thanks to their virtues they passed from the human to the heavenly world legitimized their teachings. Whereas the fact that they broke the ontological boundary was proof that this was possible. Their way – exemplary piety rewarded by God – provided guidance on how to achieve this. The sacred under

889 Cf. Levack’s explanation of witch-hunting, point 4 below.

sacramentalism ceased to be omnipresent, became distant, but at the same time also more human. It is possible that the stage of communing with the relics of saints was necessary so that what would later satisfy the believers were the more sophisticated forms of the sacred in the sacraments, especially the highly mysterious and incomprehensible Eucharist.

In miracle plays, the tropological function (moralizing, exemplary) is made stronger by a dualistic ontology: the miracle visually intervenes in mundane everyday life. However, the occurrence of a miracle – the triggering of such a strong argument – is regulated by strictly defined conditions, which always come from faith and prayer opposed by disbelief, godlessness, or combating of righteous Christians (the people of the Church). In exempla, divine intervention often takes the form of immediate remuneration like the Assumption or punishment. The latter becomes “God’s automatic judgment” or, rather, a miraculous delivering of punishment, whose elements were inherent in the institution of trial by ordeal, in which defeat meant possible injury to health or death. The resignation of the Church from trials by ordeal in the real justice system enabled them to freely and uncontrollably function in exempla. Trial by ordeal is a form of spiritualization. People had to transfer this proof of the system’s factuality from the realm of empiricism to that of narration; that is, to take it out of the control of everyday experience to eliminate the danger of a dissonance⁸⁹⁰ while simultaneously realizing the promise that “the just shall live by faith.” (Romans 1: 17).

Earlier, we described the largest body of dramatic miracle plays – the French *Miracles de Notre Dame* from the mid-fourteenth century – as an encyclopedia of legends.⁸⁹¹ One of these miracle plays, *Saint Valentin*, contains a pattern common to all medieval literature, that of the conversion of a Muslim or another pagan, also a “Prussian Saracen.” There, one of the several Saint Valentines converts a son of the Emperor but himself dies a martyr.

890 See chapter 6.3 on how Piekarczyk explains the conditions for the absence of a conflict between faith and knowledge, as well as the medieval-Renaissance faith in prodigia and Neoplatonic Spiritism as forms of this compromise. Also see Borkowska 1978 who cites as an example the treatise of John of Głogów about the lack of contradiction between astrology and the Christian faith: *Persuasio brevis, quomodo astrologiae studium religioni Christianae non est adversum, quomodo licitum et versi catholicis utilissimum*. This work is discussed by J. Dobrzycki, M. Markowski, T. Przykowski, *Historia astronomii w Polsce*, Vol. 1, Warszawa 1975, p. 109.

891 Among others, confer G. Runnals, “Medieval Trade Guilds and the Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages,” *Medium Aevum* 39/1970, pp. 257–287, about the confraternity context of these miracle plays.

Several characteristic motifs converge here: the preacher's frame (a priest's sermon opens and closes the play, which was a frequent technique); the conversion of an outstanding intellectual from the younger generation (Caton's disciples and the Emperor's son); the miracle of healing in answer to prayer and a martyr's death. All these elements evidence effective communication between a reliable God and a true believer and confirm the veracity of faith through the reality of exchange in the *sacrum commercium*: the assumption of the martyr and the immediate Divine Punishment of the hardened heathen proves God's authority even over the pagans; the coercion of the Devil to serve as a witness of God's sovereignty over the demon world; the mediation of Mary who executes Christ's commands.

The earliest forms of miracle play mostly focus on saints. The pioneers comprised Nicholas⁸⁹², Mary⁸⁹³, and Catherine, depicted in the very first miracle play (performed around 1100).⁸⁹⁴ In the older texts from the *Miracles de Notre Dame* cycle, Mary has greater autonomy, while in the newer ones prevails the initiative of Christ (Loba 1999: 119). In the later phase of miracle play development, there occur far fewer conversions, performed not by the saints but the miraculous host (see part 5). Sixteenth-century Spanish literature created a separate and

892 Jean Bodel, *Le jeu de Saint Nicolas* (before 1209). C. Davidson (1995) gathered mentions about an English play about Saint Nicholas from about 1250, about 1283, and 1473 (p. 152). In the tenth century, the canoness Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim (Saxony) wrote a dialogue scene *Tres filiae* (Three Daughters), in which we learn from the father and his three daughters about the hunger they suffer. The unexpected throwing of gold into their chamber is the only theatrical motif that makes the father invoke the benefactor and entails a short introduction of Saint Nicholas. See below about another of Hrotsvitha's hagiographic plays, *Abraham*.

893 Rutebeuf (1230–1285), *Le miracle de Theophile*.

894 In the anonymous *Ludus de sancta Katerina* (Wilson 1952: 209 with reference to *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii S. Albani*, MS. 28, I, 73), although no text exists today. The performance in Dunstable was prepared by the Norman Geoffrey, a teacher at the Saint Alban's monastery school, where he became the abbot in 1119. For the oldest English certified representation of the miracle play about Saint Catherine, see C. B. C. Thomas, "The Miracle Play at Dunstable," *Modern Language Notes* 32/1917, p. 337–344. C. Davidson (1995) offers a review of English productions with staging details and dating to about 1110. A typical Polish miracle play is *Dialog na uroczystość świętej Katarzyny panny i męczenniczki* by Jan Paweł Cichoński from 1694; *Dramaty staropolskie*, Vol. 6, pp. 137–173. The manifestation of the sacred in this play is limited to the figures of angels.

long-lasting genre of Eucharistic plays: *Autos sacramentales*.⁸⁹⁵ The genre shares with miracle play both historical themes like conversions, apostasy, heresy, or hagiography and legendary Marian themes such as structure, in which the Mary saves the hero when he turns to her for help.⁸⁹⁶ The *autos* generally developed in the allegorical direction, which justifies the definition of the genre as a “Eucharistic morality play.”

4. THE DEVIL The opposite of conversion is the apostasy of a Christian who surrenders himself to the power of Satan.

The Brabant miracle play *Mariken van Nieumeghen* shows many peculiarities (we have already discussed some). The pact with the Devil is the backbone of the story. The pact with the Devil was “[t]he central idea in the cumulative concept of witchcraft” which became the core of witch-hunts, as it was always about the idea of exchange: magical power for the soul. This power also meant the ability to summon demons to obtain secret knowledge and reach for the hidden truth. However, the contract that *Mariken van Nieumeghen* signs is somewhat innocent in comparison. Mariken is tempted by the prospect of mastering foreign languages and the seven liberal arts; the vision of a happy life is suggested by the Devil’s promise that she will be able to drink sweet wine and do whatever she may wish every day.

One of the aspects of the decadent life of the two heroes in the Antwerp inn⁸⁹⁷ are the girl’s performances as a scholar and expert in the art of rhetoric. We encounter an ambiguity here, because she presents rhetoric as a gift of the Holy Spirit while, later, expresses disappointment that people do not use art to develop the country: “everyone would rightly admire true art.”⁸⁹⁸ “They say art

895 The critical edition of Polish translations of three plays for the National Library (Series II, No. 227) did L. Biały: P. Calderon de la Barca, *Autos sacramentales: Wielki teatr świata, Magia Grzechu, Życie jest snem*, Wrocław 1997.

896 For example, it happens this way in *A María el Corazón* (A Heart for Mary); L. Biały (1997): LXXI, LXXXVI. About the “destruction of heresy” as the primary goal of *autos* and “holy stories” as their thematic source spoke the first author who defined them without yet mentioning allegoricity, that is, Lope de Vega. L. Biały (1997): XXXIIIff.

897 The episode of sinful inn life is entailed in the English mystery play about Mary Magdalene, edited by D.C. Baker et al., *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian MSS Digby 133 and Museo 160*, Oxford 1982 (Davidson 1995: 152–153). Similarly, in Hrotsvitha’s hagiographic drama *Abraham*, a heroine named Maria, a pupil of a pious hermit, is seduced and prostituted in an inn, where Abraham finally finds and converts her, reminding her of the lost joy of innocence (Langosch 1957: 69 et seq.); see the following paragraphs.

898 “Want / Reyn conste sal elck met rechte minnen”, *Mariken*, lin. 545.

ensures kindness: *Conste maect ionste*,” but unfortunately it is not true: art does not warrant respect, as the truthful poet lives in poverty while paltry flatterers prosper; ignorance and incompetence “lead to the downfall of the arts.” Assuming the probability that the author was one of the Antwerp’s Rederijkers, it seems that we may understand the slogan more broadly – like “music has charms to soothe the savage breast” – which echoes the civilizational project based on the values of art independent of social and political divisions. That is a somewhat similar project to the one created by the Minnesänger (see ch. 6.3; Rischer 1992: 156). This ballad seems to bitterly reflect on the motto of the Antwerp confraternity De Violieren: *Uyt yonsten versaemt* (Connected in kindness). The reason for this ambiguity is that these slogans are – after all – preached by a witch in the cave of evil. However, the grave tone of her ballad makes us treat its message seriously, while the scenery highlights these negative effects of failure to respect true art.

The thread on which the salvation of her soul hangs is woven here by Mariken’s uncle who constantly prays for her. In his monologues to Mariken, the Devil repeatedly confirms the superiority of God:

But my power, oh!, depends
 On the Almighty, after all.
 Should he say “No,”
 I will do not what I want (*Mariken van Nieumeghen*, p. 33).

Of course, it is no coincidence that the key scene of Mariken’s conversion after her return home occurs on the day of the annual procession, and that the conversion happens as a result of a theatrical play: “but this is better than a sermon!” (*Mariken van Nieumeghen*, p. 44).

The performance on the pageant reminds about the mysteries of the history of salvation. The deft author employed here a metatheatrical ploy to reconstruct the eschatological framework, which in some mystery and morality plays is achieved by the theme of the Heavenly Council held by the Daughters of God. The dispute of Devil the Mascaron with Christ also happens in Heaven and reminds of the main doctrinal truths. The Devil tries to persuade Christ to return to the strict law of the Old Testament. The meeting of two genres in one play – the mystery and miracle play – is not a peculiarity of historical record but a deliberate concentration of both traditions. We now clearly see that the radical juxtaposition of the Letter against the Spirit – or the “outdated” law against the “new” law proposed by Thomas a Kempis – profoundly reflects the feeling of the importance of the Incarnation.

Compared to *Mariken van Nieumeghen*, Hrotsvitha's *Abraham*⁸⁹⁹ is a less spectacular, thousand-year-old, and never performed hagiographical drama. The latter lacks miraculous intervention, as if 500 years earlier a conjecture sufficed to assume that the heroine's conversion from the wrong path occurred due to God's grace (*Divinae gratia visitationis*, p. 84, the speaking turn of Efrem), and that such a salvific visitation does not require a particularly spectacular setting. It means that *Abraham* still displays the biblical understanding of the sacred.

We should reflect a moment on the comparison of *Mariken van Nieumeghen* and *Abraham*.⁹⁰⁰

The adolescent girl Mariken, her orphanhood, her guardian clergyman uncle, the devilish seduction, dolce vita at the inn, conversion, penance – all these elements along with causal and temporal relations between them lead to a serious reflection on the similarities and possible relationship between the two plays. It is so, because the author of *Mariken* work could have known the text of *Abraham* from *editio princeps* of Hrotsvitha's works, which Conrad Celtes⁹⁰¹ prepared in 1501. Regardless of the range of similarities, differences can also

899 Ed. by Langosch 1957: 40–89; the text is based on *Acta S. Abramii*; A. Wilmaert, “Les rédactions latines de la vie d’Abram érémite,” *Revue Bénédictine* 50/1938, pp. 222–245; the play concerns the hermit Abraham of Chiduna near Edessa, a patron of converted prostitutes (E. Weis in LCI 5, p. 7) and his cousin Mary of Egypt, *Acta Sanctorum Mart.* II, pp. 428–439; G. Kaster, “Maria Büsserin,” LCI 7, col. 511.

900 They were highlighted by H.J.E. Endepols in the introduction to the publication of the volume of translations of Hrotsvitha's dramas: *Hrotsvitha van Gandersheim. Leesdrama's*, Utrecht 1950, p. LXII; qtd. after Coigneau 1991: ft. 46.

901 Conrad Celtes discovered them in Regensburg (1493) and printed in Nuremberg. *Mariken*'s oldest known print, dated uncertainly for 1515 (Antwerp, Vorsterman), may not have been the first, but the original is usually not dated before 1500. The exchange had to be quite lively between Antwerp and Nuremberg, and Celtes' mobility in Europe at that time is a well-known fact. D. Coigneau (1991) proves *Mariken*'s connection with the legend of Abraham (Tubach, No. 2564 *Hermit converts niece*), as well as (pp. 33–40) elaborates the well-known Dutch language versions from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and related threads. As a sidenote, D. Coigneau (1991: ft. 46) develops a comparison with Hrotsvitha's drama by adding a few motifs from other works by Celtes: “Many elements from *Mariken* in one book famous among the humanists!” As the most important point of the material similarity between the legend and *Mariken van Niemeghen* (also with *Abraham*), D. Coigneau rightly points to the key figure of her uncle but notices no difference between these approaches, and only considers this aspect a positive proof that *Mariken* is not a Marian legend. To fill this gap, I explain the differences in the responsibilities of the heroines of *Abraham* and *Mariken van Nieumeghen* below.

prove instructive. Let us limit ourselves here to two striking points. The hermit Abraham needed a helper to overcome the power of the Devil through communal prayer and substitute penance; whereas the Devil enslaves a weak human being to sin, but he actually is the same biblical tempter “who struck down the Parents.” 500 years later, in Antwerp, the Devil incarnated insidiously acts like a merchant, with whom one needs to strike a deal, who keeps his word, and keeps the sinner-client company; here, the sinner Mariken must identify the Devil on her own in order to break away from him, and she herself must bear the heavenly burden of repentance. The help she receives from the world is merely a direction toward the recovery of the state of grace.

As an intermediate solution between the two above plays, we might consider Hildegard’s of Bingen pseudo-liturgical drama *Ordo Virtutum* (c. 1151).⁹⁰² There, the biblical Devil leads a soul astray, while his deeds are quelled by the Virtues under the command of the Queen of Humility: they effectively neutralize the Devil and tie him up like a villain, as depicted by Hildegard’s miniatures (*Scivias*).

5. THE EUCHARIST. The sacrament of bread and blood gathers the most difficult doctrinal issues, whose formulation, explanation, and dissemination involved a great deal of effort. Much of the dramatic literature of the late Middle Ages is a testimony, result, and instrument of these hardships. From the earliest miracle plays that refer to transubstantiation,⁹⁰³ the theme appears with the motif

902 Hildegard von Bingen, *Ordo Virtutum*, ed. A. E. Davidson, Kalamazoo 1984 (with English translation). The drama ends a truly “liturgical opera:” a cycle of seventy-seven sequences, hymns, and antiphons, which the author herself described as a “symphony.” Noteworthy, the scholars suppose that the source of the motif, in which the Virtue abandons the Soul due to the Devil’s seduction was the departure of Hildegard’s collaborator, Richardis von Stade, tempted by a higher religious office: J. Bolton Holloway, “The Monastic Context of Hildegard’s *Ordo Virtutum*,” A. E. Davidson 1992: 63–78; *The Miniatures from the Book of Scivias of Hildegard of Bingen from the Rupertsberg Codex*, ed. A. Führkötter, Turnhout 1978. In the entire paragraph, I refer to the article by R. Potter (1992). The pseudo-liturgical nature of this drama stems from the lack of its clear positioning in any moment of the liturgy; the same applies to *Ludus de Antichristo*; see chapter 11.1.

903 A woman baking the Hosts laughed when Pope Saint Gregory I wanted to give her communion. Asked about the cause of laughter, she replied: “Because the bread I baked with my own hands, the priest called the body of God.” “Then Gregory fell on his knees praying for faith for this woman and, when he stood up, he found on the altar this part of the Lord’s body in the shape of a finger of flesh and blood; then the woman believed and he gave her the Host.” From the Dutch translation of the *Legenda Aurea*, MS 388 Royal Library in Brussels, fol. 175v, in: *Spel vanden Heiligen Sacramente van der Nyeuwervaert*, p. 245. A similar text is quoted by Durandus,

of doubt. Providing testimonies against the doubting is probably one of the main functions of the genre.

A similarly elementary motive of convicting the doubters is the starting point for the Brabant author Jan Smeken in the Dutch play of the Eucharistic miracle, *Spel vanden Heiligen Sacramente van der Nyeuwer Vaert* (c. 1520; see ch. 19). The Bishop's messenger Macarius received an ungrateful role here. He is to check whether the Host found on the moor by three villagers is indeed a sacrament. The Church authorities distrust the three witnesses who claim that the Host – unsoiled, even though dug out of the peat – bled when taken into hand. Deaf to the suggestions of two tempters,⁹⁰⁴ Macarius decides to wound the Host with a small knife (lin. 425–426): “If it starts not bleeding in all of the five places, / I will not consider it a perfect sacrament.”⁹⁰⁵

Although his mission was not blasphemous in intent, having proved what was evident to all, Macarius understood that he had committed sacrilege: “People say he fell into madness, cut off both his hands, and ate them” (lin. 846–847).

The author of the miracle play from Breda staged a paradoxical position of struggle and belief: his devils “believe” so that they confirm Divinity more than any other figure, and they release victorious miracles of the host (Asselbergs, p. 33).

A similarly difficult task was undertaken by the author of the English drama *Play of the Sacrament*.⁹⁰⁶ The play is a meticulous polemic with the heresy of the Lollard movement in the matters of transubstantiation, the validity of the sacraments, and the necessity of institution of priesthood (Gibson 1989: 35). However, the opponents are not the Lollard apostates but the Jews whose conversion is, of course, an even stronger argument. The Host makes them convert.

Rationale, IV.41.28 (ed. 1995, p. 449), which the editors identify as *Legenda aurea*, c. 46, 11 (ed. by Graesse 1846: 197–198).

904 The devils bear the names Sondich Becoren (Sinful Temptation) and Belet van Dueghden (Opponent of the Virtues), and they propose an ordeal of fire (whether the host would burn), of water (whether it would dissolve or drown), and hacking into pieces (whether it would grow back together).

905 “Willet tot gheen der vijff steden bloeden, / Soe en houdict voer gheen sacrament volmaect”.

906 The preserved manuscript from the sixteenth century is a copy of a transcript prepared for the performance in the village of Croxton after 1461. The performance was related to the feast of Corpus Christi celebrated in England from 1318. Lynette R. Muir, “Further Thoughts on the Tale of the Profaned Host (in the Play of the Sacrament and elsewhere),” *EDAM*, Spring 1999, p. 21, discusses the issue of desecration of the Host on the example of this and other plays.

After being cut, the Host assumes the form of Christ. The image heals the Jews and instructs them to notify the priests before turning back into the host. The *episcopus* is to bring the Host to the church in a procession, connected with the real procession of Corpus Christi, while the converts kneel among the believers, immersed in grief for their sins. As Homan remarks (1991: 201), the mutilation of the host causes the appearance of the Infant Jesus with the wounds of Christ, which is a rare motif shared by this drama and the miracle play from manuscript 51 at the Lincoln Cathedral. There, Jesus speaks to a doubting woman, "It is you who hurt me," while in the play he addresses the Jews. Recognition of the existence of the problem of doubt and disbelief along with the possibility of overcoming them through a miracle is the common theme and message of both texts (Gibson 1989: 38). This would be yet another recapitulative function of miracle plays: to support the homogenization of the Church as the Body by identifying the instrument to effectively reduce the scale of doubt and unbelief.

6. SELF-CREATION. The miracle play is a genre, in which the human subject can now act individually. A parishioner in Breda demands that inspector Macarius refrains from examining the sacrament because the miracle of the bleeding Host experienced by John Bautoen has been witnessed by two women and this seems "pure truth" to the parishioner ("*clærheit / Van waerheden*;" lines 462–463). Here we see a clash of two concepts of truth stemming from the difference between the approach of the legal, sacramental Church and folk devotion. Macarius responds: "Who knows if he is telling the truth? It is easy to convince women of something; such simpletons can be deceived by anything, perhaps he bribed them with gold. Therefore, no one can claim that this is true until it is proven so" (lin. 646–649). A slightly similar example of distrust toward man is provided by the author of *Tretise* who limits people's aspirations to preaching the truths of faith in their own words.

The lack of predictable behavior was long perceived as succumbing to the Devil; which confirms the civilizing role of religion. The more common the expectation of predictability of a neighbor is, the more the disappointment is articulated as an accusation of dealing with the Devil or fear of demons. Many scholars find that diableries gradually acquired an increasingly important dramatic function. Satan multiplies his temptations – among other things, with the invention of dice games – and truly did his utmost to prevent salvation. This is a miracular trait: the increase of responsibility for the world of the profane and the fear of its threat, should the Divine care was to cease. The glimpse at such a turn of events can be found in a number of farces.

People who once only dreamt or imagined that they follow demons, from around the fourteenth century claimed that they actually do so with full

consciousness: for example, women believed they were flying with the help of the Devil. Levack deems the reasons unexplainable. He merely suggests that scholastic theories probably influenced the situation so as to give the Devil the ability to take human shape and strike deals with people; in the end, everyone believed that people did so.

But why did precisely these scholastic theories about the Devil's talents inspired so many minds? One may perceive it as a manifestation of the merging of different elements of personality, based on the continuity of thought, coherence of reflection on experiences and dreams, which contributes to their clarification, presencing, and objectivization in specific figures (persons). The Devil also develops and does not lag behind the development of human subjectivity. We have already encountered this mechanism when learning about the process of identifying "passion narratives" with "ordinary historical facts" (Marrow 1979; ch. 22.6; cf. also "bodily contemplation" and "pedagogical theatre" by Auerbach in ch. 17.4). Below, we will learn about changes of auxiliary images in mnemonic techniques (*imagines agentes*; ch. 25.3) and certain motifs of "pedagogical stories" (ch. 24.3; Carruthers 1998) that had similar effects.

The double structure of *Mariken van Nieumeghen* enables us to compare two figures of devils.⁹⁰⁷ Masscheroen is yet another biblical opponent of God – an *adversarius* – while Moenen is a contemporary evil man, a seducer whose devilish character is completely fulfilled through human actions: there is only one scene when he resorts to his supernatural powers. The latter is no longer a pawn but a *persona dramatis* who can exert full influence on people just like Titivillus from *Mankind* in comparison with a schematic Diabolus of any cyclical mystery play (Walsh 1969: 394).

The accompanying motif of witchcraft is metamorphosis – a magical transformation – so frequent in fairy tales. However, the problematic nature of transformation presupposes the awareness of an inalienable identity – both as a value and burden – one is someone and it is difficult to escape from this fact. According to Lenk (1966: 22), the masquerades of the Nuremberg carnival were no simple relics of pagan cult games (p. 108) but a reaction to the urban policing regime. By swapping roles, pretending to be someone else, and obscuring the face, "the burghers broke free from the bonds imposed on them by the local government regulating all aspects of life, including the private sphere." Moreover,

907 There also is a third, ordinary devil, who earlier abducts the soul of a wicked woman who committed suicide.

we cannot exclude the influence of court disguise games.⁹⁰⁸ Those who greatly desired to be Someone or someone else would receive supernatural help. It seems that those satisfied with their identity predominated, while to the fact that it is a high value testify the motifs of fear of losing one's identity by way of enchantment or criminal expulsion; for instance, in the scene of abduction of a royal infant in *Esmoreit*.

A person with a variable identity becomes suspicious to others because he is obviously unpredictable: the community cannot make of such people anything larger than themselves. Mariken's insistence on her name is very telling. The Devil has his reasons to dislike this name, but she insists, so he allows her to leave the first letter through a compromise. The girl's will testifies to her maturity and fixed identity, while the letter "M" in her name is the carrier of this fruitful bond with the transcendental sacred. For the time being, it turns out to be insufficient, but it still remains a hotline through which one may call for authentic help in the event of a catastrophe. This drama provides the observation that the stabilization of the identity of human subjects was one of the fronts of the struggle between God and Satan. On this occasion, the difficulty or ease of changing one's identity once again confirms Becker's correlation between sacrality and permanence.

On the existential level, a value must become objectivized and one can only emphasize it by denial. Wherever a value appears, the anxiety about this value will appear as its guard. The model grows stronger thanks to the antimodel that, for convenience and clarity, concentrates the objective factors in a small spectrum of stereotypes, from which we choose some, thus assembling our subjectivity. The strength of one's mind determines how much objectivity can one integrate into own subjectivity and how stable such conglomerate will be. Von Paltz's methodical struggle with "offensive thoughts" was a symptom of his concern for the integrity of this conglomerate. The same is true of the images of the sabbatical Black Mass. To make the celebrant stand on his head, chant the liturgy in reverse, administer a pseudo-Host made out of entrails – it is all a thought experiment in a cognitive sense, experienced as a fear of losing a certain value. Here, Levack speaks of a fear of blasphemy (see above about the carnival and below about the Feast of Fools). The same struggle between God and Satan occurs in the field of human identity as that which happens in the world. Moreover, as the strength and range of subjectivity increase, the internal struggle becomes more important. Obviously, subjectivity is the product of distribution ("subjectivization") of

908 These customs are presented by A. Barnstein in his *Die Darstellung der höfischen Verkleidungsspiele im ausgehenden Mittelalter*, München 1940.

small crumbs of the world, and then, with successful personality's integration a completely new kingdom appears: that of the "living heart" (addressed in Part 4).

Similarly, the society was defined existentially by anti-society, which already has a Roman tradition: the images of Christians as members of secret organizations, incestuous, and cannibalistic; later we see heretical sects presented as inhumane anti-societies. We shall view the devilish companies called "heretical sects of Satan's worshippers" as an antimodel of the voluntary religious confraternities. The earliest known description of such company comes from Ireland (1324–1335) that merely outlines the concepts of a witch and a Satanic group. About 1400, in Switzerland appears a more classic model of a secular trial against a group of rural anti-Christians devastating the crops, summoning demons, and worshipping the Devil. These trials begin the separation of heresy and witchcraft; that is to say, they end the diabolization of heresy, while magic leaves the stereotype of a heretic and moves onto the stereotype of the witch and, soon after, into the characters of the folk fairy tale. The stereotype of heretics itself serves as a tool for disgrace and condemnation (Potkowski 1978: 133). The sphere of religious contradictions is distinguished from the sphere of concern for the temporal world. A legalistic understanding of religion as a sacramental doctrine based on the code of the canon law gains firm ground. Now, people can think about the world of the sacred and the world of the profane as independent of each other.

7. SATIRE. The protagonists of miracle plays only succeed if they concentrate on looking after the conversion of others and their own salvation. Success means God's favor⁹⁰⁹ – and vice versa. Worth quoting is the clinical description of this mechanism, which Haug gave, though not for drama but for the legendary romance – the literary genre, which like no other praises human skills – but here they are disgraced (Haug 1982a: 273). The work in question is the novel based on the legend of King Oswald, *Der Münchner Oswald*.⁹¹⁰ Using the structure and motifs of chivalric romance about courtship (*die Brautwerbung*), the author unmasks all "human" solutions, because they fail in the key points of the plot and progress is possible only thanks to divine intervention. This is illustrated by the comic episode in *Play of the Sacrament*, in which a doctor fails to imitate Christ's

909 "Quod devote agitur, facile perficitur" – a line of Mary from *Abraham* after her conversion, p. 82. R. Scheremet described a number of examples of legendary romances, in which the protagonist who lives a saintly life – according to hagiographic patterns – wins the prize of eternal life (1986: 100).

910 Ed. by M. Curschmann, Tübingen 1974.

miracle of healing that simultaneously offered a clear and amusing allusion to figure familiar to the local audience (Gibson 1989: 36).

In general, we notice here a two-stage use of the aesthetic opposition of seriousness and the comic. This opposition may serve as the illustration of the antithesis of ideas of divinity and mankind⁹¹¹ or as the representation of the inner diversity of human behavior as either devout or non-devout. The same appears on the compositional level. Here, the success (of seriousness) rewards the recommended behavior. The condemned conduct leads to disaster. One form of such condemnation is ridicule. It did not only appear in farces, but found episodic use in various genres, such as mystery, miracle, and morality plays.

Haug pointed to the “comic potential” of miracles (1982a: 267); “a miracle is absurd, it mocks natural and cognitive explanations.” The comic episodes in hagiography – St. Lawrence telling his torturers who burn him on the gridiron that “I am already done on one side” – clearly express the power of the saint over his body, thus intensifying the impression of difference between this and the other world; the human and the divine realm. However, Haug does not add that the saint turns the pseudo-joke against his persecutor by immediately saying: “Cut a piece of me and give it to Decius, it will already be to his liking” (*The Passion of St. Lawrence*, lin. 2163–2164).

