

# Ecumenical Theology at the Turn of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

(with Martin Vaňáč)

The first version of the text on which this appendix is based was originally published in Czech as an article entitled “Ecumenical Theology at the Turn of the Twentieth Century”,<sup>1</sup> written together with my colleague Martin Vaňáč for the journal *Teologická reflexe* [Theological Reflection]. In the first decade of the twenty-first century this journal published a series of articles dedicated to the question of what main strands and themes different theological disciplines had inherited from the last decades of the previous century. Our article was part of that series. This chapter is an expanded version of that article translated into English by Tim Noble. My original co-author Martin Vaňáč has also participated on the expansion. It now includes some of the more recent developments in the field. We continue to recognize the initial limitations, however, so while it is representative it cannot be exhaustive. While the first two chapters of this book laid out my own understanding of Ecumenical Theology, of the methods which can most effectively serve its aims, of the contexts in which Ecumenical Theology is done, and of examples of how it can be done, this appendix places those contributions into a broader context and it also locates the discourse of Ecumenical Theology in relationship to Ecumenism and Ecumenics.

The aim of the following pages is to summarize the main trends which have appeared in Ecumenical Theology at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries. In the first part we will look at the history of ecumenism and its theological reflection and in the second at themes which in roughly the past twenty-five years have received most attention, such as hermeneutics of tradition, ecclesiology, sacramental teaching and teaching on justification. In the concluding part we will summarize publications on Ecumenical Theology that have appeared in Czech in this period.

There is a geographical limitation to our study. We concentrate predominantly on the Anglo-Saxon and German settings and their influence on the Czech situation. That means that we will not investigate here other fundamental questions, such as for

1 Ivana Noble and Martin Vaňáč, “Ekumenická teologie na přelomu 20. a 21. století”, *Teologická reflexe* 12:1 (2006), 5–26.

example the significance of ecumenical dialogue, Ecumenical Theology and practice for Christians living as a minority where the majority is from another religion, and if, and if so how, these can contribute to a non-conflictual and enriching encounter with, for example, the anti-secular politico-religious world of Islam. Similarly we will not look at what Ecumenical Theology has contributed to the relationship between the rich North and the poor South. These questions are important, but we do not have time or space to deal with them in this appendix. The second problem is connected to the title of the subject under investigation. We have chosen the expression “Ecumenical Theology” for our title because we are primarily interested in theological reflection on ecumenism and on the methods of an approach to theology that takes into account the results of ecumenical dialogues. In other words, the centre of our interest will not be the history of ecumenism itself nor documents from ecumenical organizations or bilateral dialogues. Similarly, we will not concentrate on the work done ecumenically on various important anniversaries, such as those of Vatican II, Jan Hus or Martin Luther, nor on important events, such as the Pan-Orthodox Council. These would be beyond the scope of this study. Some of the work has been reflected on in previous chapters.<sup>2</sup> Rather this text traces how the influence of the state of Ecumenical Theology has changed theology from the 1990s to now, and which themes have proved to be of greatest interest and how they have been dealt with.<sup>3</sup>

## 1 An Ecumenical Winter?

In the introduction to her book *Method in Ecumenical Theology*<sup>4</sup> Gillian Evans allies herself to those voices that have characterized our period as “an ecumenical winter”. After thirty years of dialogues many old wounds and disagreements have been over-

2 Chapter seven looked at Jan Hus and brought in the current ecumenical debate. Chapter eight explored the ecumenical impact of the constitution *Lumen Gentium*, the decree *Unitatis redintegratio*, and the encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, and chapter eleven referred to the Great Pan-Orthodox Council.

3 See, for example, Hans Küng, *Theology for a Third Millennium: An Ecumenical View* (New York: Doubleday, 1990). It can be asked what is specific to Ecumenical Theology and whether any serious theology is not ecumenical in the sense that it grows from the common tradition of Scripture and tradition, even if different aspects can be emphasized in these sources. Moreover, we can ask if all theology should not attend to the main works that help develop the theme, regardless of whether they come from another tradition than the given author. Is it not necessary to enter into dialogue with these? We would welcome these comments and the more they correspond to reality, the happier we will be, because it will mean that less and less we will find confessional approaches to theology, which make an advantage of their limitations as well as of their ignorance of other approaches or unwillingness to go beyond the boundaries of their prejudice.

4 Gillian Evans, *Method in Ecumenical Theology: The Lessons So Far* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

come, but no concrete practical steps have been developed to bring about what the World Council of Churches (WCC) considers as one of its main tasks, namely the dream of full visible unity of all churches.<sup>5</sup> The conviction has been lost that we will achieve full mutual recognition of ministries and sacramental hospitality in our lifetime, and the fervour that accompanied this hope has cooled.

An ecumenical winter, however, is not the death of ecumenism. It is a season when, under the cover of the snow, new life can be prepared, when it is necessary to formulate once again and in different terms what kind of unity we want to move towards and what can strengthen advances in this direction and what prevents them.<sup>6</sup> For this we also need to know where we are setting out from. Here the book on *Method in Ecumenical Theology* makes a very useful contribution. Evans works with a vast range of archive materials and secondary literature on the theme. In her book she investigates the methodology of ecumenism and how its different forms have influenced the lives of the individual churches. She looks at the development of positions in respect of ecumenism and within ecumenism, and analyses the forms of communication and reception.

With Evans, and as we will soon detail, we can observe that in the 1990s and the first years of this century a large amount of significant source material has been published. There have been interesting studies on both the history and future of ecumenism. Ecumenical Institutes (especially in the German-speaking world) have evaluated the contributions of bilateral dialogues and worked on special themes, educated further specialists in the field, and published the results of their research.<sup>7</sup> But the question remains whether this too is not a fading fervour, whether Ecumenical Theology has not retreated into a specialized field of work where people wait for the winter to

5 At its General Assembly in Nairobi in 1975 the World Council of Churches (WCC) added to its statutes the task of “call[ing] the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship, which finds its expression in worship and in a common life in Christ, and advanc[ing] towards that unity in order that the world may believe”. The General Assembly in Harare in 1998 slightly amended the statute to read: “The primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one Eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe”. This is the third article of the current WCC constitution: see <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/wcc-constitution-and-rules> (accessed 6/6/2017).

6 See Konrad Raiser, *Ecumenics in Transition: A Paradigm Shift in the Ecumenical Movement?* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991); *Crisis and Challenge of the Ecumenical Movement: Integrity and Indivisibility* (Strasbourg – Geneva: Institute of Ecumenical Research – WCC Publications, 1994).

7 See, for example, the second volume of the series *Thema Ökumene* published by the Möhler Institute in Paderborn: Wolfgang Thönissen, *Stichwörter zur Ökumene: ein kleines Nachschlagewerk zu den Grundbegriffen der Ökumene* (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2003).

end, looking for activities to enable the intervening period to be negotiated. Or maybe Ecumenical Theology has merged into the rest of theology so successfully that it is no longer necessary for it to remain a separate discipline because the majority of theology has become ecumenical and has realized that, even if written from an Orthodox, Catholic or Protestant perspective, it always comes from a shared inheritance of Scripture and tradition, as well as always relating to a shared hope and common future. But is that the way things are? Would it not be nearer the mark to say that we find ourselves in the tension between the two positions? Studies in the field of ecumenism over the past fifteen years may help us to understand this tension.