Perhaps, we approach here an attempt to express irrationality at a time when rationality was yet to be defined. We also approach the goal of ridiculing the Enemy, which may assume two forms. The Devils in Smeken’s sacrament play curse, act maliciously, frivolously, and ridiculously. The Emperor in *Saint Valentin* suffocates while eating. This may not be funny as it is God’s punishment for the killing Saint Valentine, but it certainly is not tragic; it does not fit the dignity of the Emperor, so it also serves as a punishment of ridicule. We must distinguish this punishment from the ridicule of the Devil that is not a punishment, but a relegation to inferiority. Such humiliation makes the Devil less sinister and – more importantly – does not exclude his usefulness.

911 This was observed by R. Sprandel (1982: 55) in relation to exempla.

24. The Morality Play

1. SELF-KNOWLEDGE. Let us define morality play as a drama in which we learn to know ourselves “in our own estate.” The sacred manifests itself here only through the sacraments. We learn God’s Will not by direct revelation or miraculous intervention but by the dialog of people with sacramental values. Should God appear in a morality play, he is beyond an ontological border like at the beginning of *Elckerlyc/Everyman* – here using the mediation of Death. Thus, the interference of God’s Will does not influence the course of action.⁹¹² However, the morality play persuades that once we have God in the heart – that is, we know the rules – we can, and even must take our salvation into own hands. Such parenetic and eschatological encyclopedias, for example, were the French and Dutch festivals of morality plays.

In contrast to the mystery and miracle plays, the morality play does not deal with the history of mankind in the frame of sacred history, but puts the individual fate in the center of the action and concentrates on the individual’s responsibility for own destiny, that is, salvation (Erzgräber 1977: 61).⁹¹³ While the matter of sources in previous genres was quite simple, morality play offers a new quality that prompted Alan Knight to oppose the previous genres – as historical – with morality play and farce, which he considers fictional.⁹¹⁴ Knight considers them jointly in two subsequent chapters (3–4) of his genological dissertation (1983). In the French material from 1475–1560, Knight examines numerous and separate uses of morality plays and farces. Moreover, not only authors and chroniclers distinguished between the two but also competent viewers and authors of poetics, not to mention that the works differed in versification (A. E. Knight 1983: 46). The historical non-fictional drama uses “intentionally referential statements about the real world” (p. 49). However, the frame of reference can be removed in the reception and replaced with a fictional one, thanks to which today we may read old historical art as fictional (1983: 50). It looks like a significant weakening of the referentiality criterion for genre distinguishing.

912 J. O. Fichte prematurely expects this reduction of God’s role in Chaucer’s “The Knight’s Tale,” see chapters 12.6 and 13.2.

913 See chapter 25.2 about some forms of including the individual’s fate into the historical frame of salvation.

914 O. B. Hardison writes similarly, “The morality play is not history, but fiction” (p. 289).

Certainly, the appearance of fictional motifs in morality plays and farces is significant. However, it is difficult to ignore the presence of such motifs in miracle plays,⁹¹⁵ not to mention mystery plays, in which fictional motifs can appear, though in a strictly defined scope and only in certain places. Even if we assume that the whole of a legendary life in a hagiographic drama is historical – that is, referential – we will still have a hard time determining its designates. Which Saint Valentine is the protagonist of *Saint Valentin*? Which Caesar persecutes him? There is not even a name available. Where and when lived the “Ewanjelista” from Polish mystery plays, the Apostle from the English miracle plays, or the Caesar from the liturgical drama about the Antichrist?⁹¹⁶ Are the personifications of the Church and the Synagogue in De Mézières’ Marian officium no longer a fiction? What differentiates the characters of the Devil – assuming its historical existence – and allegories like Sinful Temptation but for their names?⁹¹⁷ Finally, we are left with “ordinary” miracle plays like *Mariken van Nieumeghen*, in which the interventions of the saints are purely literary: they happen outside of their biography and do not belong to their legend, not even as their indispensable posthumous miracles.

Ultimately, what can we say about the examples clearly inspired by catechetical and didactic literature? According to Milla Riggio (1991), the morality play *Wisdom* differs from other fifteenth-century English plays of this genre because it draws large portions of texts straight from popular contemplative sources, especially *Horologium Sapientiae* by Henry Suso (1295–1366),⁹¹⁸ *The Scale of Perfection* by Walter Hilton (1330?–1396), and the anonymous treatise *Nine Points of Virtue*.⁹¹⁹ Are these sources fictional?

915 L. Muir highlights the similiarity between miracle and morality plays in the entry “Geistliches Spiel,” *LdM* 4, p. 1195.

916 Maybe that is the reason why Brett-Evans (1975: 48) remarks that this drama is the first morality play in European literature.

917 Cox (1996) writes about the functional identity between the Devils from mystery plays and Vices from morality plays.

918 The Clock of Wisdom, sometimes called *Orologium*; considered by many to be the most read text ca. 1334 before the appearance of *The Imitation of Christ*. Critical edition by P. Künzle, *Heinrich Seuses Horologium Sapientiae*, Freiburg 1977; selection of the German writings published by W. Szymona OP, *Księga Mądrości Przedwiecznej*, Poznań 1983; also *Księga Prawdy i inne pisma*, *ibid.*, 1989.

919 Dutch repertoire notes a “play about the nine brave” (best knights), *Spel van de neghen besten*, Hertogenbosch 1532; a poem in this vein was published by N. de Pauw in *Middelnederlandsche Gedichten en Fragmenten*, Ghent 1893–1914, Vol. 1, pp. 596–635.

Noteworthy, even classic morality plays have instances, in which there is a call to the Heaven for help just like in the scheme of a miracle play. For instance, in *Moralité de Langue Envenimee*, lie overcomes truth and the protagonist (Good Name) loses; in despair, the “good” call for the help of God who sends an Archangel (A. E. Knight 1983: 71).

Among the similarities of mystery and morality plays, scholars foreground the lack of individualization of characters, their anonymity resulting from representing groups, the lack of difference in the representation of supernatural characters, special emphasis on human relations with God and Satan, the amorphism of the structure, the overloading of monologues with catechesis, and the form of verse (Davenport 1982: 4–11).

2. ALLEGORESIS. Medieval playwrights regarded the morality play to be a dramatic exemplum (A. E. Knight 1983: 36). Exempla were also often conceived as general exemplary fictions, but also intended as historical message documented with the names of real people and dates of events. Moreover, exempla enjoyed mystery (metaphysical) historicity, whose main carrier was their fairly frequent animator: the Devil. Happé (1996: 116) points out that only the Devil may wear a mask in a morality play; a privilege that he shared in cycles of mystery plays only with God, Christ, and angels. The Devil plays a special role in morality plays: “He is one of the means by which the eternal intercepts the temporal” (Happé 1996: 117). However, all types of exemplarity are equally true in design and reception; no less than the parables of Christ. Are the latter also historical? Or maybe they are fictional, since people modified them for morality plays?

Jesus authorized the apostles to transfer the secrets of the parables with images, and he gave several examples, sometimes with interpretations (Matthew 13). This leads us to skepticism about the division of motifs of religious literature – especially whole genres – into fiction and non-fiction. It is difficult to separate the pairing historicity-fictionality and the cognitive effect of both principles is not much different. Medievalist genology never adopted the opposition of “Anglo-Saxon categories into fiction and non-fiction” as the basis for significant divisions: Kästner and Schütz (1983: 450) negatively assess their suitability for distinguishing information texts that convey practical knowledge. For medieval authors, the allegorical concept of truth still operates in parallel to the concept of empirical verifiability;⁹²⁰ both concepts mix or compete with each other, and this state lasts at least until the seventeenth century.

920 Ch. Meier, “Argumentationsformen kritischer Reflexion zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Allegorese,” *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 12/1978, pp. 116–159; qtd. after Kästner, Schütz 1983: 455; there, we find a broad selection of references.

Different criteria lead to different divisions. Konrad Schoell (1996: 189) adopts Knight's schematization to distinguish only two basic groups – comic and exemplaric theater – the latter combining morality and historical plays. It seems disputable to divide medieval drama into two great currents, especially as one needs further criteria for divisions within the large groups, we will keep with a more equal division. This division would appear in the form of a fan of truth that successively (or alternately) draws confirmation from the framework of typology – allegory – personification – typicality – document. These are not just interpretative techniques but compositional methods that serve cognition. After determining the main genres of religious drama as encyclopedias, we indicate in them the appropriate carriers of various kinds of truth.

The cognitive tasks of morality plays explain the frequent use of personification and allegory. These two establish effective heuristic tools, without which the dramatic staging of a psychological theme is almost impossible at this stage in the development of literature. Allegorical figures are arbitrary clarifications and objectifications; “whether or not *Franc Arbitre* [Free Will] is present as a dramatic character, free will is always part of the morality world” (A. E. Knight 1983: 60). If a play does not personify free will, the protagonists must talk about it more. If not less dramatic, then the negotiations of internal conflicts will certainly be less spectacular.

The program of this school of self-knowledge and psychology comprises a whole range of issues that can be divided into two main groups: internal and external. They constitute a two-channel dialoging circuit, in which (1) stage projections of the inside of people serve to check what has already entered the subject and then must emerge to negotiate standards; besides, (2) stage objectifications of external factors are agreed in terms of their value, that is, usefulness for the subject.

Both circuits witness a flow of information that consists in a constant consideration of what appears as a recognized separate factor of reality and how happens the integration of these objective factors into personality (“subjectivity”). Without the personification of impulses that motivate people, it is difficult to show on stage the inside of the soul, the construction of the subject, and the functioning of free will. This is why the technique of personification gained such popularity²¹ and remains so closely associated with polemical, argumentative, didactic, satire, and moralizing genres (Bergner 1994: 38).

21 As Knight (1983: 56–57) proves in his text, from the fourteenth century, *moraliser* simply meant *parler par allégorie*, hence *farse moralisée*, which makes it not a morality play but allegorical farce, typically a parody of a morality play.

The extra-generic universality of the allegorical method is evidenced by its application in the area of architecture, also as a metaphorical method of staging parenetic content, which Christiana Whitehead (1998) presents on the example of “cloisters of the soul.”⁹²² The pioneers again include Hugh of Saint Victor who offered not even architectural but an urbanistic vision in sermon 38: the image of our times as the entire city of Babylon with seven squares ruled by pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony and lust. What complements this topography is the neighborhood of Jerusalem linked with Babylon by a short and easy way, but not the other way around, “which is very strange: the road from Babylon to Jerusalem is long and hard.”⁹²³ In the French *Moralité des Enfants de Maintenant* (first half of the sixteenth century),⁹²⁴ we find an image of a narrow way to salvation and a wide path to destruction (Matthew 7:13–14) incorporated in the parable of the prodigal son; his fate is relived by the two sons of Today: when they lose everything to become naked and barefoot, one of them begins penance, the other continues and dies. The Spaniard Juan de Timoneda in *A Play About Faith* (1575, *Auto de la Fe*) opposes Faith and World against each other as stallholders on a market: Faith encourages you to buy the “bread of life” while the World (*Mundo*) distributes the “sweet bread of sensuality” for free (Hess 1977a: 678).

If the subject of plays is supposed to be moral teaching (*moralitas*), its presentation may even benefit from a certain simplicity or schematic character. All they need to do is enter into dialogic interaction, here and there apply a longer eloquent tale – and the task done. Merle Fifiield (1982: 288–289) develops such draft of the classification of morality plays based on the degree of rhetorical complication of the narrative element (pp. 290–301). The narrative episodes may appear in the form of juxtaposition of events without sequence; but when they join together, one can distinguish a set of stimulus-reaction, a three-phase structure of ascent-disaster-escape, and a five-phase structure. This one leads from (1) exposure that outlines the conflict and plan of intrigue through (2) the clash

922 Also confer the broad entry “Herzklosterallegorien,” *VL* 3: 1153–1167.

923 Sermo XXXVIII, *De Babylone, id est saeculari conversatione per septem crimina, fugienda*, PL 177, col. 994–999. See below for the iconographic tradition that probably moves away from this project. We see that Hugh of Saint Victor again perceives the matter as a task for people. Should he perceive this change as God’s action, the journey could be easy, which is how the protagonists of Hroswit’s *Abraham* think about the matter: “Abraham: Quanta celeritate asperi difficultatem itineris transcurrimus. / Maria: Quod devote agitur, facile perficitur” (Langosch 1957: 82).

924 “Today” is the name of the protagonists’ father; ed. by V. Le Duc, *Ancien théâtre français*, 3, pp. 5–86; Frank 1954: 261–264; Hess 1977a: 677; also see ch. 24.4.

of the protagonist with the antagonist to (3) the defeat of the protagonist in this clash, his (4) recovery of the field usually by a return to the righteous path, often thanks to a powerful helper, to (5) the final culmination and a solution, which tests his previous transformation.⁹²⁵

The characteristic elements of the Dutch morality play (*zinnespel*) are “returning” allegories that explain not only psychological motives (Shame) but also interactions like the Dispute (Twist). They even received special name *sinnekens*,⁹²⁶ sometimes *duiveltjes* (“little devils”), which is partly due to the fact that the Devil was finally the only orthodox demon and had to accept various obligations. This could partially distinguish him from the “historical” Devil of the Bible (Happé 1996: 113).

3. SACRAMENTALISM. Sacramental piety is a school of communion with the sacred, which is literal, mediated by the faith of the subjects in its presence in the sacraments. In this school, the human learns the system of rules, regulations, the whole grammar of salvation. The effectiveness of the sacraments received a lot of attention from scholars. Many miracle plays (ch. 22) staged Eucharistic miracles. Sins (Vices) in the morality play *Mankind* doubted the validity of the sacraments, including marriage, penance, and the anointing of the sick (Gash 1986: 90).

So far, the religious fabric of morality plays underwent diverse presentations. Many associated the whole group of dramas with the sacrament of penance by attributing to it the same goal as the mystery plays, with the difference that “the morality play performs the same ceremony in the microcosm of the individual human life as that of the Corpus Christi cycle in the macrocosm of historical time.”⁹²⁷

We should consider the sacramentalism of the Dutch morality play *Elckerlyc/Everyman* as a textbook example. Cunningham (1991: 368) confirms this by referring to Hardison’s position (1965: 289) and goes even deeper, to the liturgy

925 Fifield outlines this on p. 294, on which she refers to her book *The Rhetoric of Free Will; The Five-Action Structure of the English Moralities*, Leeds 1974.

926 The contemporary spelling *zinneken* (allegorical figure) did not save M. Fifield (p. 287) from translating *zinnespelen* as “sin plays.” The medieval Dutch word *sin/zin* – part of such words as *zinneken*, *zinnespel*, *spel van zinnen* – means only “spiritual meaning.” For an elementary elaboration, see W. M. H. Hummelen, *De sinnekens in het rederijkersdrama*, Groningen 1958; also see P. Happé, W. Hüsken, “Sinnekens and the Vice: Prolegomena,” *CD 29/1995*, pp. 248–269.

927 R. Potter in *The English Morality Play*, London 1975, pp. 7–8; qtd. after Cox (1996: 188). See the distinction macrohistory-microhistory in chapters 22 and 23.2. See Fichte 1993 in ch. 25.5 about the non-historicity of Corpus Christi cycles.

of the Eucharist, pointing to certain parallels with the celebrant's prayer before the consecration of the host. However, the religious aspect of morality does not boil down to liturgy, but reflects the range of religious ordering of individuals' everyday life in their environment. We agree that, unlike historical genres, the morality play "is not based on fidelity to a historical source but on fidelity to doctrine."⁹²⁸ However, we must disagree with Hardison's next remarks from the epilogue of his book, in which he develops the cursory idea that "the plot of the morality play is the same as of the liturgical drama" (1965: 289). Above all, the "doctrine" is more than a "liturgical drama," which Hardison moreover introduces at this point in the disturbing singular and equips with a plot, which previously he introduced as the input of vernacular drama, as distinguishing from the liturgical drama (1965: 281). Hardison's statement that the essence of fictionality is "sacramental psychology" probably means that the composition of characters follows the "plot of the liturgical drama" and not some observational data (realism). The liturgical life pattern of any Christian individual is recapitulating the ritual course of alienation, suffering, death and resurrection (Hardison 1965: 289).

But if there is any one common hero of the "liturgical drama" – a summarized annual liturgical cycle – then it is Christ who, as we know, did not need to strive for the eternal life of his soul. The apparent similarities do not explain anything here: the beginning in innocence, the fall, the return in rebirth, reconciliation, and hope. To compare suffering of the Everyman – who unsuccessfully seeks a companion for the last journey – with the pathos of the liturgical tragedy does not change their different functions. These human sufferings are neither redemption nor penance, they lead to nothing but only show the uselessness of this world's goods. They do not even contribute to any kind of turn that the protagonist owes to his exhausted and dying Virtue who sends him to Confession. That is why Hardison must recognize that the focus of action in *Elckerlyc* on the final stage of the plot – the appeal to the Court – is unusual.

Simultaneously, this drama really does operate with "sacramental psychology." The salvation of the soul is of key importance to it. However, for example, a merchant achieves the salvation of the soul by leading a duly regulated sacramental life. Because such sacraments like baptism are something obvious in the life of a Christian, they do not enter into the plot of the morality play, which is why it is based on sacraments connected with the last things of man.

928 "The characters do not act in such and such a way because history says they did but because a sacramental psychology requires them to do so" (Hardison 1965: 289).

Thus, “an individual Christian (Humanity or Everyman) recapitulates in his own life” no longer “the ritual pattern of alienation, suffering, death and resurrection” – as Hardison states (p. 289) and which was valid for holy martyrs – but the pattern of the sacraments. Above, we considered the summarizing importance of such recapitulation. If this holds a shade of “our” recapitulation – the co-creation of a mystical body under one head of Christ – then only in such model: composed according to the recipe of the human figure as Everyman who, in this sense, can be an image of the mystical body.

In the historians’ understanding and appreciation of the social dimension of the Eucharist (see ch. 18.6 and 22.3), Cox seeks a new framework of interpretation for morality plays. Cox points out that their population of personified deadly sins (Vices) often constitute the Devil’s entourage⁹²⁹ to jointly destroy social unity, whereas the sacraments appear as a remedy, as “means of restoring and maintaining social wholeness” (Cox 1996: 189).⁹³⁰ While we should not want to return and undermine the often neglected social attachment of the sacraments, we cannot “sociologize” them totally and cover their theological dimension. The seventy-three lines of the Polish morality play *Skarga umierającego* (Complaint of the Dying) implement only a skeleton of the genre’s structure – with the crisis of the hour of death, the remedy of penance, and vision of the soul in paradise; however, it still gives place for the presentation of the social ties of the protagonist and the Eucharist has a purely religious dimension, although typical of the sacramentalism by emphasizing the role of the community (*Homines*) and the priest:

Audientes hoc Homines
Kwap się rychło ku spowiedzi,
Kaplana (w) swój dom przywiedzi,
Płacz za grzechy, przym świętość,
Boże ciało!⁹³¹

929 Exemplars often show the motif of nine daughters birthed by the Devil’s wife Lust; examples and reference list, see No 12 in J. Wolny, “Exempla z kazań niedzielnych Peregryna z Opola,” B. Geremek (ed.) 1978.

930 Examples of using a consecrated host as the “symbol of peace” to separate the fighting and control social unrest appear, among other things, in *Bale’s Chronicle* published in *Six Town Chronicles*, Oxford 1913, p. 146, with the date 1458/1459; qtd. after M. James 1983: 9, ft. 21.

931 *Skarga umierającego*, lin. 24–27, *Dramaty staropolskie*, Vol. 1, p. 190; elaborated by Lewański 1981: 69–79; reference list in Michałowska 1998: 230ff.

Audientes hoc Homines
 Quickly go to confession,
 Bring a priest to your home,
 Repent for your sins, accept holiness,
 God's flesh!

Traver (1951) and Guiette (1960) aptly pointed to mystical ideas as the essence of the religious implications in romance dramas from the corpus *abele spelen* (noble plays).⁹³² However, what the dramas much more openly exhibit is another form of piety: sacramentalism.⁹³³ We consider these dramas among morality plays, although only the play about Winter and Summer (*Winter ende Somer*) contains allegorical figures. The other three pieces are definitely fictional. We may risk the term “romance morality play” since allegory is not exclusive for the typical morality play; it also appears in mystery play and allegorical farce.⁹³⁴ We limit the discussion of sacramental devotion to these dramas little-known outside of Netherland studies. The cycle of the *abele spelen* includes one allegorical play about Winter and Summer differing from the other three, which are not allegorical, only theatrically efficient stagings of secular romance content: protagonists come from ruling families, conflict revolves around marriage in its different phases. The key problem of all three plays is the equality of partners, one work reserves sex for marriage only (*Lanseloet*) as “an explicated norm,” while others present it as a visible practice. All three create an atmosphere of sacramental monogamy in a mutually

932 The serious Flemish secular fourteenth-century dramas – *Esmoreit*, *Gloriant*, *Lanseloet*, *Winter ende Somer* – were preserved in the Brussels manuscript of van Hulthem from before 1410 and edited by Leendertz in 1907. W. Creizenach, *Geschichte des neueren Dramas*, 1. *Mittelalter und Frührenaissance*, Halle 1911; H. H. Borcherdt, *Das europäische Theater im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, Reinbek 1969; F. van der Riet, *Le théâtre profane sérieux en langue flamande au Moyen Age*, The Hague 1936; B. Hunningher, “The Netherlandish Abele Spelen,” *Maske und Kothurn* 10/1964; K. Langvik-Johannessen, “Das höfische Drama in den Niederlanden,” *Maske und Kothurn* 23/1977; Dąbrowka 1987; 1989; 1992. Fifield (1982) counts the *abele spelen* into the “community of morality plays.”

933 This passus summarizes the effects of my articles (Dąbrowka 1992, 1995a, 1995b).

934 Habicht (1968), from whom I took the qualification of *abele spelen* as romance dramas, examines them separately from the morality play. Abstracts of the plays in Polish appear in my entry on the genre (1992); also in the main entries of my *Słownik pisarzy niderlandzkiego obszaru kulturowego* (Dictionary of writers of the Dutch cultural area), Warszawa 1999; I recount the separate newer editions in the article from 1989.

consensual marriage.⁹³⁵ Raised as a foundling, Prince Esmoreit does not want to marry the sultan's daughter until he finds out if he is of equal state. Gloriant does not want to marry until he meets a partner as great as he. Harmed by Prince Lanseloet, noblewoman Sanderijn escapes his court and finds happiness in a marriage with a knight who accepts her as his equal.

But even the allegorical controversy of Winter and Summer, with its cosmological dimension, is not free from references to the sacrament of marriage. Arduous Winter punishes the supporters of Summer, idlers with meaningful names who no longer are personifications but yet incomplete types. Traver (1951) argues that the dislike for tramps was a bourgeois feature. However – first – tramps were free men who valued sex in the nature and sought neither marriage nor sedentary lifestyle nor permanent occupation. Nature (God) punishes them instead of the local government or employer. Second, the stability of residence and identity was no more important in cities than in the countryside, even if scholars reflect on its urban significance more.

Winter ende Somer illustrates the sacramental shift in the view of nature. Bread and wine become the only creations of nature and people that can be sanctified after the transcendentalization of the sacred. As noted by Sprandel (1982: 92), the relation of bread and wine to the rest of nature – deprived of the sacred – reflects the isolation within the profane of the things obedient to God's authority, those "in agreement with nature" and those extracted by the Devil hence "contrary to nature." Fertility myths, which provided content for the genre of dispute between the seasons, usually Winter and Summer, depicted the profane as the victor. However, Dutch play grants both opponents equal rights. Through the goddess of love, Venus, they pay tribute to God, which shows traces of the first Christianization of all nature. Whereas the sacramental context indicates a shift: at the beginning of the play (lines 209 ff), the giver of "bread and wine" is Summer, while at its end (line 558), the giver of "water and wine" is God. In the treatment of nature motifs this play reveals the utilization of fundamental cognitive data. Their inclusion was

935 The decisive role of Pope Alexander III (d. 1181) in the shaping of the sacramental doctrine of the validity of marriage on the basis of mutual consent is presented by Ch. Donahue (1976). Also see G. Le Bras, "La doctrine du mariage chez les théologiens et les canonistes depuis l'an mille," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 9.2/1926, col. 2123–2316; G. Franssen, "La formation du lien matrimonial au moyen âge," *Revue de Droit Canonique* 21/1971, pp. 106–26; C. Gellinek, "Marriage by Consent in Literary Sources in Medieval Germany," *Studia Gratiana* 12/1967, pp. 555–579.

an indispensable to the construction of the landscape in the Christian world of the profane.

One may add here the example of time. Compared to the cyclical time of mythology, here time was “straightened” in line with the history of salvation. In accordance with the Parable of the Talents, since then man bears responsibility for using time, as for the entire world of the profane. In the treatise *Disciplina degli Spirituali*,⁹³⁶ Domenico Calva of Pisa (died 1342) sketches “accounting morality,” which considers the wasting of one’s time a grave sin. Idlers who squander time without measuring it are behaving like animals. This view sufficiently explains the dissatisfaction of the hunting knight in the romance drama *Lanseloet van Denemerken*, who complains that he has not hunted any game for many hours. Pleij (1991: 30) considers this to manifest the influence of “bourgeois mercantilism.” However, what is truly at work here is the recapitulation pattern from the Parable of the Talents.⁹³⁷ Once again, we uncover that this is no desacralization of time, but a concern for its fruitfulness, which is what morality plays show: “the stages the characters reach in the pilgrimage of life are more significant in their temporal aspect than in their physical location. Time is no mere episodic sequence, but an organic development in which moral choices come inevitably to fruition” (A. Knight 1983: 64; cf. remarks on iconographic time in ch. 21.2).

This is because the consequences of the actions of morality plays’ protagonists “have meaning for their salvation;” they are either moral or immoral, while farce actions are amoral (A. Knight 1983: 52).

A. Knight calls this mechanism a “temporal geography,” which reminds us of the well-known principle of the spacialization of time in narrative compositions in painting. Even though this type of the spatialization of time is the one that allows folk fairy tales to show the development of the protagonist as a journey: a change in time as a change in space. Moreover, the spacialization of time in morality plays substitutes processualization.

936 Ed. by G. Bottari 1838, ch. 19–20; qtd. after Le Goff 1977: 50–51. I have written more about it in my article (Dąbrówka 1995a).

937 An example of using this as an argument comes from the encouragement that Feliks Reich – the chancellor of the Bishop of Warmia – gave to the canon Tiedemann Giese who authored the anti-Lutheran polemic *Anthelogikon*, but refused to publish it (despite Copernicus’ encouragement): “Dear Tiedemann, do not bury the talent entrusted to you by the Lord in the ground.” The letter from 15.04.1524 is quoted by T. Borawska (1996: 149).

A sequence of states in snapshots replaces the differently expressed process of internal transformations, signaled by timid self-reflective monologues,⁹³⁸ changes of costumes (Crohn Schmitt 1982: 313; Linke 1995: 142),⁹³⁹ or significant motifs in the staging, like the change in the direction of movement: the departure of the son from his father was easy but the return is very difficult (Linke 1995: 141). We should not reduce these substitutions to an imperfection of playwright's workshop at the early stage of the development of drama or a psychological stage of incoherence of the "medieval man." The internal contradiction in the idea of the protagonist of a morality play stems not from the fact that the medieval "understanding of personality change was not developmental, but transformational,"⁹⁴⁰ but because the protagonist was to be both an individual person experiencing individual fates and a universal type representing the human race.⁹⁴¹ Crohn Schmitt (1982: 312–313) proved the simultaneous presence of various meanings of characters and objects in the morality play *The Castle of Perseverance*.

In this context, we should recall the "principle of recapitulation" (or summarizing) described by Sheingorn and Bevington (ch. 20.3) and Hans Sedlmayr's observation that – when planning a painting – "the painters sought such formulas of paintings that would reveal as many aspects of the presented content as possible in a dense artistic form."⁹⁴² What also is iconic is the arrangement of scenes in liturgical dramas (Marshall 1951), which usually assemble liturgy, the Bible, hymns, tropes, and sequences.

Moreover, we should mention the literary notion of the centon – mentioned with the interpretation of *The Imitation of Christ* (ch. 18.6) – especially because "centonization" was a known method of composing longer melodies from fixed

938 For a study of monologues in English drama see R. Hillman, *Self-Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama: Subjectivity, Discourse and the Stage*, New York 1997.

939 Cf. the geographical allegory of Jerusalem and Babilon in Hugh of Saint Victor.

940 H. Craig about the Elisabethan theater in his *The Enchanted Glass*, Oxford 1950, p. 83; qtd. after Crohn Schmitt 1982: 313.

941 The eponymous protagonist of *Everyman* sometimes speaks in singular and sometimes in plural. V. A. Kolve, *Everyman and the Parable of the Talents*; qtd. after Taylor, Nelson 1972: 328 (Crohn Schmitt 1982: 311). We will develop on the problem of this duality in chapter 25.

942 J. Jarzewicz (1998: 30) with reference to H. Sedlmayr, "Über eine mittelalterliche Art des Abbildens," *Epochen und Werke*, Vol. 2, Wien 1959, pp. 140–154; O. Pächt, *Gestaltungsprinzipien der westlichen Malerei des 15. Jahrhunderts*, *Methodisches zur kunsthistorischen Praxis*, München 1977, pp. 17–58.

melodic formulas, most often used in simple psalmody, which consisted of “recovering” the Psalm usually divided by antiphons and responsories, except for the penance period (Harper 1997: 89, 136, 304, 322). It was easier to send dramatic character composed like a centon on the eschatological path marked by signposts of the sacraments. This approach allowed authors to select biblical materials according to their needs; different in passions and different in eschatological cycles, which we discuss below as allegorical mystery plays or soteriological morality plays (ch. 25; Fichte’s proposal).

This corresponds to the method of extracting motifs from their microhistory described by Auerbach, and the various manifestations of fragmenting content in compositional (ch. 20.3) and cognitive treatment; which was the second step in Descartes’ method: proceed analytically to divide all the examined difficulties into the smallest possible parts (ch. 22.6). Let us recall the anthropological theory of constructing the sense of reality with the use of detached natural phenomena (Lévi-Strauss 1966: 144).⁹⁴³ Mary Carruthers distinguishes “inventory fables” among etiological legends like some of the Greek star myths. They are “stories devised to help make an inventory of elementary learning” that convey no beliefs like how Orion appeared in the sky, but form tools for storing certain messages in memory – like the shape and position of the constellation called Orion – so that they are easily storable and findable for any author at the stage of *invention*. Inventory fables are similar to other “pedagogical stories” (bestiaries, Aesop’s fables), which represent a genre of mnemonic story-telling, used to train memory (*memoria*) in Hellenistic schools (Carruthers 1998: 27), but above all, to store knowledge (1998: 28).

Transformations of protagonists are not uncommon in miracle plays. The stubborn striving of the eponymous *Mariken van Nieumeghen* to return home signals her inner transformation that happens under the influence of a deeper knowledge of her own condition. However, this case rather means return to the

943 “[M]an’s relations with his natural environment remain objects of thought: man never perceives them passively; having reduced them to concepts, he compounds them in order to arrive at a system which is never determined in advance: the same situation can always be systematized in various ways. The mistake of Mannhardt and the Naturalist School was to think that natural phenomena are *what* myths seek to explain, when they are rather the *medium through which* myths try to explain facts which are themselves not of a natural but a logical order.” Noteworthy, while Claude Lévy-Strauss is the creator of structural anthropology, this quote pronounces the cognitivist position. Cf. “pedagogical stories” (ch. 24.3; Carruthers 1998).

old identity, disrupted by the pact with the Devil. The protagonist of morality plays “seeks the final goal,” which makes each episode a step: to reach this goal means to resolve a conflict, thus discontinues action; unlike in farce, in which an ending enables the next joke (A. E. Knight 1983: 51). However, the resolution of the conflict in miracle plays is no less definitive than in morality plays, although the subject finds or achieves no goal without the intervention of a higher power. In turn, farce often is an anecdotal episode that offers no possible continuation.

4. SELF-CONTROL happens at this stage of the transcendentalization of the sacred already without divine intervention. People were shown the way to the truth or maybe only the goal and the compass, while we had to choose the path on our own? The morality play explicates the norm (A. E. Knight 1983: 64), which means that the function of this genre is constantly to remind of the standard and demonstrate the pattern, not to “distort” the image of God. The context of recapitulation requires that we recall the collective dimension of this task. According to *The Castle of Perseverance*, the source and guarantor of community norms is liturgy, while Lucifer threatens its standards (Cox 1996: 194).

The two dimensions resemble the division of genres. In personal morality plays, subjects are responsible for their salvation, which they achieve through sacramental life, not through a miracle. When following a path through the forest full of temptations and dangers, we want to believe that our trip is well-planned. Pilgrimage, a well-known form of folk devotion (ch. 5.4), is a frequent motif in morality plays. Pilgrimage serves as visual representation of the internal struggle, which allows its participants to objectify the inner fight and observe it from the outside. The struggle happens in the soul about what standards one should follow. The soul was defined as a place of competition (*locus certaminis*; A. Knight 1983: 63). This fight is timeless, happens in open time, and follows the topos of pilgrimage, which may be prolonged and creates a compositional freedom. However, ultimately, the time in the morality play appears productive as, in the end, it rewards protagonists’ efforts with fruits. If they do not reach the Goal, they at least discover why and assume responsibility for their choices like Mal Advisé, who regrets having squandered without reason the time that was given to him.⁹⁴⁴

Institutional morality plays mostly display concern for the state of various organizations, structures, and aspects of social life – law, peace, Christianity,

944 “J’ay mis mon temps et ma saison / Sans juste cause et sans raison ... / J’ay gast mon temps follement” (h.vi.r; A. E. Knight 1983: 63).

the three estates, the youth, the nation – within which some of the earthly values are accomplished and whose stability safeguards the sacrality of its lower levels. The subjects responsible for the group must act to repair the threatened institutions.

Other genres also hold testimonies of dissatisfaction with the activities of various public institutions. In the mystery plays from *Towneley*, Potter (1983: 130) notices the condemnation of earthly justice, while the allegorical farce (*sottie*) is one great accusation of human institutions (Goth 1967). Noteworthy, the latter was a whole subgenre of farce that corresponds with Knight's institutional morality play (1983: 77). However, late mystery plays also adopted the critical approach: the horrors of the *Slaughter of Innocents* in the *Chester* cycle show the effects of unchecked secular power (Ashley 1993: 50). "Political" and "social" morality plays diabolize sins as the sources of "social entropy" that results in the breakdown of social cohesion (Cox 1996: 216).⁹⁴⁵

The morality play *Wisdom* depicts how the sin of lawlessness abounds (Potter 1983: 134–135): it presents the bribing of jurors (jorowry) and lying to judges (perjury). The eponymous *Wisdom* reminds the Soule (Anima) who long slept in sin until waking up⁹⁴⁶ that she should never again "Dysfygure yow neyer to the lyknes of the fende" (disfigure itself in the likeness of the enemy).⁹⁴⁷ The motif of similarity to God appears in *Wisdom* in the composition of the allegorical Authorities of the soul: Reason, Will, and Understanding (lines 184, 214, 1273).

In turn, *Elckerlijc*'s protagonist is the first burgher as a prototype of human species (Erzgräber 1977: 61) who undertakes to recapitulate his fate. Noteworthy, what shows the desperate man the way to rescue is Repentance or *Kennisse*, while the way is through confession. Should we understand *Kennisse* as Knowledge, then only as the biblical knowledge of good and evil, but it rather is about the confession and recognition of the truth about own deeds. *Elckerlijc* calls itself the mirror of salvation or *speculum*, which is more than a "literary form of the reader's self-cognizance" (Kaiser, Küsters 1986: 41).⁹⁴⁸ This was just the first step,

945 A. W. Astell, *Political Allegory in Late Medieval England*, Ithaca 1998.

946 Cf. the contemporary Polish *Skarga umierającego* (Complaint of the Dying), lines 28–29: "duszo moja, ocuci się, długoś spała" ("my soul, you slept long, wake up," *Dramaty staropolskie*, Vol. 1, p. 190).

947 M. Eccles, *The Macro Plays*, Oxford 1969, line 1114.

948 As similarly incorrect – even if Cyceronian, but still disagreeing with the medieval use – we must call the reduction of the meanings of *speculum* and its counterparts in national languages to "the tools of self-learning, verification, and further reflection on ourselves and the visible world" (Kruczyński 1998: 90).

while the most important content of the *speculum* was not to present the “naked truth” about the world but the role model. The same applies to the modelling message of *Erfurter Moralität*: the dramatized return of the prodigal son proves that the sinner can reach God from the greatest distance, if he only turns back before it is too late (Linke 1995: 142).

In the pre-Scholastic period, what sufficed for such return was trust in God and a more pious saint, which is evidenced by the case of Mary from Hrotsvita's *Abraham* that shows some similarities with the plot of the prodigal son parable. Seduced by “Him who fell the Parents,” the young girl escapes from the care of her saintly uncle the hermit, Abraham.⁹⁴⁹ After finding her, the uncle needs only stimulate Mary's confidence for she feels too sinful: “It is human to sin, it is devilish to continue sinning.”⁹⁵⁰ However, the greatest sin is to doubt about God's mercy for the sinners: “As the spark of a flint does not burn the sea, so does the bitterness of our sins not poison the sweetness of God's grace.”⁹⁵¹ Conversion and escape from Satan's grasp happens not with the help of a miracle – like in mature miracle plays such as *Mariken van Nieumeghen* – but thanks to the devotion of the hermit: Abraham assumes the sin of the weaker Mary on himself, hence she may return to her old life; and all she needs to do is to trust and obey.⁹⁵²

On the other hand, in the late Middle Ages, all responsibility begins to rest with the individual who is endowed with reason to learn about evil and good and has free will to choose between them (Linke 1995: 139). Moreover, as we saw in *Mariken van Nieumeghen* (ch. 23.4), the individual must herself suffer severe penance.

This mostly applies even to the so-called school morality plays distinguished by Kernodle (1989: 272) as a type of drama written for school performances under the new humanistic education – beginning in Italy in the mid-fifteenth century while in France and England around 1500 – which sets them next to political morality plays, which also mostly appeared in the Renaissance. In the school morality plays – like in the early New Latin “tragicomedies”, in the German-Dutch corpus known as the “Christian Terence” and, in its vernacular

949 “Qui protoplastos prostravit” (Langosch 1943: 74).

950 “Humanum est peccare, diabolicum est in peccatis durare” (Langosch 1943: 76).

951 “Qui enim peccantibus deum misereri velle desperat, irremediabiliter peccat, quia, sicut scintilla silicis pelagus nequit inflammare, / ita nostrorum acerbitas peccaminum divinae dulcedinem benignitatis non valet immutare” (Langosch 1943: 78).

952 Abraham: “In me sit iniquitas tua; tantummodo revertere ad locum, unde existi, et in secundo conversationem quam deruisti;” Maria: “In nullo unquam tui renitor votis, / sed, quae iubes, obtemperantur amplector” (Langosch 1943: 80).

continuations, the eschatological dimension may become weaker,⁹⁵³ but it is replaced by the educational content justified by the knowledge about the world and people. Thus, the anagogical sense turns into the pedagogical.

953 H. N. Peters (1966) writes about these three groups of dramas and counts among the main authors of the “Christian Terence” Xystus Betulius (Sixt Birck), Jacobus Schoepper, Hieronymus Ziegler, and Martinus Balticus (Peters 1966, 35). From the Netherlands, one should add at least Georgius Macropedius (Joris van Langeveldt, 14757–1558), Guilelmus Gnapheus (Willem de Volder, 1493–1568), and Cornelius Schonaeus (Schoon, 1540–1611); the latter earned the name of the “Christian Terence” that became the term for the whole current: Cornelius Schonaeus, *Terentius christianus, seu Comoediae sacrae sex, Terentiano stylo conscriptae: Tobaeus, Nehemias, Saulus, Naaman, Josephus, Juditha*, Haarlem 1594; *Terentius Christianus seu Comoediae sacrae tribus partibus distinctae*, Amsterdam 1646. H. C. Lancaster, *The French Tragi-comedy. Its origin and development from 1552–1628*, Baltimore 1907, pp. 155–162 recount Terence’s plays; J. Isewijn, “Theatrum belgo-latinum,” *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 30/1980; Kruczyński 1998: 155–157; K. S. Guthke, *Geschichte und Poetik der deutschen Tragikomödie*, Göttingen 1961; M. T. Herrick, “Tragicomedy, Its Origin and Development in Italy, France and England,” *Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* 39/1955, pp. 1–321.

25. The Recapitulatory Drama

1. THE SINNER'S MYSTERY PLAY. The following pages do not bring a discovery of a previously unnoticed dramatic genre. Instead, they offer a new name for a certain type of play distinguished by the observers of mystery and morality plays – miracle plays to a lesser extent – especially in their later form, which we know mainly from Jesuit school theaters after the Council of Trent. Developing the thought of Julian Lewański (1991b), we will propose two forms of this genre that syncretize or maybe only integrate earlier forms. An allegorical mystery play is a play, in which allegorical figures depict the story of salvation; for instance, in the extreme form, instead of the persons of God, there appears God's Wisdom or Love who perform works that in ordinary mysteries fall to Christ or God the Father. In turn, we should name as a passion morality play or a generally soteriological morality play the story of the Sinner that happens in a morality play framework, which locates the redemptive ruling in the perspective of human needs and obligations. This type introduces people as witnesses in the History of Salvation. It cannot be any historical human person, but only a generalized representative of the human species. This species differs so much from its previous stage of existence – when it caused the Fall – that it is the cause, purpose, and beneficiary of redemption. Therefore, the whole species – as one person – is in the Church, outside of which it sees no salvation. This human did what the system demanded and does not doubt nor needs converting, the only problem lies with perseverance in holding on to God's path; in short, this human is a Sinner.

Meanwhile, the allegorical mystery play similarly “forgets” about historical Jesus: as he fulfilled the work he undertook, he could return to the boom of the only God in that part of himself that did not inhabit the hearts and minds of people.

Both types are signs of a recapitulation or at least a full understanding of the idea of recapitulation. That is, this shape of drama responds to the new situation of man and God. The recapitulated human appears as a Sinner, while God may return to the role of the Judge.

It is a separate matter whether to call as recapitulatory drama both types or maybe only one, in which both these allegorizations appear; that is, in which we find both the replacement of God with allegories and of human figures with a generalized Sinner. Finally, it is a separate matter whether to also include in the genre of recapitulatory drama these mystery play cycles that lead to the future

end, the Last Judgment (see below the discussion of Fichte's proposals). The scene of the Last Judgment – with its entire setting of the fifteen signs or the coming of the Antichrist – is the most evident indicator of this genre next to allegorization.

What is inseparably connected with allegorization is the shift of the accent from the humanity of Christ to his divinity; the double role of the founder and the Head of the Church determines Jesus' special position as the Judge.⁹⁵⁴ The possible esthetic issues are: the introduction of two Human Species on the stage, the fallen and the redeemed one; the fallen has no future, it is a closed account based on old contracts; Christ took only the chosen few from the abyss of the past; the latter kind creates the mystical Body of Christ that may gain eternal life. Another issue is the historicization of the morality play and of the future time, particularly the staging of two judgments – individual and universal – and search for a method ensuring the historical interpretation of the scenes of mystery plays; especially such that would avoid the fictional presentation – not to mention reception – of the Last Judgment, which could be counteracted by the preservation of balance between the generality of allegory and the detail of fiction.⁹⁵⁵ Only a more extensive material study will show whether this outline of genetic traits will remain a characteristic of varieties and episodes or be sufficient to distinguish genres.

The type of composition of the recapitulatory drama is “pre-Trent.” In addition to his 141-item bibliography of French medieval allegorical plays, John S. Weld (1970/1971: 297–302) mentions twenty-four mystery plays with allegorical figures. There are not many of them, but they gather the most significant texts: by Mercadé (before 1440, Arras), Arnoul Greban (three performances in Paris before 1473), Jean Michel (1486, Angers), the mystery play from Mons (1501), or *Actes des Apôtres* attributed to Simon Greban and Jean du Prier (1536 in Bourges, repeated 1541 in Paris by the Confrérie de la Passion in Hôtel de Flandre; prints from 1538). Among the listed allegorical mystery plays that significantly foreground the dispute or process for the salvation of people there is *Le Proces qui a fait Misericorde contre Justice, pour la redemption humaine, Lequel*

954 This is mirrored by the return of the motif of Christ the King in fifteenth-century painting (A. Legner, LCI 1, col. 422).

955 What may prove especially useful here would be a study of the Spanish *auto* in the light of its recapitulatory ordering, as its history saw the encounters of different genres with real-life religious and judiciary practices, as well as with eschatological visions; cf. M. Flynn, “Mimesis of the Last Judgment: The Spanish *Auto da fe*,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 20/1991, pp. 281–297.

nous demonstre le vray mistere de l'annunciation nostre seigneur ihesu crist (c. 1490–1500).⁹⁵⁶ Fichte distinguishes certain types like cycles for Corpus Christi that potentially belong here also in the British and German cycles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (see below). Julian Lewański (1991b, 42–45)⁹⁵⁷ discusses the examples of relevant plays from the Polish seventeenth century repertoire and divides them into neo-mystery plays and allegorical erudite plays, including passion plays like *Homo Lapsus sive Peccator*.⁹⁵⁸ According to the tradition of morality plays, this one situates human in the title, but actually it is a mystery play in which the main roles go to the Daughters of God.

As we see, the linking of two great genres (mystery and morality play) was not exceptional and used maybe even for two hundred years, which makes for the whole period of their coexistence. Not even the Parisian ban of 1548 killed the presence of mystery plays; Confrérie de la Passion continued to stage them “undercover” as *tragédie* or *tragi-comédie*;⁹⁵⁹ mystery and miracle play repertoire prevails in France over the “Renaissance” classical repertoire even after 1600 (Frank 1954: 270). Therefore, either the separateness of these genres is uncertain,

956 A unique old print from Bibliothèque Nationale; Weld 1970/1971: 301, No. 17.

957 Beside twenty-two clear (classical) mystery plays, Lewański distinguishes in the Polish repertoire fourteen mystery plays “transformed and complemented with abstract characters, thus partly accepting the new, baroque-allegorical dramaturgy” (Lewański 1991b: 38 i 42); “in five passion plays, after the Crucifixion scene, there appears a scene with the Sinner who walks up the Calvary” (Lewański 1991b: 43). The examples on which Lewański elaborates more are *Żaloszna tragedia* (The Dismal Tragedy), MS Biblioteka Jagiellońska 3526: “the classical plot of passion play ... was supplemented in the form of an alien scene of Justice and Pity ... [which makes it a] play composed in two separate poetics and artificially compiled” (Lewański 1991b: 43–44). Another example was *Dialogus pro die Parasceves* (Dialog for the Good Friday; a copy in Biblioteka Ossolineum MS 7075) whose author “treats abstract baroque characters and generalizations on par with other depictions of the world, not to mention that he subordinated them to a mystery play technique” (Lewański 1991b: 44).

958 Lewański 1991b: 47–49. In Polish repertoire, Lewański (1991b: 45) notices ca. thirty such plays, including seventeen fully preserved texts; other examples are Marcin Paszkowski’s *Dyjalog człowieka grzesznego z anioły* (Dialog of the Sinner with Angels; print 1612; see below), the play coming from Gdańsk *Tragedia o Bogaczu i Łazarzu* (Tragedy about the Rich Man and Lasarus; 1643), and *De quatuor nouissimis* (1645) with two protagonists-brothers: one godly and one ungodly (Biblioteka Ossolineum MS 6709, pp. 81–110).

959 Besides that, the notion “tragicomedy” was used by the humanists as name for religious drama, also in vernacular languages; the first tragicomedies, “in truth, are medieval religious plays who received the name of tragicomedies” (H. N. Peters 1966: 33).

which is difficult to accept because we easily distinguish between them, or their connection meant something significant. This is why the below considerations required this separate chapter. They may be largely hypothetical, but are worth reporting, because a deeper study may require a separate book.

As we remember, A. E. Knight distinguished morality plays from the historical genres of mystery and miracle plays by using the criterion of fictionality. Referring first to his classification, we recognize that the genetic integration of the mystery play with the allegoricity of the morality play does not serve to fictionalize the history of salvation, but on the contrary: to extend historicity to morality plays, thus joining in one place macro- with microhistory (recapitulation). Their linking convinces us that the Incarnation was both a human and cosmic event; that is, it had consequences for each individual, but above all for the whole human species. Maintaining of an equilibrium between these two aspects was probably the hidden drive of these genealogical relations.

In the literary field, the will to extend historicity to morality plays suppressed the movement of allegory toward fictionalization: Christ died on the cross not for any John Smith but for the People. Sensitivity to fictional procedures and themes, and their relation to the historical dimension, is understandable on the backdrop of humanistic attempts to return to the literal reading of the Bible and in the climate of Reformation polemics.⁹⁶⁰

We find proof of disagreement with theatrical performance and representations of God in religious plays due to their fictional (“untrue”) character in the *Treatise of Miraculis Pleyinge*: such actions are unacceptable when holiness is not true but pretended. Hence, the display of “pure vanities is much better than arranging religious plays.”⁹⁶¹ Those who inscribe spectacles with the power of persuading the unbelievers commit blasphemy because they thusly believe that the word of God has less power;⁹⁶² besides, such stance

960 A collection of quotes from Luther’s works mentions literal reading in positions 281–285, while positions 312–313 reveal his disagreement toward allegorical reading; according to Luther, people should explain the Old Testament with the New Testament, not the other way around: “hoc est veterem scripturam Evangelio illustramus et non econtra;” E. M. Plass, *What Luther says. An Anthology*, I, Saint Louis 1959; qtd. after Marrow: 197, ft. 805, 335.

961 “[T]o pleyin rebaude than to pleyin siche miraculis” (*Tretise*, p. 7).

962 “A Lord, what more blasfeme is agenis thee than to seyen to don thy bidding as is to prechen the word of God, doth fer lasse good that to don that that is bodyn onely by man and not by God, as is miraculis pleyinge?” (*Tretise*, p. 112).

vividly resembles the idolatry that Moses had to destroy by killing 23,000 people.⁹⁶³

2. GENERALIZATION AND HISTORICIZATION. In the rivalry of two great dramatic structures – the mystery play and the morality play – the latter could swallow the former and include in its scope the historical dimension only under the condition of preserving its generalizing approach; that is, by making its protagonists into “universalized types,” unrelated to limited time and place. The object of biblical time was people in general, not individual people like John Smith. David Leigh (1972: 264) confirms this view on the basis of the scenes from the Last Judgment in all the cycles, and describes them as eschatological morality plays, while noting the presence of personification in two of them. However, Leigh misinterprets this fact as a “non-historical performance,” though admittedly in the future there are few people who may actually be truly historic like Jesus.

Verdel Kolve’s approach is more precise (1966: 224) as he notices in the *Chester* cycle the consistent use of typical characters instead of “actual” people associated with specific historical circumstances, both real and fictional. It is so – argues Kolve – because in the last moment of historical time we cease to be persons, and become only the moral sum of our deeds. However, this sum is different in every case, as different – and therefore historical – is the path of every person to this last moment.

Thus, the final point of view proper to morality plays does not invalidate history, but only “cleanses” people from those layers of historicity that do not matter: “It’s certain that they will not ask us what we have read....” Yes, but they will ask about many other moments and we will hide no detail. Historicity is grounded here on “moral facts.” Hence, the Day of Judgment is the border of generalization: it must stop when one has to begin to distinguish Each of Us from the Other. Morality may end with individual judgment, but the Last Judgment cannot occur with just one Everyman. Authors dealt with this task variously. If we assume that what predominates in this type of play even in the seventeenth century is the figure of the Sinner, then we should explain how the movement toward a full coherent subjectivity was restrained, since the impulse for psychological autonomy, enrichment, complication, and fictional authentication was already contained in both miracle and morality plays.

963 *Tretise*, p. 110; Vulgate; presently the Bible speaks of thousands of victims of a religious purge (Exodus 32: 28).

We discussed the sanction of generalization with the theatrical allegorization of internal life, which was the proper scenery of a personal morality play. It is equally difficult to visualize the life of the community on stage without personifying the ingraspable diverse factors conditioning its existence (institutional morality play). And it is not just about the “social context” of people’s construction. This background was equally important: it showed progress in the construction of the Body, whose head was Christ. Only on this background did the eschatological perspective become sensible and understandable for subsequent generations, as it was populated by personae and personifications proper to the place and custom of the time. The eschatological perspective focused on the circumstances of death, which despite appearances was generally neither a private nor timeless matter. Hence the special relations of *Ars moriendi* with morality plays (Happé 1996: 116), which we confirmed with the Polish example (chapters 18.5 and 24.3). Thus, part of the impulse for historicizing morality plays realized in contemporary social and moral motifs.

The scope of motifs used to paint the community background stems from the contradiction of multiplying and limiting the number of motifs, on which the abovementioned law of objectivization is based: the extracting of certain contents into perceivable segments demanded in the name of open standards by the aesthetics of recapitulation (see chapter 20.2). One could establish objectivization historically but also conventional;⁹⁶⁴ that is, one may quantify segments empirically or conceptually, externally or internally. The drive for articulation encountered a limit when authors selected motifs for constructing diverse characters and threads, and when the focus on the traits of some prototypes formulates the theme (chapter 20.3).

There is no unambiguous progress here from a modest set to a wealth of motifs. The perception of self and others in stereotypical simplification was not at all a hallmark of amateur allegorical writing but more of a norm than an exception in social communication. Besides, the allegory prominently favors the openness of the work of art. Aposiopesis, suspense, and even play with ambiguity receive laurels from the twentieth-century critics, who describe the same measures in

964 Mary Carruthers (1998) has shown that scholars undervalued the scope of conventionality of diverse mnemonic constructions: pictures, places, or stories that were to be “cognitive schemata rather than objects. They may entail *likenesses* of existing things (a church, a palace, a garden) but they are not themselves real. They should be thought of as fictive devices that *the mind itself makes* for remembering” (1998: 13, as a commentary to Albertus’ *De bono*).

old literature as manifestations of carelessness or primitivism. Meanwhile, they all were well-known artistic methods already in the fourteenth century.⁹⁶⁵

Keeping in mind the feedback between allegorical work and allegoresis, we should note that since allegoresis results in different interpretations, allegory must also allow them. With its simplicity and aposiopesis, allegory sometimes creates the same effect of complication as the psychological contradictions and riddles of a fictional character. The “oscillation of meanings” characterizes the concept of the character in the *Erfurt Morality Play*, which Linke (1995: 138) presents as the intended means to achieve the end of compiling various values, proposals, and interpretative possibilities.⁹⁶⁶ This means two things. First, that we should rather define as naïve our assessment of the “naïve” aspects of medieval mentality, contemporary perception and artistic composition. Second, that generalization does not mean incoherent subjectivity. Protagonists of such types of drama could be more schematic than in ordinary morality plays, but it did not have to mean aesthetic inefficiency, since the literary consciousness of that time allowed for arbitrariness, vagueness, and even disliked the illusory character of fiction (see part 4, the V-Effekt).

The context of the mystical Body creates a special perspective for the perception of the role of the individual and for the construction of the characters in the drama, when we compare the artistic means of combining morality plays with mystery plays and their effects. The “short” morality play “universalized” the drama character so that it could represent the entire human part of creation – *humanum genus* – thus to maintain the framework of biblical historicity but without differentiating its two epochs: with the silent omission of the Old Testament. Whereas the Sinner – the protagonist of the “recapitulatory drama” – is a human situated in the course of biblical history with its incarnation breakthrough (radical approach to and distancing from God). The Sinner must be both a new Adam, thus Everyman, and a psychologically unique One of Us, now and tomorrow. Moreover, the Sinner should still partly solidarize with the old Adam. Perhaps the Sinner even was like the old Adam, like the sinful man from the Krakow’s *Dyjalog grzesznego człowieka z Anioły* by Marcin Paszkowski (Dialog of the Sinner with Angels; 1612) that introduced Adam to the stage (in

965 The scholar who proves this is R. P. McGerr in *Chaucer’s Open Books: Resistance to Closure in Medieval Discourse*, Gainesville 1998; qtd. after J. D. Parry, [a review of the book in] *TMR* 99.06.09.

966 See chapter 6.4 about the “simultaneous realities” suggested by allegories (Erickson) and Rudd’s reflection about the “plurality of truths” in chapter 18.4.

the church, “before the Holy Sepulcher”) as a sinner, whom *Prologus* announces as “a mourning person,” “which hang the lord on the cross:”

Adam the sinner comes out in a rich old-fashioned robe as if a foreigner and begins to talk with the following words with a kind of wonder.

Adam is a (metaphysical) wanderer who focuses on unexplainable distant events that he refers for the use of the audience with considerable emotion:

I could not look any longer, so I left the place
 Wondering about His curious suffering.
 I cannot know what happened later,
 Neither can I describe who was this person
 That suffered so much and for what fault,
 I could not effectively learn the reason for this.

Dalej patrzeć nie mogąc, precz z miejsca onego
 Odszedłem zdumiawszy się dziwnej męce Jego.
 Co sie tam dalej zstało, już nie mogę wiedzieć,
 Ani też o tym umiem, kto to był, powiedzieć,
 Co tak wiele ucierpiał i dla jakiej winy,
 Nie mogłem się skutecznej wywieździeć przyczyny (lines 105–110).