The publication of sources and texts is important. In this respect mention should be made especially of the second, third and fourth volumes of documents of dialogues on the world level,<sup>8</sup> the third volume of the (official) history of the ecumenical movement,<sup>9</sup> and the second volume of a collection of documents from the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order.<sup>10</sup> Needless to say the readership for this literature is extremely lim-

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- 8 Harding Meyer, Damaskinos Papandreou, Hans Jorg Urban, Lukas Vischer (eds.), *Dokumente wachsender Übereinstimmung. Sämtliche Berichte und Konsentexte interkonfessioneller Gespräche auf Weltebene* Band 1 (1931–1982) Second Revised Edition (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1991); *Dokumente wachsender Übereinstimmung. Sämtliche Berichte und Konsentexte interkonfessioneller Gespräche auf Weltebene* Band 2 (1982–1990), (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1992); *Dokumente wachsender Übereinstimmung. Sämtliche Berichte und Konsentexte interkonfessioneller Gespräche auf Weltebene* Band 3 (1990–2001) (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2003). A fourth volume has now also appeared: Johannes Oeldemann, Friederike Nüssel, Uwe Swarat, Athanasios Vletsis (eds.), *Dokumente wachsender Übereinstimmung. Sämtliche Berichte und Konsentexte interkonfessioneller Gespräche auf Weltbene* Band 4 (2001–2010) (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2012). English: Lukas Vischer, Harding Meyer (eds.), *Growth in Agreement: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984); Jeffrey Gros, Harding Meyer, William G. Rusch (eds.), *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level. 1982–1998* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2000); Thomas F. Best, Lorelei F. Fuchs, Jeffrey Gros (eds.), *Growth in Agreement III: International Dialogue Texts and Agreed Statements 1998–2005* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2007); Thomas F. Best, Lorelei F. Fuchs, John Gibaut, Jeffrey Gros, Despina Prassas (eds.), *Growth in Agreement IV: International Dialogue Texts and Agreed Statements 2005–2013* Vols 1 and 2 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2017).
- 9 John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Georges Tsetsis (eds.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 3 (1968–2000) (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2004). The previous two volumes were published in several different editions: Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill (eds.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 1 (1517–1948) (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954) and Harold Fey (ed.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement* Vol. 2 (1948–1968) (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970).
- 10 Günther Gassmann (ed.), *Documentary History of Faith and Order 1963–1993*. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1993). This work relates chronologically to that of Lukas Vischer (ed.), *A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement 1927–1963*. (St Louis, MI: Bethany Press, 1963).

ited. It is only rarely that you are likely to encounter an enthusiastic student who will tell you how reading *Growth in Agreement* has excited and enriched them.

But this would be to have unrealistic expectations. Ecumenical documents represent the type of theological source that is produced by a committee—in short, they contain a description of agreement, how it was reached, a summary of the reasons why such an agreement is useful and a summary of the problems which remain within this agreement. Such an agreement can bring something new to all sides. And this is not agreement as compromise in the sense that we would find some kind of arithmetical average of our convictions, such that, for example, when part of the church emphasizes more the unity of God and part the Triune God, we would all end up as binitarian. Alongside the difficulty and sometimes dryness of the style, the small readership of the official sources of the ecumenical movement is also due to the pre-understanding (or better, pre-incomprehension) of the aims and methods of Ecumenical Theology.

Many studies have been devoted to this theme, mostly historical, and they have looked at the aims and methods of Ecumenical Theology from the perspective of the various stages of the development of the ecumenical movement. In the Anglo-Saxon world these works include Jeffrey Gros, *Introduction to Ecumenism*,<sup>11</sup> the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, edited by Nicholas Lossky,<sup>12</sup> *Ecumenical Pilgrims: Profiles of Pioneers in Christian Reconciliation*, edited by Dagmar Heller and Ion Bria,<sup>13</sup> *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*, edited by Michael Kinnamon and Brian Cope,<sup>14</sup> the *Historical Dictionary of Ecumenical Christianity* under the editorship of Joachim van der Bent<sup>15</sup> and Thomas Fitzgerald's *The Ecumenical Movement: An Introductory History*.<sup>16</sup> Today's situation is addressed in Michael Kinnamon's *Can a Renewal Movement Be Renewed?*<sup>17</sup> and in a collective volume *Ecumenism Today*.<sup>18</sup>

11 Jeffrey Gros, *Introduction to Ecumenism* (New York: Paulist, 1998).

12 Nicholas Lossky (ed.), *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*. 2nd ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002).

13 Dagmar Heller and Ion Bria (eds.), *Ecumenical Pilgrims: Profiles of Pioneers in Christian Reconciliation* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995).

14 Michael Kinnamon (ed.), *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices* (Second Edition) (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2016).

15 Joachim van der Bent, *Historical Dictionary of Ecumenical Christianity* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995).

16 Thomas Fitzgerald, *The Ecumenical Movement: An Introductory History* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004).

17 Michael Kinnamon, *Can a Renewal Movement Be Renewed? Questions for the Future of Ecumenism* (Grand Rapids: MI: Eerdmans, 2014).

18 Francesca Aran Murphy, Christopher Asprey (eds.), *Ecumenism Today: The Universal Church in the 21st Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

A unique contribution is found in an extensive collective monograph with various Orthodox contributions, *Orthodox Handbook of Ecumenism: Resources for Theological Education*.<sup>19</sup> Also of interest is the study in French, *La Communion ecclésiale—progrès œcuménique et enjeux méthodologiques*,<sup>20</sup> in which André Birmelé analyses the individual steps and methods of the ecumenical movement and interprets its basic concepts, such as consensus, diversity, reception, compatibility, *communio*, dialogue, etc. New ways of envisaging ecumenism are explored in the collection of essays *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*, edited by Paul Murray.<sup>21</sup> Cardinal Kasper summarises the results of the Catholic Church's official dialogues with Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican and Methodist Churches over forty years in *Harvesting the Fruits*.<sup>22</sup> A summary of bilateral dialogues with the Catholic Church is contained in the collective work *Celebrating a Century of Ecumenism*.<sup>23</sup>

In the German-speaking world the question of the method and aims of the ecumenical movement is discussed, for example, in Reinhard Frieling's work *Der Weg des ökumenischen Gedankens*,<sup>24</sup> within an overview of the history of ecumenism, of the approaches of different confessions to it and the presentation of the main themes of ecumenical dialogue. A study of early ecumenism, a collection of 19 portraits of the pioneers of ecumenism such as Nathan Söderblom, Augustin Bea, Karl Barth, Patriarch Athenagoras, Lorenz Jaeger, Edmund Schlink, Yves Congar and Karl Rahner, also raises the question as to what these theologians expected of ecumenism and how they considered their methods to be supportive of it.<sup>25</sup> A significant contribution has been made by the Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut für Ökumenik in Paderborn. Two of its most important publications have been the *Lexikon der Ökumene und Konfessionskunde*,<sup>26</sup> and

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- 19 Pantelis Kalaitzidis, Thomas Fitzgerald, Cyril Hovorun et al (eds.), *Orthodox Handbook of Ecumenism: Resources for Theological Education* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2014).
- 20 André Birmelé, *La communion ecclésiale—progrès œcuménique et enjeux méthodologiques* (Paris / Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2000). Published in German as *Kirchengemeinschaft: ökumenische Fortschritte und methodologische Konsequenzen* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2003).
- 21 Paul Murray (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning: Exploring Ways for Contemporary Ecumenism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- 22 Walter Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits: Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (London: Continuum, 2009).
- 23 John A Radano (ed.), *Celebrating a Century of Ecumenism: Exploring the Achievements of International Dialogue: In Commemoration of the Centenary of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2012).
- 24 Reinhard Frieling, *Der Weg des ökumenischen Gedankens* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1992).
- 25 Christian Möller, Christoph Schwöbel, Klaus von Marksches-Zedwitz (eds.), *Wegbereiter der Ökumene im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2005).
- 26 Wolfgang Thönissen, Michael Hardt, Peter Lüning, Bukhard Neumann, Johannes Oeldemann (eds.), *Lexikon der Ökumene und Konfessionskunde* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2007).