But Adam soon learns. When he wants to leave, ten Angels carrying the *Arma Christi* describe him as the perpetrator of these torments and henceforth the stage directions describe him as the Sinner. Justice “with a naked sword” calls for vengeance (lines 287–300); Mercy “with books ... feeds” the Sinner (lines 319–352); finally the angels recommend to God the repentance of people and express the hope that “all Christians” will thusly “have a dwelling with us” (line 385).⁹⁶⁷

Once again, we see the paradox of historicity and extra-historicity. This paradox touches the essence of the marriage of the mystery play with the morality play, which was a literary form of historicization; that is, the biblicization of sacramentalism. The sacraments as the sole way of communion with God were a novelty, therefore they had to gain more credibility than that which all the Church institutions, the catechism, and the canon law codex gave to them.

Since the redeemed humankind is the mystical Body or the Church, then the dramatic form must find an appropriate expression of the commonality of the personal model. Besides, the individual character cannot be blurred because of the personal nature of the individual’s responsibility for the salvation of the soul. The way out is to introduce a few characteristic or exemplary characters,

967 Citations after J. Lewański, *Dramaty staropolskie*, Vol. 4, pp. 248–268.

as the painters did when reducing “the legion to individuals.”⁹⁶⁸ The *Redentiner Osterspiel* (Redentin Easter Morality Play) applies the same procedure, which puts nine representatives of well-known professions in front of the court. At other times, universalizing effectively counteracts the psychological coherence of the personality of the characters, rather disallows complicating them (their uniqueness), which is understandable as later the author would need to anyway clean them of individual elements. For example, let us use the concept of a human figure in the play *Homo Lapsus sive Peccator* – greatly simplified – who is simply the Sinner (also rarely called this way in stage directions), whose entire sinfulness lies in the name. This schematism avoids compositional inconsistencies, which in many eschatological plays is caused by an excessive individualization of the human figure. The plays do gain drama this way, but they must deal with theological distinction and theatrical reconciliation of the individual judgment (after death) and the universal (Last) judgment, which always belonged to the greatest of doctrinal traps.⁹⁶⁹

Exemplum applied moderate reconciliation of the requirements of generality with uniqueness and favored the protagonist named “a certain human” (*homo quidam*). As we know, many a morality play finds satisfaction with this degree of identification. Radical internal coherence was the principle of fiction: it will not work aesthetically if it does not give independence to characters and events. However, we must remember about another principle of coherence: compatibility with the external model. These two patterns coexisted and, in a sense, competed with each other. Crohn Schmitt (1982: 312–313) discusses her observation of this fact.⁹⁷⁰ She downplays the manifestations of incoherent characters,

968 Cf. also the iconographicity of gesture in liturgical drama (Marshall 1972; our chapter 21.2). We should also remember the dispute about the unity of human will between the Dominicans (Thomas Aquinas) and the Franciscans (Bonaventura, Alexander of Hales), which faded in the fifteenth century (chapters 10.4 and 12.3).

969 The results of the difficulties to distinguish between *iudicium particulare* and *iudicium generale* are discussed by H.-J. Diller in the context of *The Castle of Perseverance* (1996). See below for an example of overcoming these difficulties in the *Erfurt Morality Play*.

970 Crohn Schmitt refers W. B. Yeats’ opinion, who stated that characteristic figures exclude tragedy and the possibility of serious sympathizing with their fate: we only sympathize when we may identify with what we see; that is, when we see ourselves on stage (Crohn Schmitt 1982: 311). See below about the achievement of the comic and irony as a mechanism of identification with the comic figure; that is, such that Yeats would call characteristic.

claiming that not only in the Middle Ages but also today the difference between internal and external conditions is not always the same for everyone.

We have shown that – besides literary reasons like readability of the image or aversion to illusion – the simplicity of the protagonist of the recapitulatory drama also had a theological (judgments on the soul) and devotional (universality) background. What were the opposite drives of complicating and enrichment?

3. FICTIONAL SPECIFICATION. We may consider the development of pastoral Shepherd plays and the excesses of perpetrators in the torture scenes of passion plays – harder to explain as they do not even create the semblance of interrogations – to be manifestations of the “expanding of historicity” by including the individual dimension and, thus, another “meeting of macrohistory with microhistory,” namely with the participation of ordinary people remembered by the Scriptures. Both cases constitute an entry through which elements of fiction could have entered mystery plays. Marian plays offer other possibilities.

The scenes of torture were adequately interpreted by Véronique Plesch (1994). When comparing the most important French passion mystery plays – two from the fourteenth and two from the fifteenth century – Plesch finds a characteristic increase in the length of dialogs in the scenes of torment. Thematisation occurs through linguistic imaging of tortures, highlighted in three main language forms: announcements (plans, orders), elucidation of actions (description of torture tools, counting of hits, multiplication of insults), and explanation of the consequences. We may notice in such “augmentation” not only the concentration of composition around the theme – dictated by the “needs of the pious imagination” – but also the implementation of the “principle of recapitulation,” which manifests fidelity to the sources. Many motifs from the passion literature – not from the Gospel – found its way there not as products of the imagination, but as an interpolation in the history of the Passion of prefiguration threads from the Old Testament.⁹⁷¹ Passion play writing draws important motifs from the prophets. The author of the treatise *De laudibus sanctae crucis* (c. 1180, Munich) enumerates forty-six prefigurations of the Cross or Crucifixion (Marrow 1979: 192). Thanks to this tradition, a bachelor of theology, Arnoul Greban, could claim to be referring only to the Gospel without the apocrypha.⁹⁷²

971 Plesch (1994: 469) with reference in ft. 52 to K. Ruh, “Zur Theologie des mittelalterlichen Passionstraktats,” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 6/1950, pp. 17–39, and F. P. Pickeringa (1970).

972 Frank 1954: 184; V. Plesch 1994: 482, ft. 63, with reference to M. Accarie, *Le Théâtre sacré de la fin du moyen âge: Etude sur le sens moral de la Passion de Jean Michel*, Genève 1979, p. 120. The most important source here was the Book of Isaiah, whose

Such an impressive attention to historicity, such a personal sense of responsibility for meaningfulness, truthfulness, and orthodoxy of the image are something incomprehensible to Rainer Warning: Greban reached for such drastic motives so far as to the prophetic books because “the mystery play is under the sign of imagination that finally found its desired missing body and chops it to pieces in an ambiguous staged scapegoat ritual” (Warning 1997: 36). This “missing body” is an idea that Warning borrowed from M. de Certeau (*La fable mystique*, Paris 1982, pp. 107ff) and a certain lecture by Lyotard. According to de Certeau, Christianity was built on the “lack of a certain body” (*la perte d'un corps*). According to Lyotard, it is a “cultural formation that was created over an open grave,” an unexplained murder that exposes it to the continuous return of the dead (which, as we know, is not a pleasure). Warning develops his argumentation from this discovery: “From the open grave begins the history of the medieval mystery play” (1997: 34).

However, we shall consider the concern for the deeper rootedness of Christ in the Old Testament prophecies as emphasis on the recapitulation theory. These measures enhance historicity by their embedding in the Scriptures, while the individual perpetrators stress the empirical and authentic dimensions and outdo each other in ideas of how to torture and kill, often using their own strength, without the help of Satan. Although, the purpose of the Incarnation was not the Passion, and the purpose of the Passion was not ritual murder (unexplained!) or chopping into pieces. The purpose of the Passion was Redemption and Resurrection, while the purpose of the Incarnation was to give hope of salvation to those who will join the mystical body of the Church.

Easy to say, “the Redeemer.” But one must sometimes ask: how did Jesus actually redeem people? Well, not with a Jupiter-like visit to the mortal realm but with the Passion. The intensity of torture demonstrates Jesus’ merit, the sum of

author was called the “fifth Evangelist” (Marrow 1979: 191). Here, see J. Paściak, *Izajasz wieszczem Chrystusa*, Katowice 1987; “nicht alleyn ein propheta, mer ein ewangelista” is how Isaiah is called by Klaus Kranc (after Jerome), a Franciscan from Toruń, in his commentary to own translation of the prophetic books prepared in the mid-fourteenth century, inspired by Siegfried von Dahenfeld, Knight Commander of Königsberg; ed. by W. Zieemer, *Die Prophetenübersetzung des Claus Kranc*, Halle 1930; qtd. after Löser 1999: 17. Even in 1564 Maciej Wirzbięta publishes in Cracow *Obyetnicze figury y prorocstwa o Panie naszym Iezusie Krystusie prawdziwym Bogu y człowieku kroczychno s ksiąg Moizeszowych y s Prorokow zebrane s porownaniem pism Apostolskich. A dla snadniejszego poyęcia wirszami spisane* (Bibl. Kórnicka Cim Qu 2188), which contains seven prophecies by Isaiah, two by Jeremiah, and a few others.

which was exactly what contributed to the ransom of the Redemption. This alone explains the difficult point in the interpretation of the Passion. Moreover, there is the double theatrical complication. The inability to show on the stage everything what you read in the descriptions, as well as the lack of a – normal in such cases – reaction of the tortured person. Without typically human reactions, torture is not what this should be.

Both these elements compel authors to make up for this limit by means of linguistic imaging. They also probably planned for the expectations of the readers of the book editions of their plays, deprived of all the visibility of the theater. In a way, the extensive verbal descriptions of torture are a kind of spoken stage directions, because they describe the actions on the stage. This would explain their literary inclination; the use of various formulas and genetic references described in detail in Kolve's ludic theory of eucharistic drama (1966). It is difficult to assess what role could play here the rhetorical power to give the images of memory (*imagines agentes*) the "very bloody, brutal, and violent," shape but it was conducive to memorization.⁹⁷³ Did the playwright not act here like a painter who visualizes metaphors? Sometimes, this ended with the identification of passion play narratives with ordinary historical facts (Marrow 1979; chapter 22.6). Does the transfer of images of memory onto the stage not resemble how people make realistic the demonological imaginations that Levack could not explain? Levack pointed to scholastic theories as the possible mechanism, which finds analogy in the theory and practice of rhetorical *memoria*.

Artistic considerations in no way change the theological function of the drastic scenes. It is difficult to refuse this technique a significant esthetic effectiveness. In the plan of behaviors and without dialog, the technique simultaneously shows human suffering and superhuman determination, thus disallows forgetting about the two natures of Christ: the human and the divine.

As soon as the mystery plays try to encompass with their structure the future time and the things outside of the Revelation – which are only a human guess and refer to the salvation of any person – there arises a "threat" of fictionalization.

973 Carruthers 1998: 101 with reference to a handbook by Thomas Bradwardine, which she reviewed in her work, *The Book of Memory*, Cambridge 1990, pp. 130–137; and with reference to E. Vance, "Roland and the Poetics of Memory," *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structural Criticism*, ed. J. V. Harari, Ithaca 1979, pp. 374–403; L. Fradenburg, "Voice Memorial: Loss and Reparation in Chaucer's Poetry," *Exemplaria* 2/1990, pp. 169–202; and J. Enders, "Rhetoric, Coercion and the Memory of Violence," in: *Criticism and Dissent in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. Copeland, Cambridge 1996, pp. 24–55.

Authors may incline to fictionalization at this point because, here, the historical frame based on the Gospel is weak. As we have seen, authors braided individual themes into mystery plays without harm, because the themes received credence from their biblical context. The author of the Frankfurt mystery play, the outline of which was preserved in the *Frankfurter Dirigierrolle*, operated with the most extreme actualization, as simple as the staging anachronisms common for mystery plays; but still shocking. The author gave the persecutors of Christ the names of the Jews who lived in the city at that time.⁹⁷⁴

When the frame does not have proper authority, the fictional motif becomes a fabrication, while the fictional character, a John Smith situated in an authentic biblical context, would suggest salvation to be automatic (*apocatastasis*). Literary fictionalization favors such an interpretation of the Incarnation in which the sacrifice of the Passion saves everyone – in the past and the future – which makes the foundation and operation of the Church no longer relevant. To counteract this, as a school of Christian responsibility for own salvation, the morality play had to embrace the whole history; that is, include the Last Judgment to show that the greatest ransom of the Passion does not provide individual salvation. To effectively convince people that the Last Judgment will certainly happen to Everyman, the morality play had to present its case as a real inevitable drama, not as a possible adventure.

However, the encompassing of the whole history may also refer to the past and cause a change in its perception. We saw Adam who appeared to be the Sinner. Thus, we may agree with Clopper (1989), who interpreted the *Mankind* morality play as a comedy in which people should attribute their poor fate to their own stupidity, not to the original sin. This sounds like theological negligence of explicit downplaying of the original sin, but it was only its redefinition, a transfer of responsibility to individual beings due to a change in perspective. Cognitively speaking, it was a new invention; today's standards involuntarily projected on the past. What interests us in this is the recapitulation feature, which always shifts the center of gravity from the old contract to the new one. In other words, the Old Agreement with the Humankind was annulled while the new one can only be concluded with each individual separately. One may turn it around and say that the Humankind changed so much that the contract needed renegotiation.

974 H. Linke's entry "*Frankfurter Dirigierrolle*," VL 3, col. 810.

We find an interesting case of mixing of the mystery play with the morality play in the abovementioned Lower German *Redentiner Osterspiel*.⁹⁷⁵ The author appended the eschatological thread to the Resurrection mystery play, which makes the minimal and optimal set for the recapitulatory drama. When analyzing this unusual structure, Joseph Dane (1978) recognizes that the strict symmetry of *Redentiner Osterspiel* bases on the principle of mirroring juxtaposition of content between its two parts – history before the Resurrection and the present after the Resurrection – and means complete displacement (redistribution) of “traditional motifs that in cycle plays and other Easter plays are ordered in accordance with historical chronology.” The history of Resurrection does not direct the order of details here, but instead constitutes a frame that only allows to understand the play (Dane 1978: 89). All the motifs are thus a repertoire of variants, which we encounter in the oral tradition. After all, each realization of a myth or fairytale has a different morphology and usually contains motifs with individual coloring or such that give a different effect through their different arrangement. The idea called by Dane “the aesthetics of the myth” sheds different light on our assessment of the structure of mystery plays by proposing the adoption of another – mythological – principle of coherence for complex works and cycles.

In search of theological meaning in the dramatic structure of *Redentiner Osterspiel*, André Schnyder⁹⁷⁶ interprets the whole second part, which traditionally presents the descent into Hell (the first thousand lines are filled with the scenes around the “empty tomb”). The majority of German Easter mystery plays – unlike in the tradition and dogmatics – *descensus* occurs not during the three days between Jesus’ death and resurrection – as the faithful repeat in the Church *Credo*⁹⁷⁷ – but only after his

975 Published by B. Schottmann, *Das Redentiner Osterspiel*, Stuttgart 1975 (both with translations into modern German); H. Wittkowsky, *Das Redentiner Osterspiel* (with a reproduction of the MS); H. Linke, VL 7, pp. 1065–1069; a monograph by L. Humburg, *Die Stellung des Redentiner Osterspiels in der Tradition des mittelalterlichen geistlichen Schauspiels*, Neumünster 1966; for more literature, see Schnyder 1995.

976 Schnyder writes in opposition to Dane’s (1978) mythological interpretation, as well as Warning’s anthropological one, and to its application in the article by J. Nowé, “Kult oder Drama? Zur Struktur einiger Osterspiele des deutschen Mittelalters,” *The Theatre in the Middle Ages*, eds. H. Braet et al., Leuven 1985, pp. 269–313.

977 We find such orthodox take in *Frankfurter Dirigierrolle* from c. 1350 and in one of the Passion Plays from Sterzing performed in 1486: *Lienhard Pfarrkirchers Passion*, lines 2775–3082, in: Lipphardt, Roloff 1988, Vol. 2: 141–153.

resurrection.⁹⁷⁸ Rainer Warning regards this difference as evidence of the mythical understanding of this event as the hero's victory over the demons: *Redentiner Osterspiel* simply reminds people about a mythic event that happened and ended in the past (1974: 65). This mythical understanding is – of course – incompatible with the dogmatics and very “ambivalent,” if not “pagan.”

However, Schnyder comes to the contrary conclusion: *Redentiner Osterspiel* prolongs the time of Christ's earthly activities after death and resurrection, adding to his journey to Hell (*descensus*) – which depleted the kingdom of Lucifer – a symmetrical “supplementation” of the local resources with new sinners, the contemporaries of the audience. This scene is called *der Seelenfang* (the fishing of souls, about 600 lines long), in which Christ judges the souls of a baker, a shoemaker, a tailor, an innkeeper, a weaver, a butcher, a costermonger, and a robber – they all go into the hands of the Hell's team that listened to the trial; only the priest remains (Schnyder 1995: 40). Thus, victory over Satan appears here not as his “neutralization.” Therefore, Christ's sacrifice was not a feat of a mythical hero – gratefully remembered in the following generations – but a re-opening of Heaven with simultaneous demonstration that the path of condemnation remains open as well. In complete agreement with the dogma, the play shows that every living person must decide about own path (Schnyder 1995: 55).

4. THE BALANCE BETWEEN MYSTERY AND MORALITY PLAYS. Thus, there was a certain purpose in the clash and mutual adjustment of the vision of mystery and morality plays. The purposefulness lies in counteracting two dangers. On the one hand, the exaggerated expectations that could effect from the highly emotional Passion mystery play. On the other hand, the possible weakening of the mystery plays' credibility in the parts that open toward fiction. This was probably the purpose of the founders of the eschatological part of *N-town* which, from all the medieval cycles, seems to have the strongest inclination toward morality plays, since its overriding theme is the availability of God's grace for the penitent Human.⁹⁷⁹ These authors counteracted the threat of fictionalization by the

978 Similarly in Mikołaj of Wilkowiecko's *Historia o chwalebnyim Zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim, Część Czwarta* (Story about the Glorious Resurrection of the Lord, Part Four); it begins after *Śpiewanie* (Singing): “Our Lord Saviour God Almighty / Jesus Christ of Nazareth of the Holy Trinity returned from death / and brought happiness to humankind. // He came from the dead without moving the stone / nor seal of any kind // the watchers fainted / and fell to the ground like dead.” “Nasz Zbawiciel Pan Bóg wszechmogący / Jezus Krystus Nazarański w trojcy wstał zmartwych ninie / uweselił ludzkie pokolenie. // Wstałci zmartwych nieruszył kamienia / ni pieczęci żadnego znamienia // stróże zemdleli / jako zmarli na ziemię padali” (D iii v / D iv r).

979 D. Mills in his part of Cawley et al. 1996, p. 197.

creation of a “ritual distance” between the audience and the stage action, similar to the “distance between the faithful and the addressee of the service;” this principle is reminiscent of Bertolt Brecht’s V-Effekt (*das Verfremdungseffekt*), the effect of alienation against the genre’s inclination toward illusion. The means used included various forms of de-theatralization: replacing dialogue with disputes, prayers, speeches, and instructions (Cawley et al. 1996: 200); allowing figures to act out of character and – like John the Baptist in *Passion I* from the *N-town* cycle (Scherb 1995/1996: 482) – admonish viewers to prepare for the coming of Christ. While Christ himself, when hanging on the cross, could direct a bitter question to the audience of the *Passion from Towneley*, “O my people, what have I done unto thee?” (Travis 1993: 159). Another time the plot may be mixed with tableaux vivants – as theater in the theater – with commentary from the protagonists of the main action, which is a manifestation of the intentional “focusing of the drama” in accordance with its “didactic function” (Hummelen 1994: 246–247). The endings of Polish late passion plays contain accusations of viewers identified with the Sinner whereas, elsewhere, “the actors provoke the audience” by the shocking behaviors of the characters. All for the purpose of almost manual “control of the perception” of viewers (Lewański 1991b: 41–43).

The weaker form of this measure were the large fictional parts observable in the *Seventh Joy* from the Brussels *Bliscappen* cycle. The work staged the circumstances of the death and Assumption of Mary. For example, the long sermon of John the Evangelist “to the people of the city of Ephesus” (*Sevenste Bliscap*, lines 507–571). This fragment does not break theatrical illusion, but it contains a large catechetical load.

Another form of the alienation of theatricality, combined with the strengthening of the orthodox message, appears in Mikołaj of Wilkowiecko’s *Historia o chwalebnyim zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim* (The Story about the Glorious Resurrection of the Lord). What creates this alienation is the isolation of the sequence of scenes reserved for the words of the Evangelists into a separate stream of action, announced as *Gospels* (*Ewanjelija*). This measure particularly clearly surfaces at the beginning of the scene of Christ’s Descent into Hell, when the Evangelist explains to the audience the change of convention (usually the relevant passages came from the Gospels):

In this here part Four
 In place of the Gospel
 I will read to you from the Book of David
 And from the Christian creed.

Przy tey tu już części Czwartey
 Na mieyscu Ewangeliey

Będę wam czytał z Dawida
I z krześcijańskiego kreda (D iv r).

Sometimes the authors force figures to speak out of character, as when Caiaphas instructs viewers to use the sacrament of confession so that they can better prepare themselves for the coming of the Savior.

Allegorical figures may also create or enlarge this distance by entering into the space between the actual action and the audience. For instance, Contemplation (*Contemplatio*) comments on the circumstances of the Annunciation and remarks: listen and see how *Hail Mary* or *Magnificat* was created (Cawley et al. 1996: 200). The figure of *Contemplatio* in plays 8–13 of the *N-town* cycle is a visualization (for Cawley et al., an “externalization”) of the contemplation of Mary reading Psalm 85. More importantly, this is a very clever method of opening the eschatological dimension on the ground of the mystery play; thus extending historicity to the content of morality plays. The method consists in indicating the moment and place in the biblical time and space, in which the seed of the old promise germinated. That the former salvific resolution of God finally happened was thanks to Mary’s prayers for his mercy (Cawley et al. 1996: 198). The Brussels *Bliscappen* cycle uses the allegorical method here: moved by the conversation with Bitter Despair (*Bitter Ellende*), Heavenly Prayer (*Innich Gebet*) knocks on the doors of Heaven to ask for God’s mercy. As a matter of fact, Heavenly Prayer does not really knock but takes a drill and drills a hole in the sky on the stage: “Singing or music. Meanwhile, Heavenly Prayer tries to drill a hole in Heaven with a drill etc., and will tell above.”⁹⁸⁰

Through this hole, Heavenly Prayer contacts with his friend Mercy (*Ontfermicheit*), which convices the audience of the immediate effectiveness of prayers: “There was no faster messenger than me” (line 924). The Brabant cycle is quite early (1448) but – despite the historical framework – thoroughly allegorized. Even the introduction of completely fictional characters does not secularize its meaning. On the contrary, recapitulatory drama simply casts average people in its roles. This is especially meaningful when their behavior shows the effectiveness of the sermon by the Evangelist in *Sevenste Bliscap* (lines 507–571): the next scene (lines 572–639) is a long conversation between four neighbors who affirm each other in their decision to adopt faith after the sermons. Simultaneously, the neighbors make many critical remarks about dignitaries who serve different masters with greater devotion than God alone or even act as if there was no

980 *Eerste Bliscap*, stage directions after line 916: “Sanc of spel. Ende Innich Gebet sal die wile metten eggere een gat willen boren inden hemel etc., ende seggen boven.”

God but the ruler they serve (lines 604–609). The fact that the conversation is completely fictional is a departure from the mystery play formula – although it does not break it – but it perfectly implements the idea of recapitulation. The historical moment of the creation of the Church – presented in just one example – then displays its full dimension in the scenes of the gathering of all the Apostles around Mary’s deathbed. The accompanying miracles confirm for the audience the establishment of the Apostles’ mission by God Himself. Thus, both fiction and the miracle element become credible, in the mystery play style, if they have a Church-making function.

However, always when the morality play did not require sacral historical authentication (biblical, “holy chronology”), it could freely develop toward full fictionality in the style of *abele spelen*.

5. THE STRUCTURAL RELATIONS IN CONNECTING MYSTERY WITH MORALITY PLAYS. In addition to allegorical figures, a dramatic cycle of mystery plays may contain entire subordinated segments similar to morality plays (Leigh 1972). Some authors combine these segments into a cycle that can even create a competitive framework and gain superiority over the frame of mystery plays. Above, we just saw this on the example of a mystery or morality play-like positioning of the Trial in Heaven; it was a Counsel of Redemption, *der Ratschluss der Erlösung*. Weld (1970/1971: 299) ascribes Greban’s *Mystère de la Passion* the role of giving the play an intellectual spine due to the distribution of successive phases of the Trial in Heaven on three days (it is conducted by the Four Daughters of God with Wisdom). The first artist to introduce in drama the Trial in Heaven in the function of a frame (introductory and final part) was the author of *Passion from Arras* (Eustache Mercadé?, died in 1440).⁹⁸¹

The predominance of eschatology over the holy chronology is the starting point for the genologic idea of Joerg Fichte (1993). In his opinion, the British and German Corpus Christi cycles replace the liturgical with the historical framework that constructed the Passion mystery plays. However, the former are not completely excluded from the sacred history: “the perspective of the Last Judgment” is their proper purpose of action (*telos*; Fichte 1993: 296). The differences between the two types of plays – cycles and passions – linked by much of their thematic content, such as the Passion of Christ, are determined by their different methods of staging and functions. In the “usual” Passion mystery plays, the aim is to invoke compassion for Jesus, while the Corpus Christi cycles

981 Frank 1954: 180. In Frank’s opinion, Eustache Mercadé followed a long poem by Deguilleville, *Le Pèlerinage de Jésus-Crist*.

reduce this theme to serve mainly for “convincing viewers that Christ voluntarily accepted martyrdom for their salvation and, thus, they owe him” (Fichte 1993: 295). Hence the stricter typological discipline manifested in the use of only those materials from the Old Testament, in which God actively engages in the history of salvation by arranging the historical events that serve the work of redemption. “God or the heavenly messenger appears in these plays to articulate the certainty of salvation anew” (Fichte 1993: 287).

Why this assurance suddenly became so necessary – after so many centuries of religious practice – that there emerged a new kind of drama? Well, figuratively speaking, because it speaks of another human species: of the Redeemed – but not yet the Saved – who must themselves take care of their salvation. Meanwhile, Fichte takes as a starting point the bourgeois character of the Passion mystery plays and Corpus Christi cycles along with their combined separation from the Church liturgical drama. Their affiliation to urban culture is to be manifested in a complete lack of Church control⁹⁸² and in a simplified, amateur theology. However, Fichte contradicts himself when first he claims that these urban cycles “did not serve to present and explain any particular Church doctrine or dogmatic training for the viewer by visualizing an article of faith” (1993: 278), but then foregrounds as the characteristic feature of the cycles the specific realization of the liturgy of Corpus Christi (1993: 281–282).

The alleged independence of the Passion mystery plays from theology is denied by Fichte’s own data about the large numbers of songs interrupting their action and “binding the presentation with known forms of official liturgical holidays:” *Alsfeld Passion Play* has 121 such songs, *Sterzing Passion Play* eighty-two, *Pfarrkirchen Passion Play* seventy-nine, *Bozen Passion Play* sixty-one, *Admont Passion Play* fifty-two, and *Frankfurt Passion Play* forty-one. All this applies only to the period from the Last Supper to the Deposition from the Cross (Fichte 1993: 285).

Rolf Bergmann (1989) locates almost all the prophets’ lines from *Ordo Prophetarum* – that precedes a mystery play preserved as a string of incipits in *Frankfurter Dirigierrolle*⁹⁸³ – not only in the Bible but also in the liturgy of the Holy Week.⁹⁸⁴ Victor Scherb (1995/1996: 479) recalls the same for *Passion I* in

982 These are the debatable interpretations of data by Clopper (1989), which I comment in chapters 15.5, 16.3, and 17.3. We should consider the thought that the lack of any sign of Church control means that there was no need for it; such situation usually effected from an able mechanism of self-control.

983 *Frankfurter Dirigierrolle* ed. by R. Froning in *Das Drama des Mittelalters*, pp. 340–374

984 Bergman simultaneously underlines the great usefulness of this work: H. A. P. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Vol. 1–2, Roma 1956–1957.

the *N-Town* cycle, after Kretzmann (1916: 104); in the codex of the confraternity of Saint Andrew of Perugia (c. 1350) “every day of Lent has its dramatic lauda, which strictly follows the gospel for this day” (Falvey 1982: 64).

Summarizing, Fichte’s concept says nothing about the causes or details of this further generic differentiation. Moreover, we will interpret Fichte’s description of differences – the most important being the emphasis on Christ’s humanity in passion plays and divinity in Corpus Christi cycles – in religious terms as a result of transcendentalization of the sacred and a symptom of the strengthening of sacramentalism; in aesthetic terms as a symptom of recapitulatory thinking and acting; while in social terms as symptoms of the activation of the idea of the Mystical Body (factuality) in the reality of the Middle Ages. Fichte’s reference to bourgeoisie is useful here because it is a community that assumed responsibility for its earthly prosperity just like, following Christ, it assumed responsibility for the work of salvation of their souls. These two tasks appear similar because they are connected.

The attempts to give the Passion a recapitulatory context were made by the author of the play, whose outline we know from the *Frankfurter Dirigierrolle*. Augustine of Hippo summons the Prophets as witnesses who announce the coming of the Messiah. However, because this does not convince the Jews, Augustine presents them as a proof a passion mystery play (theater in the theater). The audience now sees the usual sequence of events up to the Ascension, after which the play returns to its frame: the Jewish masses are convinced of the truthfulness of Christ’s mission and agree for baptism.⁹⁸⁵ As Bergmann states (1989: 29): “The prophets scene fits here not into the relationship between God’s will of salvation and the birth of Christ; it only refers to the Passion thread.” In short, we will say that the stage thusly creates a frame only from one aspect of the Incarnation with an emphasis on the redemption of original sin by martyrology. This approach does not direct the history of salvation on new, Church paths that will reliably lead to Heaven.

The theme of the Four Daughters of God serves a more daring shaping of the recapitulatory framework, whose essence is the binding of both Testaments into one historical, or even cosmic, drama. This thread surfaces in the fifteenth century, dragging behind it a whole “intertextual network” of internal coherence-building references⁹⁸⁶ and quotations from the Old Testament that strongly

985 H. Linke’s entry “*Frankfurter Dirigierrolle*,” VL 3, col. 810.

986 See chapter 20.5 for the view about the rather metatextual and metahistorical function of this vein of interpretation (Happé 1998, cf. ft. 810), which must anyway hold a certain cohesive effect in a purely formal manner.

complement the usual sermons and explicatory prologues. Plesch (1994: 482, ft. 65) admits that “Such a network links all the episodes by stressing their common meaning within the Economy of Salvation,” but argues that “as the dramatic matter expands, the theological component is increasingly more important.” This “common meaning” is exactly recapitulation.

We already elaborated the inclusion of the recapitulation thread into a miracle play on the basis of *Mariken van Nieumeghen* (ch. 23.1). The technique is very simple there: the Trial in Heaven scene transforms the protagonist. She is a completely fictional character, hence the understandable care for the delimitation of spheres: a fictitious story could not simply align on the same ontological plane with a mystery play. Their meeting place was the conventional space of the theater. The individual’s struggle for her own salvation may already be presented by means of fiction, but the matter of Redemption must preserve ontological separateness.

A multilevel system of such connections was created by the author of the *Erfurt Morality Play*.⁹⁸⁷ First, he demonstrated a bold composition of three biblical parables into one coherent sequence of events: of the ten virgins, the prodigal son, and the rich man and Lazarus. The author achieved this by linking them together in a few moments: the younger son who lost his part of the estate, feeds the rich man’s pigs, who plays with the foolish virgins; the father who honors his prodigal son’s return with a feast allows the wise virgins to enter (Linke 1995: 130ff). The second network of connections is shaped by the dispute between God’s Daughters (*Misericordia* and *Iusticia*), while the third – the individual judgment of the rich man and the Last Judgment, which condemns the Fool and foolish virgins.

We find a slightly simpler and thus more coherent composition two hundred years later in the Polish morality play *Tragedia o Bogaczu i Łazarzu* (Tragedy about the Rich Man and Lazarus; MS Gdańsk 1643, performed and critically edited in 1999). The main theme is the eponymous parable without the thread of the prodigal son, although there is the constant feast of the rich man Candidus. Candidus swore allegiance to the world, entertains himself with the Five Virgins, and takes one of them for a tour of the sea in a gondola on stage only to “escape

987 *Erfurter Moralität*, MS from 1448, Landesbibliothek Coburg MS Cas 43 (olim 8789) fol. 205ra–273ra; discovered in 1935, unpublished. Description by H. Linke in VL 2, col. 576–582; the rhetorical notion is presented by H.-G. Roloff, “Die Struktur der Erfurter Moralität,” *Von wyssheit würt der mensch geert... Festschrift für Manfred Lemmer*, eds. I. Kühn, G. Lerchner, Frankfurt a. M. 1993, pp. 391–409. Linke (1995) studies the composition of characters.

with her into the bed.” The piece ends with the death of Lazarus – whose soul is carried by the angels onto the bosom of Abraham – and the miserable end of Candidus, who dies lonely and without remorse while the devils take his soul to Hell. The strict judge is Abraham, who refuses Candidus’ hope for sparing him the torments of Hell even after “a thousand times thousand” years would pass. The thread of the Trial in Heaven (act II, scene 4, pp. 19v–23v) is completely subordinated to the biblical story of the rich man, condemned for his evil. Virtue and Mercy accuse Candidus and ask retribution for his insult – he was vicious and had no mercy for Lazarus – while Justice calms them down:

Wait my sisters for the right time.
Do not be too eager for the doom of the sinner.
For, if a human sin was to be immediately punished,
Jupiter would quickly lose all his lightnings.

Poczekajcie siostry me, do czasu słusznego.
A nie bądźcie skwapliwe na zgubę grzesznego.
Bo gdyby, jak człek zgrzeszy, wraz się [go?] karało,
Jużci by Jowiszowi piorunów nie stało (22v).

As we see, the three allegories underwent a significant transformation here. They do not refer to the original sin and Redemption in any way. Virtue and Mercy completely define human morality, while Justice preserves considerable headship, thanks to which she may speak in the name of God:

And God graciously restrains Justice,
As he does not want the death of the sinner but loves life.
He gives the sinner time to amend his ways,
But when the time comes for the horrendous judgment
He will not only punish the sinner’s depravity
But also considers his Justice.

A Bóg zaś Sprawiedliwość łaskawie miarkuje,
Nie chce śmierci grzesznego, lecz żywot miłuje.
Czeka grzesznym poprawy do czasu słusznego,
Ale jak też przyjdzie czas sądu straszliwego
Nie tylko karać będzie jego nieprawości,
Ale dobrze roztrząśnie i Sprawiedliwości (22v).

That is, God is only interested in the evaluation of this individual man. Interestingly, Justice behaves here like medieval Mercy: the last line expresses the Protestant doctrine of the salvific justification of deeds independent of their balance.

We may actually consider Fichte’s genetic proposal promising, but in order to strengthen it, we should also systematically extract texts from the corpus of the

abovementioned French mystery plays with emphasis on eschatological frame and assign them to the genre of Corpus Christi plays (*die Fronleichnamsspiele*). Moreover, we should better describe the frame itself, so that the difference between Passion and “Sacramental” mystery plays (*die Fronleichnamsspiele*) could not be reduced to the presence of the Last Judgment scene in the latter. Because there are approaches according to which “passion mystery play is not a play about the Passion of Christ but about salvation realized by the Passion.”⁹⁸⁸

Without further genealogical discussion here, we will limit ourselves to qualify Fichte’s position as the result of his observation of the same, which above prompted us to recognize incarnational aesthetics as insufficient and add to it the recapitulatory apparatus.

6. GOD DISAPPEARS FROM THE STAGE. The genre transformation indicated in this chapter expresses an understanding of the idea that the Incarnation included not only the offering of redress (Redemption) but also the founding of the Church; that the Passion was a necessary condition for salvation, but that it alone would not suffice. Christ died for the past faults of the humankind, which closed the gates of paradise behind us,⁹⁸⁹ and not for the future faults of every separate human being.⁹⁹⁰ Thus, we may only speak of the certainty of redemption, not salvation; every believer must individually take care for a place in Heaven, which

988 R. Bergmann, *Studien zur Entstehung und Geschichte der deutschen Passionsspiele des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts*, München 1972, p. 258; qtd. after J. G. Ziegler, “Das Oberammergauer Passionsspiel im Widerstreit,” *Jahrbuch für Volkskunde* 9/1986, p. 206. This is an extending interpretation of the Passion, which makes the continuation and some aspects of Christ’s mission (in the spirit of *apocatastasis*); for instance, the Eucharist, the Pentecost which marks the formation of the apostolic Church and his role as the Judge. G. Frank (1954: 134) notices a smaller recurrence of plays about the Antichrist and the Last Judgment in France in comparison to Germany. Hess (1977a: 666) foregrounds the significant presence and separateness of eucharistic plays in Spanish repertoire with romance background.

989 The Son of God: “Father, why does the law demand / That it is I who should make the penance / and I who should open that, which Adam closed” (“ontsluten, dat Adam sloet”), *Eerste Bliscap* line 1271.

990 Similarly, Kolve (1966: 235) references to Thomas Aquinas: the original sin infected the humankind and is larger than any other real sin by any person. This is why Christ came mainly to vanquish the original sin, because the good of the humankind is a more divine matter than the good of the individual (*Summa theol.* III.II, Q. 1, art. 4, p.13). This is an idea of restoration of the similarity to God. The Church practice of allocating part of Christ’s ransom for the needs of redress in the fifteenth century assumed the form of selling tickets or, rather, vouchers.

is effectively secured only when the believer remains in the Church. Only in the womb of the mystical body of Christ will people not fall into the power of Satan again. *Civitas Dei* resembles a city surrounded by walls, into which the Enemies try to sneak.

This is why the late medieval theater visualized and exaggerated the role of the enemies of the Christian-human, most often represented by the Devil;⁹⁹¹ although the anti-Jewish tendency of many of these plays prevents their staging today. The overwhelming power of these fears is evidenced by the folk belief in miracles as manifestations of divine protection, as well as their survival in a different form in the critical and reluctant mentality of Martin Luther.⁹⁹² It is only after the Council of Trent that this role of Satan is reduced again. As the basis of his right to the human soul, Satan provided the original sin; since the explanation of Redemption, this title expired and the question of salvation was settled within God's law (Traver 1925: 68).

Significantly for this approach, the play *Homo Lapsus sive Peccator* presents Satan – called *Daemon* – not as a party to the dispute, but only to utter a two-lines-long squeak of the defeated. However, nowhere does Satan disappear completely, bad people assume his role, including Christians, or unleashed evil inside people.

The intellectual preparation of this idea is visible in the desperate decisions of devils from the French mystery play *Actes des Apôtres* (Acts of the Apostles). The successes of apostolic Christianization deprived the devils of their kingdom so they are left to live as mortals only: Satan becomes a usurer, while his entourage a lawyer, a con man, a wizard, a pimp, and a simony dealer (Frank 1954: 192–193).

In a slightly different (more scholastic?) manner, Satan's role was reduced in certain Passion parts of the British cycles, as noted by Kolve (1966: 231), in which the goal of the authors was an even stronger emphasis that the natural human traits sufficiently explain the killing of a perfectly good person. One cannot hope to close the *Corpus Antichristi* behind the walls of Babylon because it dissolves in

991 Not only in drama; for instance, confer the German long poem *Des Teufels Netz* (c. 1420, The Devil's Web; more than thirteen-thousand-lines long, ed. by K. A. Barack in 1863, reprinted in 1968; VL 9, col. 723). This is a dialog of a hermit with the Devil, who reveals his actions toward people; his servants are: Pride, Envy and Hatred, Greed, Gluttony, Wrath, Lust and Sloth. See our chapter 24.6.

992 Cf. the long chapter XV "Van Obsessen de van Satan beseten sind. Wo men mit Minschen die vam Duevel beseten sint / handelen schal," in the Lutheran catechism from Pomerania, *Agenda vor de kercken in Pamern* (237v–245v), 1569.

a new form of existence and, what is worse, in a destructive wave invisibly flows from every direction.

In the conclusion of the chapter on the mystery play, we have clarified the religious conditioning of the heavy emphasis on the matter of God's power. We quoted (ch. 23.3) Anna Loba's observation about the growth of the role of Christ in later miracle plays (Loba 1999).

We emphasized the striking Christocentrism in Thomas a Kempis' *The Imitation of Christ*. Kathleen Ashley confirms this with the example of the *Chester* cycle. Ashley (1993: 52) argues that this drama reflects the obsession with God's omnipotence common among the late medieval philosophers. Radical Occamists invented hilarious paradoxes to prove God's indeterminacy. However, even their critic Bradwardine ultimately defends the absolute sovereignty of God and his transcendence from the rational world.⁹⁹³ The division of God's power into two domains – the world (*potentia ordinata*) and the omnipotence over time and space (*potentia absoluta*) – is well-established in the fourteenth century. And it should not come as a surprise to us that the first such distinction was made by Peter Damian,⁹⁹⁴ one of the pioneers of the Gregorian revolution which conducted radical transcendentalization of the sacred in its theological vein, leaving only a strictly limited set of sacraments. It was not a complete reduction. We called the piety shaped on its foundation sacramentalism. What aimed for or even reached complete transcendentalization were the Protestant currents. Some of them also displayed a radical approach to recapitulation.

We may even point to a form of stage presentation for the transcendentalization of the sacred. It will be the lack of the character of God, whose role assume the personifications of his powers and qualities. Sometimes they coexist with God as in the first instance of the Trial in Heaven; sometimes the two levels of the dispute are preserved, only that the higher and final instance are other allegories of God's powers; *Homo Lapsus* presents them as a group of sisters, not even as daughters of God. When the two arguing sisters, Justice and Mercy, conclude that they will not come to terms – irritated Iustitia says to Misericordia, "I am not your sister!" – they decide to go to God as the supreme tribunal, and this is what we expect as spectators.

993 Ashley 1993: 54 with reference to H. Oberman, *Archbishop Thomas Bradwardine, A Fourteenth Century Augustinian: A Study in His Theology in its Historical Context* (Utrecht 1957), and G. Leff, *Bradwardine and the Pelagians* (Cambridge 1957); T. Bradwardine, *De Causa Dei contra Pelagianos* (c. 1344).

994 *De Divina Omnipotentia*, PL 145, col. 610D–614C; qtd. after Ashley 1993: 65.

Misericordia: I see that it is fruitless to play with you any longer

We will have to both face God

Which is why I appeal to God's tribunal

There I will see which one of us is right.

Justice: I will see what you will win there, as God is just

And will not want to indulge with foul evil.

Misericordia: We will see, as God is always more to pity

Inclined than to your harshness.

Mis: Widzę że mi się z tobą szkoda dłużej bawić

Przydzie sie nam obiema przed Bogiem postawić

Dla tego na trybunał Boski appelluję

Tam sie z tobą, kto z nas dwu przemoże, spróbuję.

Iust: Obaczę co tam wygrasz, Bóg iest sprawiedliwy

Nie będzie chciał folgować złości obrzydliwej.

Mis: Obaczymy, Bóg zawsze bardziej ku litości

Skłonniejszy, aniżeli ku twei surowości.

However, God does not appear on the stage as the judge, but only another set of his personified powers. We should read this as an indication that this, indeed, is a new positioning of God. We have heard how Mary, contemplating the psalm 85, "reminded" God of his unfulfilled promise and how, in the Brussels mystery play, he reflected on what to do to reconcile his mercy with justice. When all this has been done in theology, there is reason to consider the situation as a new one and express it. What shows this is the famous passage from Psalm 85 (84), which is the source of the allegory of the Four Daughters of God and which speaks of their kiss. The breakthrough of this moment of making peace is expressed in *Homo Lapsus* on stage by introducing a new character: God's Love. Amor is the allegory of this new situation of God – the lack of dispute between Justice and Mercy precisely means peace and love – by significantly appearing in the middle of the stage kiss initiated by Iustitia:

I give the sign first, this kissing

Means that our steady agreement is to last.

Scene Five

Amor Divinus, Misericordia, Iustitia

Amor: What are you doing sisters?

Miser: I too give the true

Sign of love.

Iać ten znak pierwszy daię, to pocałowanie

Że to nasze statecznie ma trwać porównanie.

Scena 5ta

Amor Divinus, Misericordia, Iustitia

Amor. Co tu siostry czynicie?

Miser. I iac tesz prawdziwy
Znak oddaie miłości.

This disappearance of God⁹⁹⁵ in the Polish morality play has nothing to do with secularization, which this theme experienced in the seventeenth-century English art, in which the Daughters of God finally become only “fowre ladies” (*Respublica*),⁹⁹⁶ representing not the absolute principles but relative human values; the issues of this drama are subordinated to current political needs (Diller 1996: 100).

On the contrary, the Polish solution – the replacement of God of New Testament by God’s Love – significantly confirms God’s presence, but already in terms of later spirituality, based not on the obedience to the omnipresent higher power, but on the desire to eternal life in Heaven. The process of spiritualizing the sacred makes it difficult, and eventually excludes the presentation of a physical God on the stage. Apart from placing the Trial in Heaven in a different reality (dream,⁹⁹⁷ vision) or stage (theater in the theater) and allegorization, directors applied different methods to move the action behind the scenes, from where, for example, the audience only heard the sounds of whipping or saw shadows on the screen. Here, the Jesuits did not hesitate to utilize the fresh invention of their confrère, Athanasius Kircher (1602–1680): the magic lantern that allowed to display previously prepared engravings on the screen like with a projector of slides.⁹⁹⁸ Another, less theatrical form of putting distance was to report events from far away.

995 An even more extreme example comes with the mystery play, *Dialogus de passione Domini Nostri pro Feria VI Magna* (Bibl. Ossolineum, MS 198), in which the whole passion is described without the participation of Jesus, as described by Lewański (1992: 24–25).

996 Cf. the three allegories (Chastity, Mercy, and Justice) from *Tragedia o Bogaczu i Łazarzu* (Tragedy about the Rich Man and Lazarus), which are well on their way to become “dames” or even “maidens,” see below for more.

997 *Ibidem*, 23v.: “CANDIDUS Wakes up, scared by his vision / Three ladies visited me. One wanted to cut my head off / And readily aimed at my neck with her sword. / LIBERIUS Or maybe some ladies really were here, / To visit you as they usually do.” “CANDIDUS Przestraszony widzeniem ze sna się porywa / Były u mnie trzy panny. Jedna ściać mnie chciała / I już mi gołym mieczem ku szyi zmierzała. / LIBERIUS Albo i to może bydz, że tu panny były, / Ciebie według zwyczaju swego nawiedziły.”

998 Athanasius Kircher, *Ars Magna lucis et umbrae*, Amsterdam ²1671; ¹1646, *Athanasii Kircheri Ars magna lucis et umbrae*. Romae: Sumptibus Hermani Scheus. J. Okoń (1970: 262–265) describes the invention when interpreting its application as an “attempt to solve the difficulties stemming from the influence of epic on drama, which followed ballet in its attempts to make the spectacle more attractive and draw larger

The one who remains on the stage is the Sinner, now able to commune with God only through the sacraments; that is, only by remaining within the mystical Body of the Church. And it is the Church that is responsible for the faithful who have trusted in it.

To show how greatly did the duties of the Church differ through the epochs, let us recall an example from an earlier period: the extremely negative presentation of the (papal-Cistercian!) idea of crusades and general “Christian imperialism.” Even the heathen’s intention to completely destroy Christianity did not justify retaliation; only a defensive war was justified, and the party appointed to run it was the emperor (kings), not the papacy. Kahl (1991: 66ff) notices this position in the unknown author *Ludus de Antichristo* (before 1178).⁹⁹⁹ Paweł Włodkowic¹⁰⁰⁰ later presented similar views on religious war, which can be attributed to the special political, religious, and national relations in Poland of that time.

Die sevenste Bliscap van onser Vrouwen (Seventh Joy of the Mother of God), which ends the Brussels cycle, shows exactly the anger of Christ’s Enemies to the manifestations of his cult, repeatedly multiplied by his Mother; and these are their fears of the establishment of a new Church. “If her friends, who still love

audiences.” Okoń disagrees here with Lewański’s view presented in his introduction to *Dramaty staropolskie* (p. 73), that this measure is “the most demonstrative declaration of the renunciation of dialog and plot, the best work of arealism on the Jesuit scene.” G. Jacob, *Geschichte des Schattentheaters*, Berlin 1907; A. Haakman, *De onderaardse wereld van Athanasius Kircher* (Amsterdam 1991; a biography).

999 Probably written by a Benedictine monk, a copy is available in the codex of the Tegernsee monastery, today Munich. H. Plechl, “Die Tegernseer Handschrift Clm 19411. Beschreibung und Inhalt,” *Deutsches Archiv* 18/1962, pp. 418–501; C. E. Eder, “Die Schule des Klosters Tegernsee im frühen Mittelalter im Spiegel der Tegernseer Handschriften,” *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens* 83/1972, pp. 8–158.

1000 H.-D. Kahl devoted to them his study “Die völkerrechtliche Lösung der ‘Heidenfrage’ bei Paulus Vladimiri von Krakau († 1435) und ihre problemgeschichtliche Einordnung,” *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 7/1958, pp. 161–209. The legal aspects of the approach to pagans, infidels, and heretics were studied in Poland by, among others, L. Winowski; for instance, in his *Innowiercy w poglądach uczonych zachodniego chrześcijaństwa XIII–XIV wieku*, Wrocław 1985; Winowski also studied the respective regulations on the side of Islam in his book *Państwo islamu w czasach Mahometa i kalifów prawowiernych*, 1966. The European background of Polish legal views – also about infidels – is presented by S. Wielgus, *Polska średniowieczna doktryna Ius Gentium*, Lublin 1996.

Jesus, will win her body after death, they will turn its parts into relics to anger us and damage the Devil, as they will convert people” (lines 271–274). Therefore, the enemies decide to burn Mary’s body after death and spread the ashes in the wind, “so that every bit will fly in a different direction” (lines 278–281). The person of Mary is at the center of events, but two groups are the most active: the Apostles and the Jewish dignitaries. The mystery play layer is characterized by significant echoes of previous events: the Annunciation (Mary learns when she will die), Resurrection, and Visitation of the Holy Sepulcher (the Apostles open Mary’s grave to see that “there is no trace of her body,” together with Thomas who was not a witness to the Assumption). The poetics of the miracle play is manifest at important points of the plot: the miraculous transfer of the Apostles by angels to the house of Mary and the punishment of withering hands that falls on the Jews, who try to forcibly take the coffin with the body of Mary from the Apostles.

The Christians’ strong fear of the Enemies of any kind cannot be explained by the sheer need to defend their territory. Although, of course, the sense of material losses did not reduce the conviction that the Christian could lose to the Enemies much more than wealth and peace. The proper rate in the fight against them was salvation and eternal life.

26. The Farce

1. IGNORING SACRALITY. Genres of farce and comic inclusions in other works show impermanence, ineffectiveness, misery, or criminality of the actions of people who ignore the sacred. This enables the spectators to learn the standards of behavior in the spheres of life, which may be free from the holy sacred but must contain an invariable element for them to be common good. At the beginning of this book, we defined the diminishing durability and range of norms as going down to the lower tiers of the scale of sacrality (Becker 1967). Outside of the scale, there is only the lack of norms, freedom to break the rules, a secularization with “nothing holy.” This last area shows a fundamental difference from the previous one, which changes the way how they are used in farces. The two fields jointly cover the whole of the profane sphere of human life. This is reflected in the wide thematic scope of farces, which accompanies other genres that directly demonstrate and propagate a positive attitude toward the sacred. Below, we will also consider how medieval authors drew telling motifs and presented them directly or inaccurately, as a violation of a certain principle.

Ignoring the holy sacred was not simply one of many literary options; after all, even today one needs special permission to ridicule religion. Due to the risk of blasphemy, this thread developed with characters unrepresentative of the community – children, youth, underdeveloped and anti-social adults, jesters, vagrants – perceived and thusly defined as aliens: unbelievers, heretics (apostates), pagans and dissenters (Saracens and Jews), witches, and especially the Devil. The latter had an advantage over most of the previous anti-heroes as he was undoubtedly a strong believer,¹⁰⁰¹ so his character greatly helped the authors.

More important for drama history, because more common were farce themes based on infractions of lower-tier sacrality or drawn from the sphere of playful secularization. As the stakes were lower than in previous case of blasphemous violations of sacrality, protagonists of farces could recruit from among the ordinary people whose error carried no great dangers to the value system.

Alan Knight deals with the multilayered stereotype about farces and proves they were not simply crude realistic images for the easy laugh of the lower classes. Knight compares composition of the farce to a Hieronymus Bosch painting, who meticulously works with realistic details but juxtaposes them in

1001 W. J. M. A. Asselbergs in his introduction to *Sacrament vander Nieuwervaert* (p. 33); see chapter 23.5.

a visionary reality far removed from everyday life. Similarly, authors of farces construct a “fantastic world of symbolic actions, incredible behavior, and impossible coincidences” (A. Knight 1983: 49). Even if this explanation conveys rhetorical exaggeration, we must agree that the farce world is not devoid of meaning, and Knight himself continues to explain its implied norm. Such aesthetics bears not simply a carefree entertainment, although many often perceived it as such. Because one may fight for the truth with a fanciful fable of phantoms.¹⁰⁰² This truth lies in covert predication – which we have reached via a detour – that the evil receive punishment. Or, the evil did not receive punishment: think why?

Truth in the sphere of the sacred comes from revelation, in the sphere of the profane – from disclosure, transparency, increasingly more often from voting, if not from shouting; “But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light” (Ephesians 5:13).

The dramatic fiction of morality plays and farces forms “imaginative worlds in which affect and action are brought closer together ... desires are fulfilled and anxieties mastered by means of conventional, pre-existing generic structures” (A. Knight 1983: 49). Following his theory, Knight refers to morality plays and farce, but this applies to miracle plays as well. We understand this “imaginative world” as thought experiments that simulate situations when there is no controlling instance that would lengthen the path between affect, desire, will – and action, fulfillment, execution. Therefore, this is an exercise in recognizing the role of subjectivity by its temporary exclusion. This measure reveals the disastrous consequences of the lack of a center of control by depicting “an image of what the real world would be like without the guiding rudder of reason” (A. Knight 1983: 59), namely “the antithesis of the terrestrial paradise” or sometimes even a foretaste of Hell (p. 61).

The learning of standards and stating their absence – imperfect sacrality or its complete absence – happens in the world of the profane by presenting the image in a distorting mirror or even in a “crooked” crystal ball. The distortion of performances is not necessary in the area of secularization (in Becker’s sense): there, human behaviors are by definition non-standard and easily presented as “perverted” negative examples. The participants of the farce world do not approach it that way, but it provokes a sigh in the audience: “You have no fear of God!” In this sense, farce is an anti-miracle-play: it presents the situations

1002 The allegorical meaning “is the one that is hidden beneath the cloak of these fables, and is a truth hidden beneath a beautiful fiction” (Dante, *Convivio* II, 1. Trans. Richard H. Lansing. Garland Library of Medieval Literature, 1990).

which in the miracle play end with the intervention of the higher power. This empty place is more visible and the lack of this redemptive factor emphasizes its relevance: it is an invitation for the Enemy, which stirs anxiety that the whole area of secularization is susceptible to the expansion of Evil or even already is its kingdom.

There are certain similarities between the behavior of the subject in miracle plays and farces. In the former, ignoring the sacred ends in the understanding of the error and conversion with the help of the sacred. Whereas, in the latter, man continues individually to the end and causes an irreversible disaster; this also applies to “villains” in some of morality plays. This catastrophe is the loss of God’s grace (Gauvin 1985). However, such loss does not necessarily mean total disbelief and resignation, as suggested by A. E. Knight (1983: 61): a farce or a farcical episode in a different genre easily “becomes a metaphor of man’s sinful state before the miraculous coming of grace.” Farce knows no miracle. If it sometimes glimpses hope of regaining grace, it is only thanks to overcoming evil on the local scale. The three neighbors from the farce (*sotternie*) *Die Hexe* who set a trap to expose Juliana – suspected of witchcraft – succeed because they skillfully question her and provoke to show off her art. Also in many morality plays, Reason helps in making a moral choice (A. E. Knight 1983: 54); we mentioned the radical extension of the scope of moral stupidity, which many the medieval people often made responsible for the collapse of the previous human race (Clopper 1989); which is a reversal of the eschatological perspective in a mirror-like take.

However, because of its content, farce is rather an anti-*speculum*, a parade of “negative examples” that not only contains the implied norm (A. E. Knight 1983: 64), but reminds us of the ongoing and awaiting Task. Already Plotinus saw it that way: Evil beneficially affects the whole as a deterrent example but also brings other diverse benefits. Evil motivates people to vigilance, forces them to oppose anger, invigorates the thought, and sharpens the gaze; finally, it allows us to understand how great virtue is, by juxtaposition with the wickedness, which is the fate of the ignoble.¹⁰⁰³ The universe would be incomplete without Evil; most of the bad things – maybe all – benefit the greater whole.¹⁰⁰⁴

1003 Plotinus, *Enneades* III 2, 5, 17–21; qtd. after *Plotins Schriften übersetzt von Richard Härdter; Neubearbeitung mit griechischem Lesetext und Anmerkungen von Rudolf Beutler und Willy Theiler*, Vol. 5a, Hamburg 1960, pp. 54–55.