*Personenlexikon Ökumene*.<sup>27</sup> The current situation of ecumenism is considered in another collective work, *Ökumene—überdacht: Reflexionen und Realitäten im Umbruch*.<sup>28</sup>

Amid the variety of implicit aims and methods of Ecumenical Theology the reader can, however, begin to find common features as well as gradually formulating the ongoing differences. As far as the aims of Ecumenical Theology are concerned, changes and developments can be seen in the understanding of the full and visible unity of the church, when theology would really no longer need the epithet “ecumenical”. Questions are asked about the usefulness of a sharp distinction between the journey and the goal. There is a move from one visible institution to a mutual recognition of ministries and to Eucharistic hospitality. As to the search for a common faith, which is normally seen as a pre-condition for such unity, such a requirement is criticized when in its sharpest form it goes beyond the “unity of faith” found within individual churches.

As far as method is concerned, particular attention has been given to the method of consensus, which has long reigned in ecumenical dialogues, and to its limitations.<sup>29</sup> The first problem which has to be taken into consideration is the fact that ecumeni-

27 Jörg Ernesti, Wolfgang Thönissen, Michael Hardt, Burkhard Neumann, Johannes Oeldemann (eds.), *Personenlexikon Ökumene* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2010).

28 Thomas S. Bremer, Maria Wernsmann (eds.), *Ökumene—überdacht: Reflexionen und Realitäten im Umbruch* (QD 259) (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2014).

29 Useful aids here are the monothematic handbooks published from 1993 until 2008 by the Ecumenical Institute in Bensheim as part of the series of Ecumenical Study Guides (*Ökumenische Studienhefte*), a series edited by Hans-Martin Barth and Reinhard Frieling. Each handbook is divided into three parts, which follow first the different confessional points of view on the given theme, then introduce the main results of bilateral and multilateral dialogues and finally summarize the contemporary state of the dialogue, namely where agreement has already been found and which questions still need to be addressed. Thirteen volumes have been published. The number in brackets refers to the number of the edition and its place in the Bensheim volumes. Eckhard Lessing, *Abendmahl* (*Ökumenische Studienhefte* 1, *Bensheimer Hefte* 72) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1993); Hans-Martin Barth, *Spiritualität* (*Öst* 2, *BH* 74) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1993); Wolfgang Lienemann, *Gerechtigkeit* (*Öst* 3, *BH* 75) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1995); Harding Meyer, *Ökumenische Zielvorstellungen* (*Öst* 4, *BH* 78) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1996); Erich Geldbach, *Taufe* (*Öst* 5, *BH* 79) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1996); Wolfram Weisse, *Reich Gottes: Hoffnung gegen Hoffnungslosigkeit* (*Öst* 6, *BH* 83) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1997); Hans-Georg Link, *Bekennen und Bekenntnis* (*Öst* 7, *BH* 86) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1998); Ernstpeter Mauer, *Rechtfertigung: konfessionstrennend oder konfessionsverbindend?* (*Öst* 8, *BH* 87) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1998); Hubert Kirchner, *Wort Gottes, Schrift und Tradition* (*Öst* 9, *BH* 89) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1998); Wolfgang Lienemann, *Frieden: vom „gerechten Krieg“ zum „gerechten Frieden“* (*Öst* 10, *BH* 92) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000); Christine Lienemann-Perrin, *Mission und interreligiöser Dialog* (*Öst* 11, *BH* 93) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1999); Heinrich Bedfordstrohm, *Schöpfung* (*Öst* 12, *BH* 96) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2001); Reinhard Frieling, *Amt* (*Öst* 13, *BH* 99)

cal dialogues often count with a “pure type” of Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox, which in our setting is not so easily found. The second problem—or better the second challenge—has to do with the need to create a new relationship between “official” and “grassroots” ecumenism, paying more attention to those forms of searching and finding unity which emerge from responsible experiments on the local level and thus to do away with the idea of a single alternative, which could be summarized in a hierarchical form as 1) officially agreed positions and 2) their application in practice.<sup>30</sup>

Overviews of the history of the ecumenical movement for the most part work explicitly or implicitly with the development of the method of consensus. The problem is that then the initial search for unity among Christians becomes a specialized discipline. And if people want to understand its past and present they have to invest a lot of effort into studying specialized, often dry materials. On the other hand, looking to the past allows us not only to see a whole range of inspiring thoughts and diverse proposals, but also to look at their reception. We remain however with the hierarchical form mentioned previously and with a relatively small group of people who are interested in the topic. Studies on particular features manage in part to overcome this. In terms of moving beyond the method of consensus we can also mention theological responses to the document *Charta Oecumenica*,<sup>31</sup> which concentrated on how differences in local environments influenced ecumenical agreement (or disagreement) across the churches.<sup>32</sup> A classic example of this is the question of the relationship to homosexual Christians.

Two types of specialized study deserve particular attention. One are works on the more complex parts of the ecumenical dialogue, such as Ion Bria’s work *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition: The Ecumenical Witness and Vision of the Orthodox*,<sup>33</sup> or

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(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2002); Martin Friedrich, *Kirche* (Öst 14, BH 108) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2008).

30 The Fourteenth Academic Consultation of Societas Oecumenica in Prague in August 2006, entitled “Ecumenism of Life as a Challenge for Ecumenical Theology” was devoted to precisely this theme.

31 On the origins of the *Charta* and its content see Viorel Ionita and Sarah Numico, *Charta Oecumenica. A Text, a Process and a Dream of the Churches in Europe* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2003).

32 See, for example, the proceedings of the Thirteenth Consultation of the Societas Oecumenica in Sibiu in 2004, published as Tim and Ivana Noble, Martien Brinkman, Hans-Jochen Hilberath (eds.), *Charting Churches in a Changing World: Charta Oecumenica and the Process of Ecumenical Encounter* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006).

33 Ion Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition: The Ecumenical Witness and Vision of the Orthodox* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991). See also Gennadios Limouris (ed.), *Orthodox Visions of Ecumenism: Statements, Messages and Reports on the Ecumenical Movement, 1902–1992* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994); Todor Savev, *The Orthodox Churches in the World Council of Churches: Towards the Future* (Geneva: WCC Publications – Bialystok: Syndesmos, 1996); Constantine Cavarinos, *Ecumenism Examined: A Concise Analytical*



the volume edited by Thomas Rausch, *Catholics and Evangelicals: Do They Have a Common Future?*<sup>34</sup> The other deals with the places where ecumenism has proved particularly successful, such as Catharine Clifford's *The Groupe des Dombes: A Dialogue of Conversion*,<sup>35</sup> the volume edited by Maxwell Craig, *For God's Sake—Unity: An Ecumenical Voyage with the Iona Community*,<sup>36</sup> and Olivier Clément's *Taizé: A Meaning to Life*.<sup>37</sup> Both types of study offer a new methodological viewpoint. First, they return to themes which the earlier consensus did not include in a satisfactory fashion and second, they take as their starting point lived ecumenism and theological reflection based on this experience.

Among interesting works that do not work on the first plane with the method of consensus is Risto Saarinen's *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*.<sup>38</sup> Saarinen is not so interested in the places where we find mutual agreement, but rather in the ways in which we can share what is particular, what we receive from God as gift. Here he is criticising the fact that ecumenical dialogues too often concentrate on the "things" that we can give to each other rather than on the process of giving and receiving gifts, a process which includes forgiveness, which has to look at the complex relationship between victims and divine non-violence, and within which we learn to understand the different forms of Christian imitation of Christ.