1004 Plotinus, *Enneades* II 3, 18, 2.

The devotional images entrust the reprimand of the faithful precisely to the negative motif, which “works more strongly and more compellingly in a play than the positive motif” (Jaritz 1990: 218). From the mid-fourteenth century, the editions of Augustine of Hippo’s *De Civitate Dei* supplement the representations of the city of God’s with the symmetrical illustration of Babylon.¹⁰⁰⁵

Denial is quite commonly used as a didactic tool also in catechesis: the person who does not want to accept the five obligatory sacraments will not receive salvation;¹⁰⁰⁶ it is a sin to not baptize the child or enter marriage without love and out of greed.¹⁰⁰⁷ The practice of educational meditation exercises in the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life (*devotio moderna*, the description concerns the city of Gouda) was characterized by alternation: Saturday concentrated on sins, Sunday on the kingdom of Heaven, Monday on death, while Tuesday on God’s blessings (van Geest 1995: 102).¹⁰⁰⁸ The Rosary has the same structure (see chapter 9.4), which consists of successive cycles of five joyful, five painful, and five glorious mysteries. The first foretells the coming of Christ, the second commemorates the last moments of his life, while the third – his Resurrection.

But Farce also offers positive explanations of social norms through the extraction of a moral and explication of the implied meaning of a play, which sometimes results from the use of the fabliau scheme that ends with a moral (A. E. Knight 1983: 65). In any case, we should include the farce into the claim that the source of all forms of the Feast of Fools is never the glorification of foolishness (Heers 1995: 76).

2. THE RELIGIOUS IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMIC. When discussing the coexistence of joke and gravity in medieval literature, Curtius identifies the admixture of *ludicra* in various genres, including Church literature. However, Curtius does not undermine the principle that “the sacred and the profane ... is the basic distinction in the medieval intellectual world. Within the realm of the profane the *ludicra* have their place” (Curtius 2013: 430, IV Excursion). In contrast, the

1005 See chapter 24.2 for the “urbanist” sermon of Hugh of Saint Victor. Küster (1989: 168–169) argues that Hugh’s plan is the possible source of a transformation in the iconographic tradition, which began with an Antwerp codex from 1348; in ft. 120 Küster offers other examples from the fourteenth and fifteenth century, referencing a monograph on the dualist tradition by A. de Laborde, *Les manuscrits a peintures de la cité du Dieu de Saint Augustin*, Vol. 1–3, Paris 1903.

1006 That is, all besides Matrimony and Holy Orders; *Speculum de confessione*, cap. 34, f. b8^v; qtd. After Bange, p. 138.

1007 *Spiegel der biechten*, 58b; 62b; qtd. after Bange, p. 138.

1008 Diverse versions of detailed weekly programs are available in van Dijk 1995: 152–156.

religious genres like exempla used “grotesque and the comic” to mark another part of the divine reality: the material, mundane, and contrasting with the heavenly and exalted (Sprandel 1982: 55). A. E. Knight presents the matter in a partly similar way when considering drama (1983: 13):

Yet if there is one constant in medieval drama, it is the association of comic and religious elements in plays depicting the collective memory of the past.

In this light we begin to perceive dramatic action in the farce, not as a series of real-life practical jokes, but as a comic analogue of demonic activities in the fallen world (A. E. Knight 1983: 50).

Throughout the whole Middle Ages, there formed the liturgical opposition of the periods before and after Easter as, respectively, the time “symbolizing human existence in the world”¹⁰⁰⁹ and the time of “return to Jerusalem.”¹⁰¹⁰ As Jürgen Küster argues (1989), a special place obtained the Shrovetide (*die Vorfastenzeit*),¹⁰¹¹ clearly distinguished by Pope Gregory I the Great, who placed the Ash Wednesday in the calendar as its beginning (*caput jejunii*). The pre-Easter period thus halved into two periods, the pre-Lent and Lent; “the former liturgically dealt with the secular sphere [*der Weltstaat*] and *civitas diaboli*, the latter continued the struggle for the right path “to Jerusalem” and full conversion (meta-noia;¹⁰¹² Küster 1989: 164). The old customs of “farewell to meat” partly resembled the carnival.¹⁰¹³ People partied and drank (*helluentur vinoque bacchentur*), thus imitating Adam, who also ignored the divine commandment and could not refuse the forbidden fruit. Even the people of God sat down to feasting and stood up to play¹⁰¹⁴ in feasts, drunkennes, screams, and devilish dances that do not end with sunset to disturb most of the night.¹⁰¹⁵ These traditions crystallize in the thirteenth century in the institution of Shrovetide night (*die Fastnacht*). Its participants included in its

1009 Already described this way by Alcuin in his *Liber de divinis officiis*, PL 101, col. 1182; qtd. after Küster 1989: 160.

1010 Like the disciples of Jesus who – after his Ascension – “returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Luke 24: 52).

1011 Alcuin of York devoted the first book of his liturgics to this matter.

1012 Also see this entry in Rahner, Vorgrimler 1987; Matthew 3: 7; Luke 3: 7.

1013 The Byzantine Greek monk Theodore the Studite (759–826) described them in two sermons: *Sexto Excarnaliorum* and *Dominica Excarnaliorum* (PL 99, col. 575–577; below quotations after Küster 1989: 164).

1014 “Quin Dei populus cibo potuque capiendo sedere, ac surexerre ludere.”

1015 “Neque his diversa sunt quae per hos dies factitantur, commessiones, ebrietas, clamores, diabolica tripudia, quae non interdium solum obeantur, sed magnam quoque partem exigant noctis.”

events elements of ritual demonstration of evil, even drastic displays of the allegories of the seven deadly sins that ended with the killing of certain animals; the initiator of such a performance in Venice on Shrovetide in 1207 was Pope Innocent III whom we mentioned before.¹⁰¹⁶

Anette Köhler (1992: 104) begins her history of German Shrovetide farce in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the statement that *das Fastnachtspiel* is a religious genre (*ein geistliches Spiel*), which is confirmed not only by the strict dependence of its dates from the Church calendar but even the fact that its contents mostly draw from the Gospel.¹⁰¹⁷ In the opinion of Barbara Goth (1967), the French jester farce *sottie* was devoted to ridicule the entire human world, not only deviant behaviors. The meaning of the Dutch farce from the *abele spelen* corpus is less radical. Jester's presence in their cast – like in *sottie*¹⁰¹⁸ – does not justify their name *sotternie*, but indicates its metaphorical significance in the spirit of not social maladjustment but “moral foolishness;” that is, the violation of norms of religious ethics. The antagonists of the antagonist characters in these farces¹⁰¹⁹ are a naïve man who endangers his family finances,¹⁰²⁰ an adulteress, a priest who breaks celibacy, finally lonely women and men who neither start a family nor go to a monastery, but practice debauchery or magic. All of them are “uncivilized” or unfit because they all disregard the sacraments, for

1016 Küster 1989: 168 with reference to L. Kretzenbacher, “Alt Venedigs Sport und Schaubrauchtum als Propaganda der Republik Venedig zwischen Friaul und Byzanz,” *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e occidente (secoli XV–XVI. Aspetti e problemi I)*, Florence 1977, p. 204. About the cat as the soul of Judas in contemporary Polish Holy Thursday rites, see M. Zowczak, *Biblia ludowa. Interpretacje wątków biblijnych w kulturze ludowej*, Wrocław 2000, pp. 354 ff.

1017 As the example here, I use the *Fastnachtspiel* by Andreas Heysinger, *Coecus in via* (1702; *The Blind Man by the Road*; MS in the Austrian National Library NB 18871), performed in Vienna for the royal family in 1702; the source is Luke 18: 31–42; this is the source of the fragment present in lectionaries for the Sunday before Lent, *dominica quinquagesima*, planned by many German Shrovetide farces for the date of the performance (A. Köhler 1992: 107).

1018 Hüsken (1987: 116–117) remarks the characteristic lack of *sottie* – only one title found – and the untypical infrequency of the character of the fool/jester in the comedies by Dutch Rederijkers.

1019 *Lippijn, De Buskenblaser, Die Hexe, Rubben, Truwanten*. Edited by Leendertz in 1907. Monograph on the subject by Hüsken 1987.

1020 *De Buskenblaser*, Leendertz (pp. 70–77). The husband goes to the market to sell the cow, only to use the money for a beauty treatment; the plot reminds the action of the Five Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25).

which they are ridiculed, beaten, and even expelled from “Christianity” in the eyes of the audience. These non-sacramental people fall into the grasp of the Devil, who may appear in person or in the form of an evil human (see below p. 4 on the penalty).

We should agree with Gurevich (1988: 312), who does not consider “medieval laughter” as extra-religious: on the contrary, the comic strengthens the sacred (against Bakhtin). It functions on the basis of contrast. The distribution of the comic is complementary to the holy sacred. The presence of the comic element in religious literature excludes it from the circle of liturgy and revelation. Similarly, the comic is not possible in the face of death, birth, sex, or mystical experience; that is, everything doubtless disagrees with the comic.

The comic clearly limits the area of the holy sacred onto which it does not enter, but neither does it offer hospitality on its own territory. The diagram in chapter 21.1 specifies how the holy sacred only appears in genres 1–3. Konrad Schoell introduced a similar division in his study of the comic theater of the French Middle Ages by opposing the “immanent world of the comic theater” with the transcendent world of the serious theater.¹⁰²¹ The producers of passion plays explicitly asked not to “ridicule the whole play” or mock the actors who “mistake rhymes” because the performance happens for the Glory of Jesus.¹⁰²²

In the context of transcendentalization, we may perceive the comic as a sign of departure of the holy sacred to Heaven, and perhaps even as a force that accelerates this journey. In the positive action within its domain, the comic covers the privacy of the subject who escapes from the protection of the sacred. We encounter confirmation in the observation that “nothing is objectively comical, there are only things comicized by the subject, things found to be comical.”¹⁰²³

1021 *Das komische Theater des französischen Mittelalters*, Munich 1975, p. 34; qtd. after A. E. Knight 1983: 53; also see Schoell 1996. Below, I make reservations about the immanence – that is non-referentiality – and the withdrawal of the represented world of the farce (confirmed by A. E. Knight).

1022 *Bozner Passion* (1495, Tyrol, lin. 1003–1007); two director’s versions were published by B. Klammer in Bern 1986, p. 47; qtd. after Fichte 1993: 280. Schnyder (1995: 38) considers similar requests in other texts as a topos of Christian humility. However, he also recalls a threat from the prologue to the II day of the Tyrol *Passion from Sterzing* that the spectators should not mock actor’s mistakes, for “whoever will not be saddened today, should expect eternal damnation;” lin. 1213–1216, edited by J. E. Wackernell, *Altdeutsche Passionsspiele aus Tirol*, Graz 1897, p. 78; qtd. after Schnyder 1995: ft. 29.

1023 “Objektiv komisch ist nichts, es gibt nur das von einem Subjekt aus Komisierte, das komisch Gefundene” (Christian Janentzky’s opinion qtd. after: Haug 1982a: 260).

This statement opens the most sovereign area of human behavior, within which subjectivity can best show what it can do. Maybe that is why the hero of the feast day – a player, an actor, a jester – wants to win by way of a hilarious feat and, as argued by Jacques Heers (1995: 7), gains fame and prestige enjoyed by the organizer of the festivity? Such hero achieves this under the cover of a joke, not quite seriously, and through experimenting. Play is a convention that frees one from responsibility and gives the opportunity to try out the individual's contribution to the community safe from punishment. This impunity partly shelters all those who dress up, let alone fake or real fools, not to mention children. The contribution of children and old people in the discovering of miraculous paintings (ch. 23) first creates the possibility to invalidate the discovery if it proved a forgery, which would be difficult, should someone's prestige lay on the line.

We outlined two main ways of using the comic: from the viewpoint of the holy sacred – as the condemnation of secularity equated with impiety – and from the point of view of the lower tiers of sacrality, as an expression of self-governing aspirations of subjectivity.

3. "FORMS OF IMPIETY." Previously (ch. 22–24), after presenting the type of the sacred to be learned in a given genre, we went on to look for manifestations of its subsequent forms of piety. Here – when the holy sacred is noticeably absent – we allow ourselves to define this area of behaviors with an antonym, which only directly names that what others usually called euphemistically by presenting the world of farce as a "metaphor of moral folly" (A. E. Knight 1983: 59). Foolishness and irrationality are the accusations against those who ignore or disregard the will of God – or even oppose it – but also those who diminish the lesser "holiness." Farce happens in the sphere of secular behaviors, represents lower-tier sacrality and secularization activities (as introduced by Becker). Their impious character is emphasized by the absence of any traces of the holy sacred in farce. They are imaginative worlds, but not fantastic.

Some varieties of morality play use instruction means of demonstrating alternately the good and bad behavior of people or personifications like sins and virtues, thus safeguarding that the good ends victorious. The same applies to the dramatizations of biblical parables that cause some classification problems, because they are not part of the sacred history as a narrative sequence, but are moralizing entities isolated from that time: the Parable of the Faithful Servant (Matthew 24: 45–51), the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25: 1–13), the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25: 14–30). The Parable of Ten Virgins proves that other genres than morality play also call the lack of piety by the name of foolishness, that is, disregard for salvation. *Düringische Chronik* (The Chronicle of Thuringia) by Johannes Rothe (d. 1434) describes how stupefying was the

irrevocability of the Last Judgment for the Landgrave of Thuringia, that he witnessed in the 1322 performance of the German-language play *Ludus de decem virginibus* in Eisenach.¹⁰²⁴ The Landgrave was overwhelmed with doubt, fell into a heavy melancholy, suffered a stroke, and died two years later (Brett-Evans 1975: 45–46). The Flemish version of *Spel van de V (vijf) vroede ende V dwaenze Maegden*¹⁰²⁵ (ca. 1500, Oudenaarde), becomes a morality play, when it turns virgins into allegories of virtues or sins, but also inclines toward farce, when expanding the composition of negative figures: the foolish virgins and the devils. The method of “demonstrative contrast” was developed by the author of the *Erfurt Morality Play* so far that it led to the “partitioning of characters.” Not only do Prudens and Fatuus appear side by side (the Wise and the Foolish), the latter may turn into the Repentant and Obdurate – only to testify that even the ill-advised behavior of the Foolish does not ultimately determine the matter of their salvation (Linke 1995: 135).

The late Shrovetide games harness the same argumentation by dramatizing the fate of two protagonists – Carnival and Lent – with an unmistakable moralizing tendency: the audience not only recognizes them as two poles on the map of salvation but also follows their fate without doubt about which direction of their actions is right. One of the examples may be the Salzburg *Comico-Tragoedia von Baccho* (1628), in which the followers of Bacchus encounter a miserable fate (A. Köhler 1991: 115–116).

Secular holidays also had a dual structure, combining gentle meaning with aggression and praising both general allegories and specific living leaders. These ceremonies offered the opportunity not only to express the joy of victory but also show contempt to dishonor the “prisoners in chains.” Besides that, the shows on secular holidays “rather express unity and praise virtues than glorify a specific victory,” honor people of outstanding merit, and worship the allegories of certain values like Love, Purity, Death, Fame, Time, and Eternity.¹⁰²⁶ Heers already attributes the gentleness of these later, fifteenth-century shows to the influence of humanistic thought (1995: 194–195).

1024 See H. Gras, “The Ludus de decem virginibus and the reception of represented evil,” *Evil on the Medieval Stage. Papers from the sixth triennial colloquium of the International Society for the Study of Medieval Theatre SITM 1989*, ed. M. Twycross, Lancaster 1992. German studies call this play *Eisenacher Spiel von den zehn Jungfrauen* or *Eisenacher Zehnjungfrauenspiel*, from the city in which it was staged.

1025 Ed. by M. Hoebeke, The Hague 1979; the text transferred valuable didascalia.

1026 The protagonists of Petrarch’s cycle of poems *I Trionfi*, ca. 1360; qtd. after Heers 1995: 194.

Farce focuses on the dark, aggressive side without subtlety. According to A. E. Knight, all dramatic conflicts in morality play and farce refer to the problem of power or rationality. In farce, all power is “debased” and chaos prevails (Cox 1996: 216 speaks of “social entropy”); all the organs of power are corrupt, while the distribution of authority reveals foolishness; hence, stupidity is an indispensable player in the world of farce. This world is an “ethical jungle” in which only shrews and sly men can survive; it is a world of retributive justice, because there is no higher law or authority (A. E. Knight 1983: 53). The process of creating state power is presented as very imperfect or burdensome. Let us remember that the institutional morality play also combines this fundamental civilization process with the progress of Christian morality. It is possible that dubbing those who do not keep up with the process “foolish” instead of impious is an innovation that expresses the separateness of the sphere of the profane (cf. the abandoning of the diabolization of heretics ch. 23.6).

The highlighting of values by their provocative undermining likens dramatic farce to the mechanism of ritual insult. It is a well-known – though disappearing – genre of rural and urban folklore: in the cities, most often cultivated by taxi drivers cursing other drivers. Ritual insults are usually also rated by an audience, who assesses which player won. The situation offers a lot of fun at somebody’s expense, but fun as a path of openness (see p. 2 above). The ritual insult differs from the personal one, by the fact that the former’s predication is false and the latter’s is real (Labov 1972: 142 ff). A ritual must have an audience, because it assumes a common knowledge of this hypothetical truth and expresses the possibility that something like the insult’s claim is thinkable or can happen.

This is the explicated moral in the farce *Truwanten* (Vagrancy) about a girl who left work on a farm to live freely in the company of a fugitive monk. The Devil, who explains the moral (lines 185–196), says: “Beware for I take such people to Hell.” The message of the ritual is a warning that someone from the audience may need to be personally insulted at one time (Labov 1972: 143). Certain rituals use the impunity – the lack of legal capacity – of the young generation to “commission” them to perform ritual insult; here we may ascribe the European traditional *charivari*, folk ritual lynching (not necessarily lethal) conducted by the community on the member who violated the moral norm.¹⁰²⁷

1027 E. P. Thompson, “Rough music: Le charivari anglais,” *Annales E.S.C.* 27/1972, pp. 285–312; K. Meuli, “Über einige alte Rechtsbräuche. Charivari,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 1, Basel 1975, pp. 445–484; O. E. Breibeck, *Nacha treibt’s zua. Das Haberfeldtreiben*, München 1979; W. Schild 1980; *Le charivari*, J. Le Goff, J.-C.

This is where the similarity to the satirical function of farce appears: someone in the audience may be the happy-go-lucky, adulterer, or a henpecked husband who allows adultery; neighbors know. This person will then hear the warning: “Do not change your life into a farce!” As noted by Marjoke de Roos (1989: 324), Nuremberg’s management forbade too personal insults that often appeared as content of Shrovetide performances.¹⁰²⁸ Kathleen Falvey found in the codex of the Confraternity of Saint Andrew – next to 117 lyrical and dramatic lauds – a text about the inhabitants of Perugia, who were to deserve punishment for their sinful life (1982: 64).

The loading of lower-tier sacrality (on the Becker scale), which do not have such a strong sanction, paradoxically increases the demand for ritual insult. The tools to control social standards that are only sanctioned by custom require more frequent and explicit testing. Everyone must know that norms exist, are respected, and where are their limits.

A significant part of this task happened – and continues to happen – via non-literary communication, on the plane of interaction and exchange. This task must refer to a non-discursive message consisting in the modification of known significant behaviors, including ritual insult. We may notice this in the example of games for the Feast of the Holy Innocents on December 28, which people called the “feast of fools.” This is how people called the customary law of the younger clergy from the more significant diocesan churches – not monasteries – to celebrate pseudo-sacral ceremonies that performed “always the same scandalous, most liberal and promiscuous secularity” (Heers 1995: 133). The oldest preserved record of the tradition of mockery nearing blasphemy probably dates back to 1198 (Heers 1995: 129).¹⁰²⁹ It must have been a fairly widespread custom – known as *festas stultorum* among other games like *episcopi puerorum* – when it appeared in the 1207 Papal brief of Innocent III, *Cum decorem domus Domini*, which conveys the earliest known ban on theater plays (*ludi teatrales*, public entertainment) in churches, sent to the Polish Archbishop of Gniezno,

Schmitt (ed.), Paris 1981; H. Rey-Flaud, *Le charivari. Les rituels fondamentaux de la sexualité*, Paris 1985; S. Frank, “Popular justice, community and culture among the Russian peasantry,” *The Russian Review* 46/1987, pp. 239–265; De Roos 1989.

1028 De Roos conveys the details in her article “Le théâtre ou la vie? L’élément charivarique dans les farces du carnaval allemandes du XV^e siècle,” *II Simposi Internacional d’Historia del Teatre*, Barcelona 1988.

1029 Documentation of texts in Young 1933, Vol. 1: 104ff, 169ff, 551; Chambers 1903, Vol. 1: 274ff, 280ff; Frank 1954: 40–43. Kolve (1966: 135–137) rejected the joint consideration of both customs.

Henryk Kietlicz:¹⁰³⁰ “due to the excesses of their [spiritual sons], there sometimes happen performances in the churches ... and in these spectacles appear masks of frights.”¹⁰³¹

If we acknowledge the need for entertainment and play to, accordingly, devote part of the canonical time for *recreatio*, then we will better understand some of this ritual’s uniqueness. The young seminarians play with matters they know, among which they grow up, and with which they will soon seriously deal; they may now explore the nearer and more distant environment; by marching through the city to other churches they may manifest the presence and position of their cathedral, or actually its chapter in front of the bishop;¹⁰³² simultaneously, they provide the city with entertainment and gaining the kind of prestige that the imperial governors previously gathered by organizing the games for the plebeians.¹⁰³³ Because they are part of the clergy, their language must be as far from the liturgy as possible. Initially, there was the *Office of the Feast of Fools* written by Archbishop Peter of Corbeil (d. 1222) that distanced itself from the liturgical tradition only in small parodist deviations: word play, familiar tone, a recommendation to sing the antiphon with falsetto (Heers 1995: 126–127). But all this proposed not a reform of the liturgy but its internal, temporary, and partial denial and enrichment. An example is provided by the description of the liturgy for the Feast of the Holy Innocents preserved in the thirteenth century

1030 Noteworthy, Kietlicz was the supporter of the Gregorian reform, engaged in the struggle for the independence of the Church from secular power. At the time of the letter, Kietlicz stayed in Rome (1206–1208), to which he fled after excommunicating the Polish prince Władysław Laskonogi; cf. him to the hundred years earlier Anselm of Canterbury; cf. the entry by J. Dyla, “Henryk Kietlicz,” EK 6, col. 713–715.

1031 “[P]er insolentiam eorumdem interdum ludi fiunt in ecclesiis theatrales et ... ad ludibriorum spectacula introducuntur [1071] in eas monstra larvarum.” Qtd. after Fijałek 1997: 63, ft. 108; PL 215, col. 1070–71 and ft. 857; cf. *Decretalium D. Gregorii Papae IX Compilatio*, III, 1; about the customs of the clergy, see 12: *Ludi theatrales etiam praetextu consuetudinis in ecclesiis vel per clericos fieri non debent*. About the possible connection to the tradition of Saturnalia, see M. Fassler, “The Feast of Fools and Danielis Ludus: Popular Tradition in a Medieval Cathedral Play,” *Plainsong in the Age of Polyphony*, ed. Th. F. Kelly, Cambridge 1992, pp. 65–99; Young 1933, Vol. 1: 104–110.

1032 Heers presents festivities as a time to “remind the city about the inner hierarchy of the clergy, with the strong and primary position of the collegiate churches” (1995: 131).

1033 In the Flemish Doornik (Tournai) “young sons of burghers of this city [join the party ...] to entertain the people at their own expense for ten to twelve days” (Heers 1995: 129).

codex of the Cathedral of Padua (Young 1933, Vol. 1: 106–109). Let us quote only the strictly dramatic episodes that follow the prime, the office, and the reading: then the cleric reading the lesson,

clad in a simple tunic, holds a wooden spear in his hand, which he throws at the faithful after he is done; after the spear, some armed men appear who spread around the church searching for the baby Jesus and his mother, that is Christ and the Virgin Mary. Someone is dressed like a woman sitting on a donkey that runs away through the church, as a remembrance of the escape of the Virgin and her son to Egypt, after the advice that the angel of the Lord gave Joseph in his sleep.¹⁰³⁴

Even with the reservation that Young understands drama in a classicist manner, we should still protest when he describes these “sporadic manifestations of drama” in the following way:

Although the Feast of Fools and the custom of the Boy Bishop contain occasional features which can be identified as drama, it is scarcely necessary to insist that in their fundamental conception they are allied to sheer revelry and hilarity rather than to the stage. The *episcopellus*, to be sure, does, in a sense, pretend to be the real bishop, and in some of his doings he may be said to imitate that dignified personage. It should be remembered, however, that the chief action in which he is engaged is not an *imitation* of the liturgy, or a dramatic representation of it but the usual, authorized worship of the day. He is, therefore, not an *impersonation* of the true presiding bishop, but merely a ludicrous substitute. (1933: 110).

When focusing his attention on the figure of a juvenile pseudo-bishop, Young neglects to notice the dramatic tension that must have accompanied the search for victims in the church crowd. Such visualization of the words that the participants just heard in the office and the reading about the Massacre of the Innocents was nothing entertaining, but instead aroused empathy and compassion, if not “pity

1034 Young 1933: Vol. 1, 107–108: “Post Primam quidam sacerdos dicit Missam Episcopelli ad altare Sancte Crucis, et ibi a dextro latere altris preparatus est Episcopellus cum pluuiiali et mitra, et cum capellanis suis. Officium *Ex ore infantium*. Epistola *Vidi supra montem Syon*. / Quam dicit quidam indutus quadam uili stricta, et tenet in manu quandam hastam ligneam, quam prohibet uersus populum. Et ibi sunt quidam armati, qui secuntur dictam hastam, et circuiunt ecclesiam querendo Infantem cum Matre sua, scilicet Christum cum Beata Uirgine Maria. Et est quidam indutus ad modum mulieris que sedet supra Asinam fugientem per ecclesiam, ad significationem Uirginis fugientis cum puero Egypto secundum quod angelus Domini in sompnis dixerat Ioseph”. “Vidi supra montem Syon” is the beginning of chapter 14 of the Book of Revelation: “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion...”

and fear.” After all, Herod was to decide about the murder of “144 thousand” Bethlehem newborns!

If we accept Young’s argument that the dramatized Flight into Egypt is common in the whole international corpus of texts related to the tradition of the Feast of Fools or Innocents, then we should return to Kowzan’s comment on the liturgical theory of the genesis of drama (21.2). Even in a polemical abbreviation, liturgical drama is something more than a few fractions of the Christmas or Easter liturgy, something more than a few sentences uttered by the clergy, and more than a couple of their movements from one place to another.

When the feast left the church and poured out into the streets, the differences from authentic liturgy became more visible in order to exclude the danger of public misunderstanding and scandal. The older generation of clergymen could then observe the young generation in natural conditions: whom they choose as their one-day bishop (the elections were always part of this ritual), how this elected *episcopellus* acts in his role of the celebrant and master of the ceremony, who plays in moderation, and who becomes unpredictable. The Feast of the Innocents ceases in the sixteenth century, when “the synods and university doctors succeed at imposing ... their own understanding of the sacred, decency, and admiration for the places of worship, along with the dignity of Church offices and the clergy.” Counter-Reformation definitely confirmed this. “Thus, the event that may seem like just an episode in a conflict of bishop and the chapter of his cathedral, actually signifies the inevitable removal of the latter” (Heers 1995: 133). Simultaneously, there disappears a certain stream of oral Tradition, giving way to the written canon, and the common law also retreats to folklore, pushed away by codices, statutes, and bureaucracy.

The accumulation of negative motifs makes it impossible to end the dramatic action of a farce with the singing of antiphons – still present in morality plays (Cox 1996) – even with falsetto, as prescribed by the *Office of the Feast of Fools*. The alienation from the liturgy is a sign of the inaccessibility of the sacred as a direct helper and defender. In order to stylistically oppose the divine world with the world of the Devil, already around 1130, the unknown author of the Limburg office on the Magi extended the Herodic parts with characteristic secular circumstances and equipped him with markedly negative, mundane features. Against this background, the world of the friends of the King-child radiates peace, its characters show gentleness, and this world pervades the elevated peace of liturgy (Nowé 1989).¹⁰³⁵

1035 J. Smits van Waesberghe (see ch. 20.3) suspected the authorship of Theodoricus of Sint Truiden (before 1107) who could play a broader role for Herod to voice his

However, we do not have to necessarily agree with A. E. Knight that farce is a parody of the *duellum* in which man, instead of Christ, struggles with the Evil One and loses. This is but the same historic battle that repeats itself as a farce...

Do people always lose? Maybe yes, but we laugh back. The ridicule weakens the opponent, makes him casual and familiar. The learning of Evil reduces the fear of it and gives hope to overcome it: whether this opponent will be weakness, error, sin, or even the Devil.