The plurality of methods and aims of Ecumenical Theology is encountered in works dedicated to the discipline's future. These include the work edited by Marc Reuver,

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*Discussion of the Contemporary Ecumenical Movement* (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1996). Here too we can mention the third volume in the series Thema Ökumene published by the Möhler Institute in Paderborn, Johannes Oeldemann, *Orthodoxe Kirchen im ökumenischen Dialog: Positionen, Probleme, Perspektiven* (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2004).

- 34 Thomas Rausch (ed.), *Catholics and Evangelicals: Do They Have a Common Future?* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003). On a similar theme see Reinhard Hütter, *Bound to be Free: Evangelical Catholic Engagements in Ecclesiology, Ethics and Ecumenism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004). A topic of growing interest is the place of the Pentecostal and Free Churches, who are also fully engaging in ecumenical dialogues. The Bensheimer Hefte series have published a series of monographs on the results of this dialogue.
- 35 Catharine E. Clifford, *The Groupe des Dombes: A Dialogue of Conversion* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005). English translation of documents of the Groupe des Dombes: Alain Blancy, Maurice Jourjon, *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of the Saints: Toward a Common Christian Understanding* (New York: Paulist Press, 2002). Catherine E. Clifford (ed.), *For the Communion of the Churches: The Contribution of the Groupe des Dombes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010). Catherine E. Clifford (ed.), *"One Teacher": Doctrinal Authority in the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).
- 36 Maxwell Craig, *For God's Sake—Unity: An Ecumenical Voyage with the Iona Community* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1998).
- 37 Olivier Clément, *Taizé: A Meaning to Life* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 1997).
- 38 Risto Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving* (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005).

*The Ecumenical Movement Tomorrow: Suggestions for Approaches and Alternatives*,<sup>39</sup> *Ecumenism: Present Relations and Future Prospects* edited by Lawrence Cunningham,<sup>40</sup> the volume edited by Oliver Roland, *Ökumene—wohin?*,<sup>41</sup> and *The Unity We Have and the Unity We Seek: Ecumenical Prospects for the Third Millennium*, edited by Jeremy Morris and Nicholas Sagovsky.<sup>42</sup> A common feature, however, remains the fact that more attention needs to be paid to the particular places where ecumenism happens (or does not happen), and from which Ecumenical Theology grows (or does not grow). The perspective “from above” is complemented by a perspective “from below”.

The question as to whether we are living in an ecumenical winter can be further subdivided into two other questions: the first has to do with the official ecumenism of church representatives, the second with ecumenism in the lived and concrete relations of people who in the first place are “representatives” of their own life which often includes different forms of belonging and not belonging to church institutions.<sup>43</sup> These two sub-questions are of course linked, even when we get different answers to them. Ecumenical Theology is linked to both, draws on both and serves both with its critical analysis.

## 2 A Net Full of Fish

In the second part of our article we turn to the themes to which Ecumenical Theology has given special attention over the past fifteen years. We concentrate in particular on the fields of hermeneutics, ecclesiology, sacramental theology and the doctrine of justification.

The first theme touches on our reflection on the process of understanding when we go about interpreting our common heritage, including the moments of which we are not proud and those where we differ or where tensions remain and division occurs not

39 Marc Reuver (ed.), *The Ecumenical Movement Tomorrow: Suggestions for Approaches and Alternatives* (Kampen: Kok, 1993).

40 Lawrence Cunningham (ed.), *Ecumenism: Present Relations and Future Prospects. Papers Read at the Tantar Ecumenical Center, Jerusalem* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998).

41 Oliver Roland (ed.), *Ökumene—wohin?* (Mannheim: AZUR, 2003).

42 Jeremy Morris and Nicholas Sagovsky (eds.), *The Unity We Have and the Unity We Seek: Ecumenical Prospects for the Third Millennium* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2003).

43 As an example, consider ecumenical marriages or the movement connected with practice in those communities in which people feel at home, independent of whether it is “their” denomination. Or there is the practice, impossible from a disciplinary point of view, but practically often lived, of obedience to more than one church, as well as people who want to believe, even to share their faith, but who have problems with “institutional” belonging in the usual sense of the word.

only denominationally, but nationally, locally, socially or theologically. Here attempts at an ecumenical hermeneutics are important. Examples include *Ecumenism and Hermeneutics*,<sup>44</sup> edited by Anton Houtepen, and his own *The Living Tradition: Towards an Ecumenical Hermeneutics of the Christian Tradition*,<sup>45</sup> *One Faith: Biblical and Patristic Contributions towards Understanding Unity in Faith*, by William Henn,<sup>46</sup> and *The Language of Unity in the Letter to the Ephesians and in Ecumenism*, by Annemarie Mayer.<sup>47</sup> These works both strengthen the search for and discovery of shared biblical and patristic roots and at the same time maintain the different interpretations, which have not been—and need not be—connected to a divided church. Moreover, nowadays the tendency is for some of the legitimate interpretations not to be made primarily from a denominational point of view.

The tensions, or as Ricoeur would put it, the “conflict of interpretation”,<sup>48</sup> shift, then, from questions about what constitutes a legitimate interpretation within Catholicism, Protestantism or Orthodoxy to the question of what constitutes a legitimate interpretation in the plurality of Christian traditions. The distinction is thus whether it is a symbolic or idolatrous interpretation. In other words, it asks if a particular interpretation gives room for the reduction of the plurality of meanings to one chosen meaning and if this uses as a description “transcendent reality” and commits violence with it. A contribution to this debate is made by the issue of *Concilium* entitled *Fundamentalism as an Ecumenical Challenge*.<sup>49</sup> “Communicative theology” also belongs to this area of research, with its efforts to reinforce a deeper study of the dialogical study of theology.<sup>50</sup>

The second area which is frequently discussed is that of ecclesiology, although there is no agreement as to whether this a good thing or not. Critics argue that the over-concentration of the churches on their own self-understanding takes Ecumenical Theology away from broader connections, such as the relationship to society or to

44 Anton Houtepen (ed.), *Ecumenism and Hermeneutics: Findings of the VIIIth Consultation of Societas Oecumenica* (Utrecht: Institute for Missiology and Ecumenism, 1995).

45 Anton Houtepen, *The Living Tradition: Towards an Ecumenical Hermeneutics of the Christian Tradition* (Utrecht: Institute for Missiology and Ecumenism, 1995).

46 William Henn, *One Faith: Biblical and Patristic Contributions towards Understanding Unity in Faith* (New York: Paulist, 1995).

47 Annemarie Mayer, *Sprache der Einheit im Epheserbrief und in der Ökumene* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr—Paul Siebeck, 2002).

48 See Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretation: Essays in Hermeneutics* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974).

49 Hans Küng, Jürgen Moltmann (eds.), *Fundamentalism as an Ecumenical Challenge* (London: SCM, 1992).

50 This project began in the theological faculty of the University of Innsbruck. The results have been published in a series of publications from Grünewald Verlag under the title of “Kommunikative Theologie”, with Bernd Jochen Hilberath and Matthias Scharer as series editors. The programmatic work is Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie: Eine Grundlegung* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald Verlag, 2002).

other religions, both of which it needs. Those who defend it emphasize that ecclesiology remains a key theme of Ecumenical Theology when institutions are massively mistrusted and preference is given to spirituality or ethics. For such people it is necessary for the church to move, with however small steps, to a deeper mutual consensus and to an understanding of the obstacles even if not always to getting rid of them, or that they should take more into consideration the changes which often occur on a local level.