First, laughter was aimed at the unclean force (Gurevich 1988: 276), or the Enemy. One will also easily find a whole range of ridiculing of weakness, error, and sin. Zdzisław Żygulski (1978) describes a mocking armor that ridiculed the soldiers who conduct the Crucifixion and the Massacre of Innocents:

The anti-knight had a face contorted with grimace, stigmatized with cruelty, while his movements were violent and brutal. His armor had to be equally deformed, dark, and repulsive. The armor displayed scales and bars instead of shiny smooth plates, fish fins and bats wings instead of circular shields, while the helmets were pointed like the heathens' or crowned with a dragon's back. Instead of white and brightness, the color of the plates was rusty, brown, red, or even black, associated with Hell and the abyss.¹⁰³⁶

It is precisely because of this burden of farce motifs with the mocking distortion, the negative judgment, and the forced repulsion that the interpretation of farces as realistic art must be very cautious. The negative image of women in German Shrovetide farces expressed not misogyny but served to create a distaste for marriage among young apprentices, economically unable to provide for a family; that is, these farces were to "make life easier" for the apprentices (E. Keller 1992: 236). Even the cases of dual transmission – when pairs of serious play and a farce appeared jointly as in the corpus of *abel spel* and *sotternie* – are not as explicit as suggested by Traver (1951) and others after her. The opposition of the superiority of the higher class with the inferiority of the lower social customs may suggestively appear as an easy choice but, after closer inspection,

anti-caesar views, as Theodoricus was deeply engaged in the Investiture controversy, which costed him sixteen years of exile to the abbey of Saint Peter in Ghent (cf. with the similar troubles of Anselm of Canterbury). Nowé disagrees with Waesberghe's interpretation. D. Stains elaborates the figure of Herod in a comparative overview, considering both liturgic and vernacular drama, in his article "To Out-Herod Herod: The Development of a Dramatic Character," in Davidson, 1982, pp. 207–231. 1036 Żygulski (1978: 599) shows the images of the perpetrators from the Marian Altar and a few other paintings. By assuming the artisan's viewpoint, we may consider that the masters wanted to ridicule the botchers. Noteworthy, this may be a metaphor of the whole didactic charge of farces (to laugh at the marauders of the civilizing process).

both morality plays and farces show a similar differentiation of the wrongdoers and the aggrieved. Both genres eventually punish the wrongdoer in one way or another: “Here you hang Robrecht” (*Esmoreit*) and “Here they fight” (farces). Who was to learn here from whom? Should Robrecht only receive a beating for high treason? Should the wife late for dinner hang in a farce? Or, should we do nothing? (Only burst out laughing?)

One will certainly notice a certain amount of solidarity in the equal placement of two different worlds on the stage. Besides those who reject the norms, there are many more of those who do not know what they do because they have yet to learn the norms. This creates a smoother transition between the world of farce and the rest of the genres. Opposing different points of view is one of the favorite compositional measures that so enliven the dialogic genres and passages of medieval literature, including scholarly writings.¹⁰³⁷ They model situations of decision by presenting a choice of options, thus remain inseparably linked with the freedom of will and subjectivity.

If farce is a counter-example, then why does it entertain instead of, e.g., provoking an outrage? Because it manifests a ritual, not the cult. It does not serve to propitiate, sustain, or even realize the presented state as the cult treatments do. The Sabbath is cult. The carnival is ritual (at least, until everyone gets drunk, and it turns into a Sabbath...).

The capricious reality of farces consists of the motifs of momentary (hence illusory?) submission to negative motives: to taste and experience that which is tempting. Sprandel (1982: 220) claims that the attention of confraternities to implement strict sexual morality manifested itself, among others, in Shrovetide performances, which subversively exaggerated perverse sex life in a seeming acceptance of something essentially impossible (pornography?). The grotesque, the comic, the (self-)ridicule, and the upsetting of the social hierarchy – the

1037 J. Kilcullen (1991, 389) distinguishes the recitative and assertive writings of William of Occam. The former only compile the views of others, while the latter present his own ideas. This division repeats the Scholastic distinction of *auctoritates* (incontestable statements) and *sententiae* (the effects of own work). Cf. Rudd's opinion (ft. 679) and Bakhtin's rule of dialogism, indispensable in the subject's learning, as it “cannot simply become mute” (1986: 512). Also there, we find a few commentaries that agree with my ideas of processuality, the accrual of subjectivity, and the obligation to reveal standards: “The gradation of objectivity and subjectivity. The event-driven feature of dialogic learning. The encounter. Evaluation as the inseparable component of dialogic learning.” Brewer (1988) acknowledges dialogic reasoning as the characteristic quality of the Western culture that begins with Socrates.

world à rebours – was not a cultic but a ritual demonstration of anti-values that aimed teaching them to others, as only their knowledge allowed medieval people for their rejection.

Of course, it would be strange if this grasping in hand and abandonment – a constant delimitation and transcendence of people understood as a manifestation of the human spirit (Dec 1995: 94) – was not an important task of drama as the form of communication that does not require reading. The farce motifs usually do not portray people or groups, but point to all environments. A scandalous composition and Dantean monstrosities are audiovisual means, which materialize the possible threats, that is, an unfortunate turn of the future affairs. Thanks to this maneuver – to see for yourself a blink of the future on stage – the present tasks gain clarity.

4. SUBJECTIVITY. Farce is a rivalry of truths, pseudo-truths, half-truths, and more or less explicit falsities. This could not be different, as even the very word “farce” meant a *trick* (A. E. Knight 1983: 51).¹⁰³⁸ Usually, the Devil prepared the trick, but a different one than the demons from the world of morality plays. In a morality play, “a real hell and real devils may intrude upon the action of the play” (A. E. Knight 1983: 50). The apparatuses of deception, that served in morality plays as “instruments of eternal damnation in the hands of demons and vice characters,” appear in farce as tools for one character to gain an advantage over another (A. E. Knight 1983: 50). One could notice here a warning against the persuasive abuse of rhetorics.

Both exercise the subject’s independence. What Janentzky connects with subjectivity, A. E. Knight considers on a wider background: laughter is possible only in a meaningful cultural context, in which understandable elements collide with each other (A. E. Knight 1983: 48). Equality of colliding elements results in farce with conflicts that are not being resolved, but “only momentarily neutralized” (A. E. Knight 1983: 51). As if no one was better or nothing was permanent. The Everyman in a morality play “is always moving forward toward the ultimate goal of conversion or salvation (or damnation) and every episode is directly related to the final goal.” The protagonists may sometimes choose direct benefits – like farce characters – but they always operate motivated by external moral standards, while farce characters do not have these (A. E. Knight 1983: 52). In morality plays,

1038 Hess (1977b: 693) argues that the source meaning of “farce” is “stuffing” from the German word “die Farce,” which means both farce and stuffing, thus suggesting the content of plays: diverse and spicy; see J. Frappier, *Le Théâtre profane en France au moyen âge (13^e et 14^e siècles)*, Paris 1961, p. 15.

the main character mediates “between the social group comprising the audience of the work and a metaphysical entity important to that group: fate, providence, honour, society” (A. E. Knight 1983: 65). Farce has no heroes, hence there appear neither solutions to the conflict nor conditions for introducing order. Farcical pseudo-heroes restore order “by ruse and trickery, not by the strength and sacrifice required of a real hero.” Should one gain authority by physical force, it constitutes no moral teaching in the sense of a morality play, because strength does not prove right or constitute merit; such pseudo-authority belongs to “the irrational world of the farce” (A. E. Knight 1983: 65).

This world is governed by kratocracy. Or, maybe, it is ruled by the sly? So, in a sense, the smart? The rational in a different way? The person who does not believe in the ability to effectively call upon the higher power to help, is less likely to act heroically. Farce resigns from heroism or presents a “non-heroic” version of heroism: “Farce characters act in order to deceive, and often their actions are really reactions to other characters who have deceived them or are in the process of doing so.... Their actions change nothing essential” (A. E. Knight 1983: 51).

However, often, responding to a banal deception, the farce characters reveal the truth. The truth is quite a decent “metaphysical entity” important for all groups. What else should we expect from commoners?

Meanwhile, in morality play, the choice that is being made not only has a direct ethical qualification – good vs. evil – but it refers to the ultimate good or evil: salvation and damnation (A. E. Knight 1983: 52).¹⁰³⁹ The lack of a clearly repeated final goal in farce suggests that it disregards time and its economy; the farce’s coordination of time is limited to a very small scale, which seems disorderly by any system of coordinates. Indeed, there are farces carefully composed as a closed absurd reality;¹⁰⁴⁰ they strike the spectators as ruthless provocations, after all, counting on people’s understanding what it is about. However, even in this enclosure, we may notice after Sprandel (1982: 2, 21) the praise of own group and the insult toward the others – the audience, other theatrical corporations, other cities – which closely corresponds with the folklore aspect of ritual insult. In the opinion of Rüdiger Krohn (1974: 143), the “growing independence of

1039 This approach by Knight again erases the similarity of the miracle play to the morality play: both have standards and their ultimate goal is salvation.

1040 For instance, Hans Sachs’ farce *Das Narren-Schneyden* shows the birth of a “ready-made” jester with the use of cesarian section; Remshardt (1989). In the same way, what holds a farcical character is the composition of Hieronymus Bosch’s grotesque paintings; as Jeffrey notes (1973: 330), the central part of *The Haywain Triptych* shows “the present [time].”

stage reality” is counteracted by the prologues and epilogues of Shrovetide farces which were to “enhance the viewers’ conviction about the complete interchangeability of people on stage and in the audience, ... to bring the audience closer to the stage, to emphasize the illusion of direct participation in the fictional over-coming of moral and social norms” (Krohn 1974: 153).

Therefore, one should not absolutize the irrationality of farce. Typically, it is a jester who explains the absurd action of a farce – in mystery plays done by the *conductor*, *precursor*, or *expositor* – a figure external to the fiction on stage who is executing the message which in morality play effected from argumentation or meaningful opposition of values. This fiction of staged farce is then the argument by *reductio ad absurdum*. The absurd opposes the value unrepresented by the characters of the drama, but appreciated by the audience. Even if the heroes of the Shrovetide farce “oppose the City Council and the Church, act openly against reason, morality, and decency,” then the respective non-dramatic narratives in verse “emphasize the fact that man and woman will in the end answer to God” (E. Keller 1992: 235).

Moreover, farces lack no examples that include in its plot the indication to the values, which the viewers should defend. There is nothing final in the world of the profane. There is only a momentary balance. Microhistoricity happens in the fringe of the Wide Context that appears to us in the form of trivial examples. They keep silent about the Great Purpose, but shout about the small goals. However, this is the care of what you may really influence: do not pursue Lucifer or all the witches of the world, but expose this Juliana you know who stopped your cows from giving milk. It is true that the punishment of the farce characters is a retaliation for personal injury (A. E. Knight 1983: 52), but is there really no “wider ethical context?” The episodic nature of the farce obscures the fact that this context is implied by the subject of the conflict; and this conflict includes average people who decide on the punishment, but they still adhere to certain values. That is, when a spouse punishes her partner for adultery or when neighbors jointly decide about the witch, they may all act from a private motive but in the interests of a wider community: they expose the alien element in the Body of Christ. The same applies to farce performances: the *Fastnachtspiel* tradition is inextricably linked with the craftsmen of German cities, but still reckons the interests of all strata of the state society, including rural gentry and the patri-
ciate (Brett-Evans 1975: 2, 147).

However, the episodic nature of the majority of farces coincides with a huge variety of motifs which, in a way, countervails the lack of drama with the epic element, the lack of depth with breadth. Moreover, should we consider the wider spectrum of pre-Renaissance comic genres – elaborated by Willem

Hüsken (1987) for the Dutch literature – then we will notice the necessity to distinguish plays, operating with a plot, alongside the previously distinguished types of French farce (B. Rey-Flaud and A. E. Knight) that operate with conflict, confrontation, deception, misunderstanding, and polar exchange of roles (*coup de théâtre*). Hüsken (1987: 74) defines plot as the sequence of the above steps, usually deceptions, which aims to stabilize or change the relationship between characters.¹⁰⁴¹ Let us not delve into typological discussion and, instead, concentrate on Hüsken's emphasis of deliberate action, which is a different quality than an error, mistake, immediate reaction to an attack, or even an advantage by means of a one-time deception.

5. OTHERNESS. Obviously, the struggle usually parodied by the farce has its serious pedigree in social conflicts. Its extremes vary between physical extermination of opponents and banishment. Already in the fourth century, there appeared the first Christian lynching of the pagans in the name of God (Brown 1992: 132). Besides physical violence, culture developed a number of political methods that sometimes effectively excluded otherness;¹⁰⁴² street rituals conducted a certain part of this policy, and literature gradually claimed the role.¹⁰⁴³ All these methods sought to remove extraneous growths alien to the Body that threatened its integrity or "health." They react to failed incorporation or the emergence of new and overtly alien elements inside of it, or the perceived connecting of these elements in the *corpus Antichristi*.

In the passion play part of the *Chester* cycle, the evil characters are "indistinguishable," in which Travis (1993: 147) perceives a conscious measure of the playwright who unites them such "formalizing" into an impersonal, collective force. The treatise on the life of Antichrist *Vom Antichrist* (fifteenth-century

1041 This is a structuralist understanding of the plot, different than in the term *farce d'intrigue* used by Aubailly, that Hüsken offers without definition (1987: 59); J. C. Aubailly, *Le théâtre médiéval, profane et comique: La naissance d'un art*, Paris 1975.

1042 Further see *Other Middle Ages: Witnesses at the Margins of Medieval Society*, ed. M. Goodich, Philadelphia 1998; E. Schubert, *Fahrendes Volk*, 1995; the French works of Bronisław Geremek are classics in this field, for instance, see his *Świat opery żebraczej. Obraz włóczęgów i nędzarzy w literaturach europejskich XV-XVII wieku*, Warszawa 1989.

1043 W. Lenk (1966: 108) formulated this thesis after critically examining the functional and content relations between fifteenth-century street masquerades and Shrovetide farces. Cf. H. Brunner, "Verkürztes Denken. Religiöse und literarische Modelle in der politischen Dichtung des deutschen Mittelalters," *Üf der mæze pfat. Festschrift Werner Hoffmann*, ed. W. Fritsch-Rössler, Göppingen 1991, pp. 309–333.

MSS) includes into such “Anti-corpus” the Jews, “evil Christians,” and “all heretics.”¹⁰⁴⁴ All minorities fall victim to this approach that distinguishes and defines them. Each differentiation happens on the basis of the current state of knowledge about the threats of a given community or the ideas for its better organization. However, accidents developed not straight from barbarity to civilization: many sources indicate that the emphasis on the exclusion of otherness grew with the emerging Renaissance tendencies, and not vice versa. It is not because of the excess of tolerance that Thomas More’s *Utopia* conveys the proposal of Soviet-like passport regulations (Bejczy 1994: 235) or the rules that stigmatize such Others as old bachelors, the ugly, and adulterers. The status of slaves on the island of Utopia differs from the concentration camps only due the absence of that name (Bejczy 1994: 246), while More’s call to incurable patients to end their lives nears the Nazi theories of euthanasia (Bejczy 1994: 248). With his energetic creativity – including theater pieces like *Herzog von Burgund* (a *Fastnachtspiel*) – Hans Folz truly conducted an anti-Jewish war in line with the policy of the council of Nuremberg, which for many decades sought to expel Jews and get rid of their competition. The emperor finally consented to their requests and expelled the Jews in 1499, which lasted until 1850 (Wenzel 1992: 264–265).

Besides systemic solutions, there appeared many occasional moves, entangled in current disputes; for instance, Hugo of Lincoln excommunicated the royal officials and refused Church benefices to the king’s courtiers.¹⁰⁴⁵

However, by the sheer gradual inclusion in the field of view, the otherness was cautiously sanctioned and even institutionalized in separate professions or social estates. That is, the attitude of the Middle Ages to otherness was not exclusively negative.¹⁰⁴⁶ We may even describe the romance genres after Derek Brewer (1988) as an important literary expression of dealing with the problem of otherness, because the most common way to reach the Other is love, while

1044 Published by P. G. Völker, *Vom Antichrist*, München 1970; A. Wang, “Vom Antichrist,” VL 1, pp. 397–399; cf. W. E. Peuckert, “Antichrist,” *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* I, pp. 479–502.

1045 M. Daniluk, EK 6, col. 1290. For more about the excommunication, see E. Vodola, *Excommunication in the Middle Ages*, Berkeley 1986. For more about the ridiculing of the king and the mock king, see S. Billington, *Mock kings in medieval society and Renaissance drama*, Oxford 1991.

1046 Also see *Toleranz im Mittelalter*, ed. A. Patschovsky, Sigmaringen 1998; the broad Polish literature in the matter was gathered and elaborated by M. Korolko, “Tolerancja w kulturze polskiej średniowiecza i renesansu. Rekonesans badawczy,” ed. Nieznanowski, Pelc 1994: 221–242.

the beginning of this path is separation from parents. Such “separation” usually happens under the cover of a parody:¹⁰⁴⁷ of the Church hierarchy as *episcopellus* and of the political as the king of jesters. The permanent institution of the court jester not only displays the public’s right to have a voice but also offered an alternative and encouragement for new participants in social communication.¹⁰⁴⁸ Confraternity Shrovetide farces are self-manifestations of a group that amplifies its boastfulness with an aggressive laughter aimed at the Others (Sprandel 1982: 221). In both cases, the comedian enters into a ritual dialogue with the Others, which is exactly the recognition of the objective existence of other subjects and contributes to their public appearance.

A special – religious – variation of the jester was probably “the Holy Fool.”¹⁰⁴⁹ The phenomenon, known in various cultures, has a prototype in the Syrian saint Simon Salus (d. 590).¹⁰⁵⁰ The provocatively sinful and vulgar behavior of the Holy Fool draws everyone’s attention to their own shortcomings. It does not really matter whether it was a deliberate educational action – an ethical happening – or a manifestation of some aberration: what counts is the function of ostentation,

1047 P. Lehmann, *Die Parodie im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1963; T. Verweyen, G. Willing, *Die Parodie in der neueren deutschen Literatur. Eine Systematische Einführung*, Darmstadt 1979. K. L. Gravdal, “Vilain” and “Courtois:” *Transgressive Medieval Texts. A Study of Parody in French Literature of the 12th and 13th c.*, Columbia Univ. Press 1985.

1048 The social dimension of the institution of the jester is described by S. Billington (1986); the Polish setting is described by M. Wilska, *Blazen na dworze Jagiellonów*, Warszawa 1998; J. Pokora, *Nosce te ipsum. Studium z ikonografii blazna*, Warszawa 1996. For more about the literary threads, see *Schelme und Narren in der Literatur des Mittelalters*, Greifswald 1994.

1049 *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints* defines the jester as such and also with the word “eccentric.”

1050 D. Krueger, *Symeon the Holy Fool: Leontius’s Life and the Late Antique City*, Berkeley 1996; also see a review of this book, by P. Halsall in the online journal *The Brynn-Mawr Medieval Review* 96.9.9 – later *The Medieval Review* – who also offers more elaborations of the matter: G. Feuerstein, *Holy Madness*, New York 1991; E. Thompson, *Understanding Russia: The Holy Fool in Russian Culture*, Lanham, New York 1987; cf. A. Kuznetsova, “Holy Fools in Medieval Russia: More Questions than Answers,” *Christianity in East Central Europe. Late Middle Ages, Proceedings of the Commission Internationale d’Histoire Ecclésiastique Comparée*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Vol. 2, Lublin 1999, pp. 382–388; I. Gorainoff, *Les fols in Christ dans la tradition orthodoxe*, Paris 1983; L. Ryden, “The Holy Fool,” *The Byzantine Saint*, ed. Hackel, London 1981, pp. 106–116; J. Saward, *Perfect Fools*, Oxford 1980; J. Grosdidier des Matons, “Les thèmes d’édification dans la Vie d’André Salos,” *Travaux et mémoires* 4/1970, pp. 277–328.

showing on your own example: this is what you are. This is already theater. A certain meaning in the perception of such activities may also be known in anthropology as playing with evil and impurity as a demonstration of the strength of the priest or a hero; as described below.

The cognitive approach to subjectivity regards the simultaneous statement of contradictory claims as the achievement of the comic; simply put, the inclusion in the speech of two different meanings of one word enables one to gain distance and express self-irony. This approach appears most visibly in wordplay jokes whose simultaneous ambiguity updated at the same time causes ridiculousness. In normal communication, the simultaneous realization of different meanings of a word is completely unbearable because it introduces uncertainty. Another kind of uncertainty underlies the metaphor that gives a new meaning to a known word based on the similarity that one must find on his own. Barbara Bowen (1982) writes that the metaphorical ambiguity precedes lexical ambiguity in the order of the history of meanings and is commonly used in farce. The foolishness of one of the heroes of such “metaphorical” farce *L’Arbalète* (The Crossbow) bases on its repeated literal understanding of metaphors. His wiser wife of the telling name Sybilla tells her foolish husband to finally learn to distinguish between the literal and figurative meanings, and tells him that the best method of learning this is “to acquire a taste for the Scriptures,” which is when he decides to eat a book (Bowen 1982: 96). Noteworthy, this farce reveals the ability to decipher allegoresis was not reserved for the theologically proficient elites, but was considered to be the hallmark of normality.

We find this situation very close to the motifs of “the world à rebours” and “the struggle of the sexes,” which most trenchantly juxtapose meanings in narrative genres – especially fabliau – and theater. Halina Lewicka (1970: 67) distinguished whole types of farces, built on the principle of improper understanding of speech. There also is no lack of them among the later Polish intermedia, which often aptly utilize the specific multilingualism of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. We have entire dialogues, sentences, and inclusions in Ukrainian, Lithuanian, German, Jewish, Kashubian, and Armenian.¹⁰⁵¹ A somewhat similar phenomenon appeared in the work of the father of the Portuguese drama, Gil Vicente (d. 1536?), who acted as a master of ceremonies at the essentially bilingual royal court and also used Spanish in his dramas (Hess 1977a: 668). A skillful author of the *sotternie* in Dutch, *Die buskenblaser*, was able to build an entire two-track communication on the ambiguity of words and whole predications: the audience

1051 See *Dramaty staropolskie*, ed. J. Lewański, Vol. 6.

follows one track of meanings, while the protagonist follows the other track, led by the weakness of his character (Duihoven 1994: 199). The punch-line concluding the farce about Pathelin is based on literal malicious application of the idiom “payer à un mot:” the client of counsellor Pathelin, instead of paying him “according to the contract,” repays with “one word,” which is the sheep’s “Bee” proved effective at court as the only answer of the accused client who was acquitted after such successful pretending to be a fool who is only able to bleat “beeh” like a sheep (Hess 1977b: 696).

Farces entail a special type of obscene metaphors – also common to facetiae, fabliaux, and novellas – in which religious vocabulary mixes sexual vocabulary (e.g. a monastery as a brothel). Wolfgang Beutin proved the unfairness of Huizinga’s claim¹⁰⁵² that such imagery proves ungodliness and mocks the faith. Moreover, Beutin accused Huizinga of ahistoricism (“twentieth-century prudishness”)¹⁰⁵³ in regard to the latter’s suggestion that “the Church” feared the linking of eroticism and religion. What disproves this proposal is the contemporary eroticization – nay – sexualization of the language of mysticism. After all, to use the language of religion meant utilizing common vocabulary, just like the frequent references to chivalric and court culture (1990: 22–24).¹⁰⁵⁴ The cognitive approach suggests this to have been a pragmatic measure that served to intensify the means of expression and the audience’s understanding of the content. This

1052 In chapters 8 and 12 of *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*. Kolve (1966: 137–139) writes about the “untouchability” of the sacred, even the characters of the saints in the scenes of the officium of the Innocents and in mystery plays. Bowen (1982: 89) laments the “bias” surrounding the farces that operate with sexual motifs – including metaphorical performance of sex on stage – as “understandable in the 1920s” but amazingly lasting in the 1970s. In the beginning of his article, Beutin (1990: 7–9) refers a work by H. Kratz about late medieval and early modern German erotic vocabulary in *Über den Wortschatz der Erotik im Spätmittelhochdeutschen und Frühneuhochdeutschen*, Ohio 1949; cf. Krohn 1974. *Obscenity, Social Control, and Artistic Creation in the European Middle Ages*, ed. J. M. Ziolkowski, Leiden 1998. About the obscene in Attic comedy, see J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse. Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*, New Haven 1975.

1053 Cf. Curtius’ remark in the context of the popularity of the obscene repertoire: “The Middle Ages—always excepting the rigorists, who were in the minority—was much less prudish than the Modern Period” (2013: 144).

1054 Among others, J. Müller studies them in his work *Schwert und Scheide. Der sexuelle und skatologische Wortschatz im Nürnberger Fastnachtsspiel des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bern 1989. Somehow no one considered the metaphor linking sword with a phallus to be anti-chivalric.

is how we should explain the so-called *joca sanctorum*, the behavior of some saints who maliciously pranked the robbers of their reliquaries. “[T]hese stories were not ‘jokes’ in the modern sense of the word, but a way of expressing the relationship between the saint and his or her devotees in terms appealing to all [*rusticus intellectus*]” (Ward 1982: 211). Authors do not achieve their goal if they omit well-known matters, that combined with their text trigger a comedic effect. German farces usually developed these motifs from physiology (Merkel, 1971: 72). It may surprise us today that these farces mix sacred things with physiology, because other matters are common and universal for us, and besides, we have experienced the merciless anti-Church pamphlets that deprived the joking treatment of religious motifs of their innocence.

Suffice to consider Hans Folz’s riddle poem about a guy who was circumcised, his clothes grew with him, he walked barefoot, was baptized a little late, then betrayed and sold, shed his blood for us, but mostly won us over because we may drink wine with him.¹⁰⁵⁵ The breaking of biblical material into separate motifs and the play with them testifies to the liberation from the essentialist mood of allegoresis, when the animal traits and behaviors that prefigured sacral values received some of them. In this situation, Christological motifs – extracted from their proper processes – lose their inviolability and, thus, identity to only become literary subject matter. The comic effect is twofold: to deceive the listeners who followed the obvious associations and – after understanding the error – to usher them into a cognitive dissonance, the experience of inadequacy, the insurmountable contrast between the two beings – designates or extensions – earlier suggested by a set of descriptive themes. As Wachinger rightly observes, such genre is not only far from mocking religion but also gives competent listeners the esthetic satisfaction whenever – unlike the naive listener – they know from the beginning that the first impression is false and, because of this, they constantly receive the whole dimension of ambiguity. This is the basis of the parody: *episcopellus* pretends to be a bishop, a clown acts as if he is a king, the man dresses as a woman, a townsman poses as a peasant; but in everything they do, there appear signals that explain: I am not and cannot be a bishop, I am not and cannot be a king, a woman, a peasant.

1055 *Ein ander rot* (A different riddle) about a capon; H. Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, published by H. Fischer, München 1961, p. 296; qtd. after Wachinger 1993: 4. Later, I develop the idea that such type of game with the ambivalence of words is something completely different than traditional allegoresis, in which animal traits meant something as “*liber et pictura*.”

Does this trivial metaphorization of sacrality hide a “revenge of sensuality on this doctrine that was most interested in the extermination of sensuality” (Beutin 1990: 23)? Maybe; but then we should also indicate some forms of “revenge” on the secular process of civilization, which was no less responsible for the taming of the urges. An example that may show the existence of something like a mechanism of revenge is the anti-aristocratic myth of the “*jus primae noctis*.”¹⁰⁵⁶ We may consider that the tradition used the formula of a legal agreement to dress up the conviction: that the lords commonly abused girls sexually. That is, the myth not only had rhetorical function but also origin. May we compare with this myth the magic as a tool of “social justice,” for it is said that the poor forced some help from wealthy peasants by threatening them with sorcery.¹⁰⁵⁷ However, the revenge in this case would be double-edged: the answer to the threat of sorcery would be the suspicion of witchcraft and witch hunt.

We may call the means to humiliate the opponent a primitive form of a fighting policy, conducted with the help of literature. Depending on the community, the humiliation appeared as more or less like slinging mud at each other. As mud-slinging sometimes makes other laugh, we should consider it along with the condemning comic in a farce, which we have defined above as “the metaphor of the sinful condition of man” (Knight, Goth, Gauvin); in the same way – as a “depiction of the sinful state of the soul” (Beutin) – Dorothy Castle (1990) defines the function of the scatological motifs in the morality play *Mankind* (1990).¹⁰⁵⁸

Both the metaphorical art and the comic exhibit the original contribution of people in the construction of tools getting one to know the world. The ability to arrange and read a metaphor or comic effect is a sign of the capability for careful observation, for finding a truth. Moreover, to master the comic is the condition for critical self-reflection and, above all, a manifestation of an immediate cognitive response to a surprising event, to understanding an impossibility,

1056 A. Boureau, *Le droit de cuissage: La fabrication d'un mythe (XIII^e–XX^e siècle)*, Paris 1995. For the handbook elaboration of the history of sexual life, see *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, eds. V. L. Bullough, J. A. Brundage, New York 1996.