One of the main themes of “ecumenism from above” over the past decades in this area has been the question of papal primacy. At the beginning of the 1990s William Farmer and Roch Kereszty published a work entitled *Peter and Paul in the Church of Rome: The Ecumenical Potential of a Forgotten Perspective*,<sup>51</sup> which reopened this question. The theme became the subject of even more intense interest thanks to the publication of Pope John Paul II’s encyclical on ecumenical efforts entitled *Ut Unum Sint*.<sup>52</sup> The document voiced appreciation for the ongoing study of the question of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome and called on church leaders and theologians to engage in a patient and fraternal dialogue on the theme (*Ut Unum Sint* 96).

The result of this is a whole raft of works, of which we can mention only a few. Three works appeared in the well-known German series *Quaestiones disputatae*. In the first Hermann Pottmeyer reflects on the possible role of the papacy in the third millennium.<sup>53</sup> He examines the historical background and teaching of the First Vatican Council and the unfinished reform of the papacy at the Second Vatican Council, and sees as a task for the third millennium a reflection on and real practice of a model of the church as communion and a reform of the papacy to serve this end. The biblical roots of papal primacy in the context of ecumenical dialogue are investigated in the exegetical work of Rudolf Pesch.<sup>54</sup> The former archbishop of San Francisco, John Quinn, contributed a book with broader strokes and more practically oriented. In it he looked at the papacy primarily in connection with the idea of episcopal collegiality and introduced several concrete proposals for the reform of the papacy and the Roman Curia.<sup>55</sup>

51 William Farmer and Roch Kereszty, *Peter and Paul in the Church of Rome: The Ecumenical Potential of a Forgotten Perspective* (New York: Paulist, 1990).

52 Pope John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint* (25 May 1995), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25051995\\_ut-unum-sint.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint.html) (accessed 13/3/2017).

53 Hermann Pottmeyer, *Die Rolle des Papsttums im dritten Jahrtausend (Quaestiones disputatae 179)* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1999). This is a translation of *Towards a Papacy in Communion: Perspectives from Vatican Councils I and II* (New York: Crossroad, 1998).

54 Rudolf Pesch, *Die biblischen Grundlagen des Primats* (QD 187) (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001). The book is a slightly reworked version of a study prepared for a symposium organized by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in the Vatican in 1996.

55 John Quinn, *Die Reform des Papsttums* (QD 188) (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001). This is a translation of *The Reform of the Papacy: The Costly Call to Christian Unity* (New York: Crossroad, 1999).

In English a series of books were published around the theme *Ut unum sint: studies on papal primacy*.<sup>56</sup> Adam DeVille has presented a summary of Roman Catholic—Orthodox dialogue on the papacy.<sup>57</sup> In this regard, an interesting reflection on papal primacy from an Orthodox point of view is Olivier Clément, *You are Peter*.<sup>58</sup> From 2003 to 2009 a Lutheran-Catholic dialogue group of theologians from Germany, France, Italy, and Scandinavia met at the Farfa Monastery near Rome to discuss the papal office. The resulting report was published in 2010.<sup>59</sup>

Also of interest are several publications which approach the topic of papal primacy from different angles, be those confessional or thematic.<sup>60</sup> From information about other new books it is clear that the theme of the papacy continues to occupy a central point of interest. Here we have experienced unexpected developments. While a couple of years ago it would be possible to say no far-reaching reform of the office of pope or the Roman Curia is probable,<sup>61</sup> with the election and inauguration of Pope Francis the

56 Apart from the works above by Hermann Pottmeyer and John Quinn, this series contained the following books: Michael J. Buckley, *Papal Primacy and the Episcopate: Towards a Relational Understanding* (New York: Crossroad, 1998); John R. Quinn, Phyllis Zagano (eds.) *The Exercise of the Primacy: Continuing the Dialogue* (New York: Crossroad, 1998); William Henn, *The Honor of my Brothers: A Short History of the Relation between the Pope and the Bishops* (New York: Crossroad, 2000).

57 Adam A.J. DeVille, *Orthodoxy and the Roman Papacy: Ut Unum Sint and the Prospects of East—West Unity* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

58 Olivier Clément, *You are Peter: An Orthodox Theologian's Reflection on the Exercise of Papal Primacy* (New York: New City Press, 2003). Translation from French *Rome autrement: une réflexion orthodoxe sur la papauté* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1997).

59 German original: Die Gruppe von Farfa Sabina, *Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt: lutherisch-katholische Annäherungen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Lembeck, 2010). English translation: Group of Farfa Sabina, *Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry: Lutheran-Catholic Convergences* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014).

60 See, for example, James F. Puglisi (ed.), *Petrine Ministry and the Unity of the Church: "Toward a patient and fraternal dialogue": A Symposium celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Foundation of the Society of the Atonement, Rome, December 4–6, 1997* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999); Walter Fleischman-Bisten (ed.), *Papstamt—pro und contra: geschichtliche Entwicklungen und ökumenische Perspektiven* (Bensheimer Hefte 97) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2001); Johannes Brosseder (ed.), *Der Dienst des Petrus in der Kirche: orthodoxe und reformatorische Anfragen an die katholische Theologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 2002); Walter Kasper (ed.), *The Petrine Ministry: Catholics and Orthodox in Dialogue; Academic symposium held at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity* (New York – Mahwah, NJ: Newman Press, 2006); James F. Puglisi (ed.), *How Can the Petrine Ministry Be a Service to the Unity of the Universal Church?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

61 In German, see Paul Wess, *Papstamt jenseits von Hierarchie und Demokratie: ökumenische Suche nach einem bibelgemäßen Petrusdienst* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2003); Wolfgang Klausnitzer, *Der Primat des Bischofs von Rom: Entwicklung—Dogma—Ökumenische Zukunft* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2004); Regina Randlback-Ossmann, *Vom Papstamt zum Petrusdienst: zur Neufassung eines ursprungstreu und zukunfts-fähigen Dienstes an*

situation has changed. Not only is the public image of the Roman Pontiff transformed, but Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* already spoke about the necessity of reforming the Roman Curia and Papacy.<sup>62</sup> This sheds new light on previous publications on the history of papal primacy.<sup>63</sup>

It is also necessary to mention in relation to this area of research those works which are dedicated to further ecclesiological themes, such as for example the question of apostolic succession, or episcopal or ordained ministries in general. Among such works can be placed that of Thomas Kocik, *Apostolic Succession in an Ecumenical Context*,<sup>64</sup> a collection of articles on the theme, *Ecclesiology and Church Constitution*, edited by Gunther Wenz,<sup>65</sup> as well as Walter Kasper's book, *That All May Be One: The Call to Unity*,<sup>66</sup> which deals with ecclesiological perspectives from an ecumenical point of view.<sup>67</sup> Werner Führer's book, *The Office of the Church*,<sup>68</sup> offers a comprehensive examination of Martin Luther's concept of ordained ministry and of the possibilities

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*der Einheit der Kirche* (Konfessionskundliche und kontroverstheologische Studien, hrsg. vom Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut 75) (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2005).

- 62 He said: "Since I am called to put into practice what I ask of others, I too must think about a conversion of the papacy. It is my duty, as the Bishop of Rome, to be open to suggestions which can help make the exercise of my ministry more faithful to the meaning which Jesus Christ wished to give it and to the present needs of evangelization. Pope John Paul II asked for help in finding 'a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation' (Ut unum sint, 95). We have made little progress in this regard. The papacy and the central structures of the universal Church also need to hear the call to pastoral conversion". (EG, 32) Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* (24 November 2013), [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html) (accessed 13/6/2017). Elsewhere we read: "Nor do I believe that the papal magisterium should be expected to offer a definitive or complete word on every question which affects the Church and the world. It is not advisable for the Pope to take the place of local Bishops in the discernment of every issue which arises in their territory. In this sense, I am conscious of the need to promote a sound 'decentralization'". (EG 16). Since 2013 a group of nine Cardinals has been discussing the necessity of Curial reform.
- 63 See e.g. Klaus Schatz, *Der päpstliche Primat: seine Geschichte von den Ursprüngen bis zur Gegenwart* (Würzburg: Echter, 1990); Otto Herman Pesch, "Služba Petrova nástupce ve 21. století. Ekumenická perspektiva", *Teologická reflexe* 4:1 (1998), 7–19 and Reinhard Frieling, "Společenství s papežem, ne pod papežem", *Teologická reflexe* 4:1 (1998), 20–31.
- 64 Thomas Kocik, *Apostolic Succession in an Ecumenical Context* (New York: Alba House, 1998).
- 65 Gunther Wenz (ed.), *Ekklesologie und Kirchenverfassung. Die institutionelle Gestalt des episkopalen Dienstes* (Münster: LitVerlag, 1996).
- 66 Walter Kasper, *That All May Be One: The Call to Unity* (London: Burns and Oates, 2004).
- 67 On ecclesiological discussions and acceptable ecumenical models see the first volume of the new *Thema Ökumene* series from the Möhler Institute, Georg Hintzen and Wolfgang Thönissen, *Kirchengemeinschaft möglich?: Einheitsverständnis und Einheitskonzepte in der Diskussion* (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2003).
- 68 Werner Führer, *Das Amt der Kirche. Das reformatorische Verständnis des geistlichen Amtes im ökumenischen Kontext* (Neuendettelsau: Freimund Verlag, 2001).



of ecumenical understanding in the area of ordained ministry. Also important is the three-volume work of the German Ecumenical Study Group on ministry and apostolic succession *Das kirchliche Amt in apostolischer Nachfolge*.<sup>69</sup>

In the area of ecclesiology other works are also to be found that return to the theme of the unity of the church community, but approach its institutional framing in a more nuanced way. They are grouped under the title of “*communio* [or: communion] ecclesiology”. In this approach the distinction between an ecumenism from above and from below does not always make sense. Among works in this area are Gillian Evans, *The Church and the Churches: Towards an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*,<sup>70</sup> *Communion Ecclesiology: Visions and Versions*, by Denis Doyle,<sup>71</sup> and Nicholas Sagovsky’s *Ecumenism: Christian Origins and the Practice of Communion*<sup>72</sup> and *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, by Lorelei F. Fuchs,<sup>73</sup> and Miroslav Volf’s ecumenical ecclesiology.<sup>74</sup> As for the German-speaking world, mention can be made of a number of collections, such as the work of the German Ecumenical Study Group on the question of ecclesiology,<sup>75</sup> a volume of essays published as *Communio—Ideal or Caricature of Communication?*<sup>76</sup> or the ecclesiological contributions in the book *The Church in Ecumenical Perspective*,<sup>77</sup> which was a Festschrift for Walter Kasper on his seventieth birthday. From the large number of reactions to the problematic Roman Catholic document *Dominus Iesus* (2000), we can mention collections that examined

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- 69 Theodor Schneider, Gunther Wenz (eds.), *Das kirchliche Amt in apostolischer Nachfolge: I. Grundlagen und Grundfragen* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2004); Dorothea Sattler, Gunther Wenz (eds.), *Das kirchliche Amt in apostolischer Nachfolge: II. Ursprünge und Wandlungen* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2006); Dorothea Sattler, Gunther Wenz (eds.), *Das kirchliche Amt in apostolischer Nachfolge: III. Verständigungen und Differenzen* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2008).
- 70 Gillian Evans, *The Church and the Churches: Towards an Ecumenical Ecclesiology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- 71 Denis Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Visions and Versions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000).
- 72 Nicholas Sagovsky, *Ecumenism: Christian Origins and the Practice of Communion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- 73 Lorelei F. Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology: From Foundations through Dialogue to Symbolic Competence for Communionality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).
- 74 Miroslav Volf, *Trinität und Gemeinschaft: Eine ökumenische Ekklesiologie* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald Verlag, 1996). English version: Miroslav Volf, *After our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998).
- 75 Peter Neuner and Dietrich Ritschl (eds.), *Kirchen in Gemeinschaft—Gemeinschaft der Kirche. Studie des DÖSTA zur Fragen der Ekklesiologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 1993).
- 76 Bernd Jochen Hilberath (ed.), *Communio—Ideal oder Zerrbild von Kommunikation?* (QD 176) (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1999).
- 77 Peter Walter, Klaus Krämer, George Augustin (eds.), *Kirche in ökumenischer Perspektive* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 2003).

ecclesiological themes from an ecumenical perspective, such as *Confessional Identity and Church Community*<sup>78</sup> and *What is Still Catholic Today?*<sup>79</sup> The relationship between ecclesiology and ethics was the subject of a work edited by Thomas Best and Martin Robra,<sup>80</sup> and touching on similar themes we can also note John Nusner's book, *For All Peoples and All Nations: The Ecumenical Church and Human Rights*.<sup>81</sup>

Interesting changes have been seen in sacramentology, especially what we could call fundamental sacramental theology. Under the influence of dialogue with the Orthodox,<sup>82</sup> but also because Western theology has begun to work more and more with non-dualistic and non-causal categories<sup>83</sup> made available to theology by contemporary philosophy, sacraments are less and less thought of as "things separated" from the rest of creation, but as the action with which God unites creation, salvation and consecration in one whole. Sacramentology has thus entered into a new relation with ecclesiology, and is not conceived simply as a part of it, but as a partner, which also gives to ecclesiology a theology of creation and provides it with a theology of the Kingdom of God. Here it is not just that the church celebrating liturgy gives a context to the sacraments, but that the sacraments give a context to the church, a broader context than simply the church itself. Widening the scope in this way also then has an influence on how the question of sacramental hospitality is dealt with.

Among the works which have led to a shift in fundamental sacramental theology are Martien Brinkman's book, *Sacraments of Freedom: Ecumenical Essays on Creation and Sacrament, Justification and Freedom*<sup>84</sup> and Bruce Morrill's *Anamnesis as Dangerous*

78 Helmut Hoping (ed.), *Konfessionelle Identität und Kirchengemeinschaft* (Münster: LitVerlag, 2000).

79 Albert Franz (ed.), *Was ist heute noch katholisch? Zum Streit um die innere Einheit und Vielfalt der Kirche* (QD 192) (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001).

80 Thomas Best and Martin Robra (eds.), *Ecclesiology and Ethics: Ecumenical Ethical Engagement, Moral Formation and the Nature of the Church* (Geneva: wcc Publications, 1997).

81 John Nusner, *For All Peoples and All Nations: The Ecumenical Church and Human Rights* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005).

82 Perhaps the most outstanding personality here is that of Alexander Schmemmann, who continues to influence contemporary Western sacramental theology. See Alexander Schmemmann, *The World as Sacrament* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1966); *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998); *The Eucharist* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987, 2003).

83 This is linked especially to the critique of Western metaphysics as developed by, for example, Martin Heidegger or more recently Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion. It has been most extensively worked out in sacramental theology by Louis-Marie Chauvet, see below footnote 87.

84 Martien Brinkman, *Sacraments of Freedom: Ecumenical Essays on Creation and Sacrament, Justification and Freedom* (Zoeltemeer: Minema, 1999).