1057 K. V. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, London, 1971, pp. 564ff; qtd. after Burke 1992: 106.

1058 “The scatological humor supports the themes from the negative standpoint by graphically displaying the state of the sinful soul and is thus thematically and structurally important, rather than merely a concession to an uneducated audience” (Castle 1990: 167). See later for the remarks on the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch. For a general consideration of political struggles, see L. Shepard, *Courting Power: Persuasion and Politics in the Early Thirteenth Century*, (New York 1999).

and – generally – an untruth. What effects from the collision of the “better” truth with the old one – of the ideal with reality – is irony. A fine example from the field of drama is provided by Adam de la Halle’s *Le Jeu de la Feuillée* (A Play About a Gazebo):¹⁰⁵⁹ the work juxtaposes the vision of the desired lady with her real image dictated not by the court poetic convention (Żółkiewska 1999: 106–107).

This is the path of David L. Jeffrey’s (1973) interpretation of the grotesque work of Hieronymus Bosch. Jeffrey explicitly calls ironic the motif of a helmet on the head of the soul, which in the Hell part of the *Haywain Triptych* (*Hooiwagen panel*) is carried toward damnation by an ox. The ox symbolizes the priesthood (1 Corinthians 9: 9–10), and the condemned is someone who betrayed it, someone who should have been the model soldier of Christ. Most characters in *Haywain Triptych* are those who did not follow Christ that fed them with wheat,¹⁰⁶⁰ but instead chased after the chaff. This group appears as the procession that follows the cart (Jeffrey 1973: 320).¹⁰⁶¹

What is staged in genres devised only to provoke laughter – if there are such – are exactly the surprises and grotesque exaggerations. The surprise of the impossible can be so great that authors cannot avoid the comic. Such an example is “the fundamental absurdity of the Virgin giving birth,” which challenges the common

1059 Ed. by J. Dufournet, Gand, Ghent 1977.

1060 That is, “with the finest of the wheat” (Psalm 81: 16). “Civabit eos ex adipe frumenti, alleluia” are the words of the hymn that opens the mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi (Jeffrey 1973: 320). For more on the biblical motif of wheat and chaff, see D. W. Robertson and B. F. Huppé, *Fruyt and Chaff*, Princeton 1963.

1061 I protest against the interpretation of some aspects of Bosch’s work developed by K. Piwocki in his *Dzieje sztuki w zarysie*, Vol. 2: *Od wieków średnich do końca XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1977, p. 68: “Some assume that Bosch was the member of the Brethren of the Common Life, who semi-legally acted in Dutch cities in the fifteenth century. However, it seems that Bosch followed no codified beliefs or practices.” This is no place to summarize Jeffrey’s article, who situates Bosch’s triptych in the tradition of altar painting and interprets it with the liturgy of Corpus Christi. Bosch was a member of the Illustrious Brotherhood of Our Blessed Lady in Hertogenbosch that dealt with, among other things, the organization of diverse performances. According to the books of the brotherhood, Bosch held an important role in 1488 as the stage designer and actor, as well as singer in the church choir. R. P. Delevoy, *Bosch*, Cleveland 1960; qtd. after Jeffrey 1973: 317–318. Finally, the Brethren of the Common Life (not to mistake with the heretic Free Spirit!) is the name of Dutch legal pious societies that realized the program of *devotio moderna*; they also conducted modern schools, such as the one attended by Erasmus of Rotterdam. For more on Bosch’s historical and cultural background, see P. Vandebroek, *Jheronimus Bosch. Tussen volksleven en stadscultuur*, Berchem 1987.

sense. Painting and literature – also dramatic literature in Christmas scenes and plays – exploits in this function the motif of Saint Joseph, in various periods and proportions presented as tragic, comic, lost and reconciled; the “Divine Cuckold” and the “Holy Fool” (M. W. Walsh 1986: 296–297). The mystery play cycle from York contains a particularly skillful development of the theme that focuses all the possible reactions of the betrayed husband and a wife who tells the truth in a complicated situation.¹⁰⁶² Certain genres of oral literature, jokes, and anecdotes play a similar role; they store the memory of exemplary dissonances and pranks for other purposes. The inventory of Polish curses contains such a complete set of unconventional sexual practices as if it had been planned to be transmitted completely (so “revenge” after all?).

If the comic signified the sphere of the profane, then it provoked a mocking distortion or diabolization of such motifs in texts representing the point of view of the sacred.¹⁰⁶³ We may include here the grotesque goblins from the paintings of Bosch, which express with their shapes the enormity of damnation that they received. That is why the panopticum of farce characters gathers all kinds of idlers, losers, and weirdos. On the one hand, they appear jointly as Devil’s company which one must combat; on the other hand, their various behaviors convey many observations of real people. According to the observation of Maria Corti, the folk manifestations of corporality are perceived by the official culture as dangerous, because they demonstrate a self-sufficiency of the existential sphere, beyond any ideology; in their behavior, jugglers and prostitutes use their bodies in ways not predicted by the model (Corti 1979: 352). This approach to the bodily encloses people in the realm of reality and does not exhaust the spiritual implications of the model,¹⁰⁶⁴ hence separates the world of the profane from the world of the sacred. Yet, the discussed process of transcendentalization of the sacred meant not a return of the world of the profane to heathens, but its separation as the part of the religious cultural system, for which every Christian answers to God.

1062 *York Mystery Plays: A Selection in Modern Spelling*, Published by R. Beadle, P. M. King, Oxford 1984, lines ca. 100–220; qtd. after M. W. Walsh 1986: 294.

1063 See earlier chapters for more about the negative adaptation of the ancient gods and the larger effectiveness that the authors of vitae expected of negative motifs.

1064 It is about the whole tradition of the symbolical explanation of the descriptions of physical beauty in the *Song of Songs* initiated by Origene’s *Commentary*... M.-J. Rondeau, *Les Commentaires patristiques du Psautier (III^e–V^e siècles)*, Vol. 2, Rome 1982–1985.

The represented world of farce describes these human behaviors that are outside of the model of society (the cultural system) and must remain there as long as they deny it, but which must still be defined by the same model, so that their autonomy does not suggest the model's incompleteness. Before these behaviors become frequent and common or receive moral qualification, the farce puts them through objectivizing trials in their amoral and marginal forms. Should they pass the trial of laughter – they cease to make the audience laugh and become a background revealing the ridiculousness of other matters – then they stand the chance to remain and enter the model. The model filters stimuli and limits the field of view. A deviation from the standard (*das Anormative*) of the Arthurian hero from Hartmann's romance *Gregorius* is described by Dagmar Hirschberg as the path to finding identity. The norm leads the protagonist first to a crisis, while separation from the norm allows the hero (and the audience?) to build values from scratch. Therefore, this does not mean the creation of an alternative or relativization of court values, but aims to integrate and confirm the values (Hirschberg 1983: 390 ff). This indicates that also some romance and, probably, legendary patterns like the sinner's conversion operate with elements of farce.

Thus, farce is a sluice through which new elements flow without any pre-existing restrictions. In well-developed genres like fabliau, this leads to a wealth of motifs and, even, a certain social representativeness. As Ewa D. Żółkiewska argues, “a woman appears in farces as a rich and diverse personality” (1999: 108). Farces omit no age group, no feminine profession, no occupation or state, while their spectrum of behaviors does not justify Bédier's opinion about the anti-woman character of the genre:

They [women in farces] bustle around their homes, seduce men, argue with them. They try to be beautiful, do not avoid rouge and powder, they try to be virtuous, although it is very difficult at times as they are not free of human weaknesses: sloth, greed, vanity, lust, greed, or wastefulness. But they are always smart and clever, even in youthful naivety. Thanks to their intelligence, ability to act deceptively, curiosity of the world – thus the classic vices or perhaps the virtues of the eternal Eve – they often emerge victorious from their clashes with men: husbands, lovers, fathers... Fabliaux show the power that a woman holds over the house, trunks, keys, service, husband, and his prestige. She organizes everything, advises, commands, and most importantly, gains authority (Żółkiewska 1999: 109–110).¹⁰⁶⁵

1065 J. Bédier, *Les fabliaux. Etudes de littérature populaire et d'histoire littéraire du Moyen Age*, Paris 1893.

We should consider another aspect of the farce's ritualism separately. The regulations of ritual purity and its restoration – common in the Mosaic law and in early Christianity – slowly disappear in the course of the stabilization of the legally-sanctioned sacramentalism. Ritual “pollution” has a social function and signalizes “a state of moral impurity deriving from a violation of boundaries regarded as fundamental in a given society,” especially the border between nature and culture and between man and supernatural forces (de Jong 1998: 158). In turn, “[p]urity is the enemy of change, of ambiguity and compromise” (Douglas 1984: 163), which is how it becomes similar to the sacred, as defined by Becker (ch. 4.2). Moreover, it surprises not that the scope of the cult and ritual rules of communing with the sacred decreases along with its transcendentalization. The law, including liturgy, codifies some of these rules, while standards operate in the unregulated area. As we have repeated many times here, the disclosure and social control of standards is the main function of social communication, including literature and theater.¹⁰⁶⁶ We distinguished from among the farce characters those that violate moral standards, which anthropologically means ritual impurity. What must restore the disturbed order in that situation are purifying treatments (Douglas 1984: 205). While the purely devotional sphere reduces such treatments to verbal prayer, the secular sphere conducts “literary ablutions” through the publication of violations and their collective judgment. This happens collectively, in the public sphere, when the individual has little possibility to avoid taking a position. The real rules of impurity operate similarly, as according to Mary Douglas, their social function is to enforce moral condemnation, should their own reaction prove too slow. This is how Douglas generalizes her observations of the behavior of men from the Nuer tribe: the tribe knows adultery as a dangerous offense but, when faced with such a case, men astonishingly identify rather with the perpetrator of the seduction than with the betrayed spouse; the rule of impurity that imposes sacrificial treatments thusly forces a stronger customary reaction in the form of solidarity with the victim.

The determination of standards violation in terms of ritual impurity allows us to cast different light on the functions of abnormal farce characters. On the one hand, they represent everything that does not fit in the model, this “rest of life, which does not tidily fit the accepted categories,” but it “is still here and demands

1066 For the latter cf. A. Dąbrowka, *Staging a Mirror, Establishing Harmony: Theatrical Constitution, Display and Control of Value Systems* [in:] *Images of the City*, ed. by Agnieszka Rasmus and Magdalena Cieślak, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle 2009, pp. 2–16; online: academia.eu <http://tinyurl.com/n85eu9p>

attention” (Douglas 1984: 164–165). We must clearly distinguish two types of entropy elements: the pluralizing, centrifugal one (Corti 1979: 341) and the in-flowing, which has not yet joined the system. The assessment of the dissonance depends on whether it symptomizes disintegration or integration. The question is which element contributes to what? However, we cannot always formulate immediate answer. As we remember (ch. 2.7), moral phenomena have a processual nature: “it is a conceptual and metaphysical impossibility that a person have the relevant virtue without having acquired it in the specified manner” (Fischer, Ravizza 1998: 182). The fact that this applies equally to various “people who lack virtue” is evidenced by thousands of exempla that explain the circumstances of certain behaviors, which may give them a completely different meaning (cf. penance and “ethics of motivation”). Therefore, novelties do not usually reach the capitol but first receive a quarantine period. A standby army of alternative behaviors may then undergo trials and inspections that will allow the people to assign them a vector. This vector depicts the historicity of a behavior: where it came from and where it leads.

On the other hand, the assessment of an element does not end even if people assess it to be divisive. Some religions treat anomalies with special attention: they see the possibility of drawing strength from mastering them and implementing into the system (Douglas 1984: 160). Impurity is not only a threat, but connotes magic (Meens 1998: 291) and even sacrality (de Jong 1993: 158). It is possible that what plays a role here is an association with the demonic and fascination with the unusual.¹⁰⁶⁷ Someone who breaks the taboo of communing with the impure may be stigmatized, but may also become a hero if he did not succumb to evil and bends its vector, reroutes the course of events, while his victory releases the community from the fear of a threat. In its weaker form – which borders on the mechanism of irony and its sophisticated forms that use perverse praise as a reprimand – the victory manifests itself as a certain dose of admiration for the behavior of violators of norms; it always accompanies the laughter of audiences

1067 The monk who described the fire of his church cannot stop his admiration: “The fire was a bewitching spectacle, if terrible” (“Mirabile immo miserabile”). Gervase of Canterbury (1141–1210), *The Chronicle*; qtd. after Białostocki 1988: 298; The original is *Tractatus de combustione et reparatione Cantuarensis ecclesiae* as part of *Chronica Gervasii monachi Cantuarensis I* published by, among others, J. von Schlosser, *Quellenbuch zur Kunstgeschichte des Abendlandes*, Wien 1896, pp. 252–265. Meens considers uniqueness as the indispensable condition of magical influence, which is how he explains the common use in magic of substances that are unclean and excluded from everyday use (p. 291; literature on p. 289; ft. 8–11).

of comedies who do not feel only strengthened but also oppressed by the norm (Catholy 1977: 37).

This explains not only why “unclean things are used constructively in rituals” (Douglas 1984: 160) but also how is the functionality of the experiment, error, impropriety, lack of orthodoxy operating; and thus how the “divinity” of Simon Salus emerges from madness. The unclean things reveal the limits of culture, from beyond which new elements arise. These new elements come from three sources: subcultures, external foreign cultures, and the development of own culture. Just like dialectal features, foreign words, or native neologisms enter the general language system: the proportions between them, their pace and depth of integration determine how these innovations will change the character of language. Thinking back about unusual behaviors and farce characters: they testify to the learning and development of the young generation, to the entrance of new social groups on the stage, and tell us about our culture’s encounters with strangers. The contribution of innovation to the identity of individuals will depend on the assessment of the risks and benefits of this process.

Thus, otherness turns out to be a form of objectivization of subjectivity *in statu nascendi*.

6. THE COMIC REPERTOIRE. Just like the liturgical drama aspired to mothering the medieval theater, the scholars expected the same from the carnival as the source of drama. Andreev (1989: 8) presented a cycle of folk customs and carnival-like rituals as a source of secular drama other than liturgy and ancient tradition. So far, researchers recognized this role of the carnival only for the comic theater (J.-Cl. Aubailly,¹⁰⁶⁸ P. Toschi¹⁰⁶⁹). Only Robert Stumpfl¹⁰⁷⁰ talked about the whole, reaching up to the cult forms of Germanic folklore. One can only maintain Andreev’s position at the expense of such an extension of the concept of “theatricality of the carnival” (1989: 9) that the carnival ceases to mean what it meant and becomes synonymous with public forms of spectacle, recreation, and entertainment. Zumthor (1979: 236) rightly distinguishes the former from Bakhtin’s understanding of the carnival (“a world upside-down”)¹⁰⁷¹

1068 J.-Cl. Aubailly, *Le Théâtre medieval, profane et comique*, Paris 1975; *Le Monologue, le dialogue et la sottie*, Paris 1976.

1069 P. Toschi, *Le Origini del teatro italiano*, Torino 1955.

1070 R. Stumpfl, *Kultspiele der Germanen als Ursprung des mittelalterlichen Dramas*, Berlin 1936.

1071 Exactly these “socio-historical implications” of Bakhtin’s understanding of the carnival make Wachinger avoid the use of this tool, when he elaborates the phenomena of literary parody (1993: 6).

and prefers to focus on the festival, or the cyclical nature of the holidays that organize the life of urban communities. We already discussed and approved of the similar views by A. E. Knight and Ramakers about the key role of the processional forms of spectacles. Gordon Kipling (1998) significantly appreciated these ideas in the area of politics.

A separate issue lies with the Latin works of the late Middle Ages that testify to the continuity of the reception of antiquity, albeit limited to texts. This small corpus of nineteen usually short plays or only erotic dialogues in verse (elegiac couplet), interrupted with narration, gathers works called elegiac comedies¹⁰⁷² that show significant popularity, since only in Poland there remain eleven full manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁰⁷³

Andrzej Kruczyński (1998) extensively elaborates the medieval reflection on the comedy. Kruczyński's analysis shows a similarity of the function of ancient and medieval comedy, which confirms the stability of cognitive processes that drive the creators and promise benefits for the audiences. What is noteworthy from the viewpoint of subjectivity is the understanding of the interactive-pragmatic nature of the drama, as demonstrated by one of the professors of the Krakow University, Andrzej Grzymała (1451): "Comedy is a story that concerns the insults experienced by private people."¹⁰⁷⁴

The idea of a significant succession from the Latin comedy to medieval comic drama – practiced under the name of *esbattement* – was uttered in 1562 by an unknown author of an introduction to the edition of morality plays from the country festival of 1561 in Antwerp:

When Comedy was staged – in which place we play today our *esbattements* – presenting and showing the ordinary life of burghers, teaching about the various affects and

1072 M. Goldast, *Ovidii Nasonis Paelignensis Erotica et amatoria opuscula*, Frankfurt 1610, pp. 75–105; qtd. after Lewański 1966: 8; M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, Vol. 3, München 1931.

1073 J. Lewański 1968; M. M. Brennan, *Babio: A Twelfth-Century Profane Comedy*, Charleston 1968; K. Bate, "Twelfth-Century Latin Comedies and the Theatre," *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar*, ed. F. Cairns, Vol. 2, Liverpool 1979, pp. 249–262; A. G. Elliott, *Seven Medieval Latin Comedies*, New York 1984; K. Dmowska, SLS: 379–380. A separate phenomenon is the play of Hrotsvith von Gandersheim (tenth century), which based on Terence.

1074 "Comoedia est fabula, quae de despectibus hominum privatorum (tractat)." MS from the Czartoryski Library 1315, col. 664 v. 23; qtd. after Kruczyński 1998: 80.

inclinations that drive and linger in ordinary people, then the scene was arranged like the house of an average burgher, while the ending of the [play] was happy, full of joy.¹⁰⁷⁵

The term “comedy” as a description of Dutch repertoire – based mostly on morality plays – appears most frequently around 1575 (Hüsken 1987: 49, ft. 106). Already then, Hans Sachs used “comedy” in relation to his “Renaissance” works, such as his adaptation of Aristophanes’ *Pluto* as *Pluto, ein gott aller reichthumb, ein comedi mit 11 person zu recidirn, unnd hat fünff actus* (1551).¹⁰⁷⁶ In addition to Roman comedy, from the fifteenth century, playwrights begin to imitate Greek works; especially Aristophanes’ Old Attic comedy, as it was close to the medieval farce.¹⁰⁷⁷ Against the background of Aristophanes’ popularity,¹⁰⁷⁸ there emerged a special genre of “moral farce” during the period and the fall of the Florentine republic (1495–1515). Without reference to the Bible and supernatural motifs, these plays implement an ethical and political program. Simultaneously, they are religious because they “dramatize moral lessons whose themes are drawn from Savonarolan preaching on social and religious reform” (De Mara 1980: 378).

1075 “Als men een Comedie speelden (in wiens plaetsse wy nu onse ebatementen ghebruyckende zyn) representerende ende voor ogen stellende tghemeyn borghers leven, by brenghende diverse affectien ende gheneghentheden den welcken doorgaens die ghemeyne menschen subject ende onderworpen zyn, alsdan was tspeeltanneel toegerust ghelyck eens middelbaers borghershuy, ende was deynde vanden selven vol ghelucx, blyschaps ende vreuchden.” *Spelen van sinne*, Willem Silvius, Antwerpia 1562, A3r; qtd. after Hüsken 1987: 35.

1076 J. Łanowski, “Wstęp,” *Arystofanes. Trzy komedie. Lizystrata, Sejm kobiet, Plutos*, Wrocław 1981, p. LXXIV. There, on page XII and following, we read that “the oldest comedy, the old Attic comedy rather reminds us of folk spectacles, nativity plays, sometimes farces, revues, or circus. Such comedy is a sequence of episodic scenes alternating with songs, loosely joined by a single or several caricatured characters-types and the poet’s idea that winds the action and illustrates his bias; usually a fantastical idea.” See below for more about the “revue” construction of German Shrovetide farces.

1077 T. Zieliński, *Die Gliederung der altattischen Komödie*, Leipzig 1885; J. K. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy*, Berkeley 1972. For more about the influence on English drama, see C. Gum, *The Aristophanic Comedies of Ben Jonson: A Comparative Study*, The Hague 1969; A. Lafkidou Dick, *Paedia through Laughter. Jonson’s Aristophanic Appeal to Human Intelligence*, The Hague 1974; P. G. Ruggiers, *Versions of Medieval Comedy*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1977; M. Steggle, *Wars of the Theatres: The Poetics of Personation in the Age of Jonson*, Victoria 1998.

1078 The first print of nine comedies in 1498 Venice, the print of *Lysistrata* in 1515 Florence; Łanowski, op. cit., s. LXXIV.

Allegoricity, didacticism, and a certain seriousness bring them closer to the Northern European morality play.

The medieval comic theater developed a peculiar range of varieties. Local traditions surface in them even more clearly than in other genres. This indicates its deeper rooting in the lives of communities and agrees with the special role of the comic in the expression of subjectivity. Beside the best known about two hundred French farces,¹⁰⁷⁹ we have various forms of intermèdes;¹⁰⁸⁰ for example, the English interludes¹⁰⁸¹ or Dutch *tafelspelen*¹⁰⁸² (in Poland the form appears from the sixteenth century).¹⁰⁸³ An important part of the comedy repertoire comprises about three hundred preserved German Shrovetide plays (*das Fastnachtspiel*), mainly from the fifteenth century.¹⁰⁸⁴ They represent a wider tradition of performances with diverse themes. We find there not only typical comedy of manners, with the most famous genre of the adventures of Neidhart (*das Neidhartspiel*),¹⁰⁸⁵ but also the mystery play about the Antichrist, *Des Entkrist Vasnacht* – which Brett-Evans described as a political morality play – a theological dispute between “the old” and “the new” religion, *Die alt und die neu ee* (A. Keller, No. 1), and even miracle plays about Saint George or Saint

1079 G. Frank 1954: 243–264; Goth 1967; H. Lewicka wrote many valued studies about the French farce, among others, *Etudes sur l'ancienne farce française*, 1974, with the repertoire of titles and bibliography, and *Bibliographie du théâtre profane français des XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, Wrocław 1980; also confer B. C. Bowen's monograph *Les Caractéristiques essentielles de la farce française, et leur survivance dans les années 1550–1620*, Urbana 1964.

1080 W. Ostrowski, genre entry in *Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich* 5/1962, pp. 167–168.
1081 Norland 1991.

1082 P. Pikhaus, *Het tafelspel bij de rederijkers*, Vol. 1–2, Ghent 1988–1989.

1083 J. Lewański 1981; SLS: 352–354; also there, the information about intermedia preserved in other languages of the Polish Commonwealth.

1084 A. Köhler (1992: 103). Also there, information about more than 800 known titles; cf. Brett-Evans 1975, Vol. 2: 141; a classical collection published by Keller 1853. The miserly separate Low German tradition: E. Simon, “Das Schauspiel der Lübecker Fastnacht,” *ZdPh* 116/1997, pp. 208–223. The dramatic genology in the works of Hans Sachs – who himself divided his work into tragedy, comedy, and *Fastnachtspiele* – was thoroughly elaborated by I. Glier, “Die ‘Dramen’ des Hans Sachs. Wandlungen des frühen deutschen Theaters,” *Dichtung, Sprache, Gesellschaft. Akten des IV. Internationalen Germanistenkongresses*, eds. V. Lange, H. G. Roloff, Frankfurt a. M. 1971, pp. 235–242. The catalogue of Sachs' art was published from the manuscript by R. Hahn, *Das handschriftliche Generalregister des Hans Sachs. Reprintausgabe nach dem Autograph des Stadtarchivs Zwickau von Hans Sachs*, Köln 1986.

1085 Brett-Evans 1975, Vol. 2: 141.

Susanne¹⁰⁸⁶ (Brett-Evans 1975, Vol. 2: 40). Only the circumstances of staging are common: the confraternity or guild community, the end of the carnival, usually short duration of half an hour. As the only structural link Brett-Evans (1975, vol. 2: 144) foregrounds the near complete lack of plot: these plays are usually “revues” of short monologues addressed to the public,¹⁰⁸⁷ which use no fiction of an ontologically different reality of the scene and often end with a common dance on the stage. According to the research by Anette Köhler, the genre of *Fastnachtspiel* in the period after the Council of Trent became even more diversified, evolving in Catholic areas toward tragicomedy and including such elements of morality plays as the dance of death (1606 Ingolstadt, 1640 Augsburg; Köhler 1991: 115 ff).

Regardless of the triviality of many farce conflicts, beneath them always lies a conflict of truths, which gives each viewer an opportunity to formulate an assessment and to support one side or the other. The behaviors that follow the assessment may be trivial or even morally doubtful, but they are independent and create a resource of tasks achievable for the average person.

1086 *Spiel von dem heiligen Georg*; Brett-Evans 1975, Vol. 2: 17; *Spiel vom Leben der Heiligen Frau Susanna*; p. 131.

1087 Some studies apply the notion *Reihenspiel*. The instance of performing whole parts as “proclamations” to the audience was observed by Bergner (1994: 43) in the twentieth mystery play from the *N-Town Cycle* (the Massacre of the Innocents and the death of Herod).

Concluding Remarks

We may depict the Following of Christ that heads toward Heaven under his lead as an army of salvation. Such depiction accounts for the element of coercion present in the process of civilization which, as we have seen, also appeared in the Church. Like every army, it has its own banners, commanding corps, elite and ordinary divisions, various weapons, strategies for different occasions, training programs, a history of collective achievements and deeds of heroic individuals, and finally plans for future campaigns.

As we have seen, the following of Christ itself is not cheerful but has a cheerful tail. Like every army, this one also has its own musicians, cynics, marauders, clumsy crocks, cowards, and deserters. These unheroic heroes populate and color the different varieties of farces. But the function of farce was not to portray them but to discipline, which partly meant self-discipline. Discipline is indispensable at every step of training, practice, and combat, because the commander of this army seems more like a coach of a sports team: he partakes in no skirmish and was removed further away than the king that stands on a hill during a battle (transcendentalization).

Only in mystery plays do order and chaos, reason and stupidity, good and evil collide with each other in cosmic struggle until the victory of the forces of good at the end of time.¹⁰⁸⁸ Still, one should not underestimate the minor skirmishes fought every day by the privates of this war. Sometimes, they looked like lame hops of young birds before they got off to a flight, they formed empty phatic expressions about innocuous content; they glorified folk wisdom. We recognize them in the texts that show fear of the new type of self-proclaimed subject, this new force whose essence is not bravery but deception.

Starting from the front guard, we have critically overviewed a whole army of people of good will who learned where to go during their marching, against weakness, and with proper discipline that kept them going.

We have traced this long path also in the higher regions that we have elaborated with the certainty of frequent visitors. But we have always kept our gaze fixed at the ground. And we have seen that it is not a paradise free of duty. The ground is covered by always forking paths, on which there continues a movement from the outside, from the periphery to the center and back again. This

1088 A. Knight (1983: 59) about genres that he defined as historical plays.

movement may give birth to new values, should their strength become productive within the cultural system.

It may be that – on our way – we have encountered a temple, a fortress, or a school of individuality. Nevertheless, our last steps have certainly led us to the place, in which we saw a kindergarten, or maybe a playground, where in a fair-like clamor and play the maturing subjectivity is growing.

Therefore, we have come down to joyful environs, where we may part our ways with a firm belief that this book ends well.

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Abbreviations

- CCCM *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis.*
- CD *Comparative Drama.*
- CSEL *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.*
- EDAM *Early Drama Art and Music Review.*
- EK *Encyklopedia katolicka*, eds. S. Wielgus et al., Katolicku Uniwersytetu Lubelski, Lublin 1995.
- JMH *Journal of Medieval History.*
- LCI *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, Vols. 1–4: *Allgemeine Ikonographie*, ed. by E. Kirschbaum et al.; Vols. 5–8: *Ikonographie der Heiligen*, ed. by W. Braunfels, Herder, Rom 1968–1973.
- LdM *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, eds. R. Auty et al., Vols. 1–6, Artemis Verlag, Zürich; Vols. 7–10, LexMA Verlag, München 1980–1999.
- MGH *Monumenta Germaniae Historica.*
- ODCC *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1998.
- PG *Patrologia Cursus Completus. Series Graeca*, Vols. 1–161, ed. by J. P. Migne, Paris 1857–1866.
- PL *Patrologia Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, Vols. 1–217, ed. by J. P. Migne, Paris 1878–1890.
- RORD *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama.*
- SLS *Słownik literatury staropolskiej. Średniowiecze, Renesans, Barok*, eds. T. Michałowska, B. Otwinowska, E. Sarnowska-Temierusz, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1998.
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- STB *Słownik Teologii Biblijnej*, ed. X. Leon-Dufour, Pallotinum, Poznań 1994.
- TMR *The Medieval Review*
- VL *Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, eds. K Ruh et al., De Gruyter, Berlin 1978–.

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