*Memory: Political and Liturgical Theology in Dialogue*,<sup>85</sup> which attempts a critical synthesis of the Orthodox emphasis on a liturgical reading of the world in the sacraments and of political theology, which leads to the interpretation of the sacraments as celebration of a new reality, of a just world in God, with the motivation to build this world that we celebrate. A similar theme is found in William Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist*.<sup>86</sup> These last two works do not, it is true, have the word “ecumenism” in the title, but nevertheless make an important contribution to an Ecumenical Theology of the sacraments. The same could be said about other significant books, which work with the sources and which have an influence that transcends the confessional belonging of their authors, or which with the shift in their emphases enable new journeys of mutual understanding and enrichment. Here first we should mention the second important study by the Catholic theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*.<sup>87</sup> Also to be noted, from a Protestant perspective, is Geoffrey Wainwright’s study *Eucharist and Eschatology*<sup>88</sup> and the trilogy, unfortunately little known in Europe, by the Lutheran theologian Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*, *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology*, and *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*.<sup>89</sup>

Other publications in the field of sacramental theology have more strongly linked sacramentology and ecclesiology. These works put the question the other way around—what influence does the concept of the church have here? If we accept the *communio* model, for example, what would that mean for ecumenical sacramental theology and practice? An example of this is Jeffrey van der Wilt’s work on *A Church without Borders: The Eucharist and the Church in Ecumenical Perspective*.<sup>90</sup>

A further series of publications has dealt with the question of how to move on after the Lima Document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. Interesting suggestions can

85 Bruce Morrill, *Anamnesis as Dangerous Memory: Political and Liturgical Theology in Dialogue* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000).

86 William Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

87 Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2001; original: *Les sacrements: Parole de Dieu au risque du corps*, Paris: Ouvrières, 1993). As it is within our timeframe, we can also mention here the English translation of the book *Symbole et Sacrement. Une relecture sacramentelle de l'existence chrétienne* (Paris: Cerf, 1987), *Symbol and Sacrament: A sacramental reinterpretation of Christian existence* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), which caused a great deal of discussion in the 1990s.

88 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (Peterborough: Epworth, 2002).

89 Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*, *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology*, and *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993, 1999, 2003).

90 Jeffrey van der Wilt, *A Church without Borders: The Eucharist and the Church in Ecumenical Perspective* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998).

be found in a collection edited by Thomas Best, *Ecumenical Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy and Beyond*.<sup>91</sup> Otherwise emphasis is mostly placed on whether it is possible to go further in mutual recognition of ministries and in the expansion of official paths to responsible sharing of one Eucharistic table,<sup>92</sup> given that the mutual recognition of one baptism offers us many possibilities which have not yet been used, either theologically or practically. This approach can be found, for example, in another collective work, edited by Michael Root and Risto Saarinen, *Baptism and the Unity of the Church*,<sup>93</sup> or in *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, edited by Thomas Best and Dagmar Heller.<sup>94</sup> Also of note here is Dagmar Heller's overview of the theology and practise of baptism in different traditions.<sup>95</sup>

A range of ecumenically oriented works in German have also looked at the question of the possibility of a shared Lord's Supper and mutual recognition of church offices. This theme was reinforced in the German setting by discussions over the question of the possibility of a shared celebration of the Eucharist in connection with the first ecumenical *Kirchentag* in Berlin in 2003. Although the organisers in the end decided against having an official common Eucharistic celebration, given the rejection of the idea by the Vatican, there were many voices that considered the refusal of a common celebration an inadequate response to the current state of ecumenical dialogue. A cogent theological position in support of Eucharistic hospitality is found in the joint theses of the Ecumenical Institutes of Strasbourg, Tübingen and Bensheim, *Fellowship in the Lord's Supper is Possible*, published in 2003.<sup>96</sup> There have been other publications in support of Eucharistic hospitality, such as a collection issued in connection with the ecumenical *Kirchentag, Eucharistic Hospitality*,<sup>97</sup> and the book by the Lutheran theologian, Johannes Rehm, *Free Entrance*.<sup>98</sup>

91 Thomas Best (ed.), *Ecumenical Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy and Beyond* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998).

92 See John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (17 April 2003), at [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_20030417\\_ecc-de-euch.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_20030417_ecc-de-euch.html) (accessed 15/2/2018).

93 Michael Root and Risto Saarinen (eds.), *Baptism and the Unity of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998).

94 Thomas Best and Dagmar Heller (eds.), *Becoming a Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999).

95 Dagmar Heller, *Baptized into Christ: A Guide to the Ecumenical Discussion on Baptism* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2013).

96 *Abendmahlsgemeinschaft ist möglich* (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 2003).

97 Johannes Brosseder and Hans Georg Link (eds.), *Eucharistische Gastfreundschaft. Ein Plädoyer evangelischer und katholischer Theologen* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003).

98 Johannes Rehm, *Eintritt Frei! Plädoyer für das ökumenische Abendmahl* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2002). The author of this work is extremely well acquainted with the Roman

Finally, probably the most significant contribution of German ecumenical dialogue to world ecumenism is the work on doctrinal condemnations of the past. The aim of the thorough study of mutual condemnations in the past, especially in the sixteenth century, has been to investigate to what extent such judgements from the past concern today's church and whether they still divide the church.<sup>99</sup> The motivation for this work arose during a meeting between the bishop and chair of the Protestant Church in Germany, Eduard Lohse, and Pope John Paul II during the latter's first visit to Germany in 1980. A Joint Ecumenical Commission was formed, which entrusted a full study of the condemnations of the past to an Ecumenical Working Circle of Protestant and Catholic Theologians (*Ökumenischer Arbeitskreis evangelischer und katholischer Theologen*). The results of the five-year work period of this group (1981–1985) were published partly already in the 1980s and partly in the 1990s under the overall title *Doctrinal Condemnations—Do they Divide the Church?* There were in total four volumes, the first of which, subtitled *Justification, Sacraments and Office in the Time of the Reformation and Today*, contained the result of the work of the Working Circle, whilst the following two volumes contained materials on specific themes.<sup>100</sup> The fourth volume contained public responses from official church sources.<sup>101</sup>

These works gave rise to a series of discussions and ultimately served as one of the preparatory stages of the 1997 Joint Declaration of the Roman Catholic Church and

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Catholic—Lutheran dialogue on the Lord's Supper, which he had examined in his book on the subject, Johannes Rehm, *Das Abendmahl. Römisch-Katholische und Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche im Dialog* (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser / Gütersloher Verlag, 1993).

- 99 The older schism between East and West has so far received less attention. Motivations for the study of this theme come not only from the attempt to develop closer relationships with Orthodox Churches but also because of important anniversaries. See, for example, the collected work of the Munich Ecumenical Centre, Theodor Nikolaou (ed.), *Das Schisma zwischen Ost—und Westkirche. 950 bzw. 800 Jahre danach (1054 und 1204)* (Münster: Lit.Verlag, 2005).
- 100 Karl Lehmann (ed.), *Lehrverurteilungen—kirchentrennend? Band 1: Rechtfertigung, Sakramente und Amt im Zeitalter der Reformation und heute* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht—Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1986); Karl Lehmann and Friedrich Beisser (eds.), *Lehrverurteilungen—kirchentrennend? Band II: Materialien zu den Lehrverurteilungen und zur Theologie der Rechtfertigung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht—Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1989); Wolfhart Pannenberg and Hans Helmut Esser (eds.), *Lehrverurteilungen—kirchentrennend? Band III: Materialien zur Lehre von den Sakramenten und vom kirchlichen Amt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht – Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1990). In 1990 an English version was published: Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do They Still Divide?* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990).
- 101 Wolfhart Pannenberg (ed.), *Lehrverurteilungen—kirchentrennend? Band IV: Antworten auf kirchliche Stellungnahmen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht – Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1994). This work contains a complete bibliography of the reception of the published results up to 1994.

the World Lutheran Federation on the Doctrine of Justification, which, after some rather tempestuous discussion, was signed by representatives of both churches in Augsburg on 31 October 1999.<sup>102</sup> Needless to say, the signing of the agreement did not put a stop to the discussions and apart from further contentious themes from the Reformation period, a number of works focussed on the question of whether this declaration should not have some concrete consequences for the participatory churches (for example, the possibility of common Eucharistic celebrations).<sup>103</sup> Another significant contribution to this theme is Martien Brinkman's book, *Justification in Ecumenical Dialogue: Central Aspects of Christian Soteriology in Debate*.<sup>104</sup> Finally, two further collections dealt with the dialogue with the Free Churches on the theme of justification, faith and baptism.<sup>105</sup>

To conclude this part, we can refer to Stefan Höschele's insightful study, "Defining Ecumenics Fifty Years after Mackay",<sup>106</sup> which offers the following typology. There are those approaches which focus on the church and the churches; on theology; on unity; on the world and the church-world relations. Within each of the types we find a further

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- 102 On the history of the origins of the Declaration, see, for example, Dorothea Wendebourg, "Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der 'Gemeinsame Erklärung'", *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* Beiheft 10 (1998) *Zur Rechtfertigungslehre*: 140–206. On disagreements over the declaration, see Johannes Wallmann, "Der Streit um die 'Gemeinsame Erklärung zur Rechtfertigungslehre'", *ibid.*, 207–251. The Declaration was published in Czech along with a commentary by Pavel Filipi, "O ospravedlnění ekumenicky", *Teologická reflexe* 4:2 (1998), 147–158 (commentary) and 164–174 (translation). It was published again in Czech in 2000 together with the responses of the Roman Catholic Church, the World Lutheran Federation and the Decrees of the Council of Trent: Tomáš Machula (ed.), *Ospravedlnění a dědičný hřích v ekumenickém dialogu* (Prague: Krystal, 2000). On the discussion around the Joint Declaration, see Filip Susa, "Spor o společné prohlášení k učení o ospravedlnění", *Teologická reflexe* 7:1 (2001), 30–41. A very detailed history of the preparation and reception of the Declaration can be found in Friedrich Hauschildt and Udo Hahn (eds.), *Die Gemeinsame Erklärung zur Rechtfertigungslehre: Dokumentation des Entstehungs—und Rezeptionsprozesses* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).
- 103 Among many works, mention can be made of two volumes: Bernd Jochen Hilberath and Wolfhart Pannenberg (eds.), *Zur Zukunft der Ökumene. Die "Gemeinsame Erklärung zur Rechtfertigungslehre"* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1999) and Ernst Pulsfort and Rolf Hanusch (eds.), *Von der Gemeinsamen Erklärung zur gemeinsamen Herrenmahl? Perspektiven der Ökumene im 21. Jahrhundert* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2002).
- 104 Martien Brinkman, *Justification in Ecumenical Dialogue: Central Aspects of Christian Soteriology in Debate* (Utrecht: Institute for Missiology and Ecumenism, 1996).
- 105 Walter Klaiber and Wolfgang Thönissen (eds.), *Rechtfertigung in freikirchlicher und römisch-katholischer Sicht* (Paderborn: Bonifatius—Stuttgart: Edition Anker Christliches Verlagshaus, 2003); Walter Klaiber and Wolfgang Thönissen (eds.), *Glaube und Taufe in freikirchlicher und römisch-katholischer Sicht* (Paderborn: Bonifatius—Stuttgart: Edition Anker Christliches Verlagshaus, 2005).
- 106 Stefan Höschele, "Defining Ecumenics Fifty Years after Mackay", *Communio Viatorum* 55:2 (2013), 105–136.



plurality of positions. And yet, according to him, the common denominator, namely the desire to heal conflicts, generates both reflection and practice of inter-church and interfaith relations in which ideals of unity are taken merely as guiding principles for lived and inevitably imperfect relationships.

### 3 The Czech Contribution

Before giving a brief overview of literature on our theme in Czech, it is necessary to take into account the historical context of ecumenism in the Czech lands and note some circumstances which would seem to be the cause of the lack of development of Czech Ecumenical Theology. First, we have to bear in mind the legacy of twentieth-century totalitarianisms, Nazi and above all Communist, which systematically oppressed Christianity and church life in the country, as well as theological education and work. The long-term isolation from theological events in the world (the Second Vatican Council, the great development of the ecumenical movement) and minimal contact with foreign ecumenism, restricted to only a few chosen people, necessarily had an impact even after 1989.

Along with other post-Communist countries we also share another legacy that has proved unhelpful for ecumenism, namely the fact that official ecumenism in the Communist period was discredited because of the collaboration of its representatives with State organizations. The ecumenical structures in the Communist countries were under the supervision of the State, and concentrated on what was called “peace work”. They were also often abused in order to support the regime, either through declarations of loyalty at various internal or foreign political events, or as “proof” of religious freedom for foreign delegations in a period when many other Christians were imprisoned because of their convictions, or could not minister in churches because they did not have the requisite state permission. The extent of the collaboration of ecumenical structures and their representatives with the totalitarian regime and its evaluation today still arouses disagreements and tensions between former workers in ecumenism and those Christians who were persecuted by the regime. Despite a number of works, this theme still awaits an in-depth study.<sup>107</sup>

107 The activity of the World Council of Churches during the Cold War is the subject of Heinz-Jürgen Joppien (ed.), *Der Ökumenische Rat der Kirchen in den Konflikten des Kalten Krieges. Kontexte—Kompromisse—Konkretionen* (Beiheft zur *Ökumenischen Rundschau* 70) (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 2000). On the other side, the way in which the KGB sought to influence world ecumenism by means of collaborators from among the leaders of the churches is documented in the book by Christopher Andrew and Vasilij Mitrokhin, *Neznámé špionážní operace KGB. Mitrochinův archiv* (Prague: Academia, 2001; original: *The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West* (London: Penguin, 1999).

In Czechoslovakia the Communist regime permitted the inauguration of ecumenical structures in the second half of the 1950s (in 1955 the Ecumenical Council of Churches, in 1956 the Ecumenical Institute at the Comenius Protestant Theology Faculty and in 1958 the Christian Peace Conference), but at the cost of a tight control. Especially in the first decade of their existence these institutions concentrated on foreign peace activity in close cooperation with the regime. In the meantime, there developed a completely different type of ecumenical cooperation on a personal level, based on practical cooperation and mutual solidarity, because it arose in many instances from a shared experience of persecution. It was only with the slightly freer conditions at the end of the 1960s that unofficial ecumenical contacts could develop into semi-official activities, such as the Bible Translation Committee or the seminars in V Jirchářich Street in Prague.<sup>108</sup>

It is thus understandable that the Czech production of Ecumenical Theology is very meagre. Only a few books need be mentioned. Partly these are guides for students of theology or other interested parties published after 1989 by Ivan Štampach and Pavel Filipi. Ivan Štampach's *Outline of Ecumenical Theology*<sup>109</sup> was intended for students of the Catholic Theological Faculty, and although it mainly looks at ecumenical aspects of conciliar and post-conciliar documents, it also offers a brief overview of non-Catholic ecclesiology. Among the most interesting parts is the section on the history of Czech ecumenism and considerations of the need for ecumenical work, in which he warns of the temptation of the Roman Catholic Church to isolate itself from other churches and criticizes the insufficient reception of Council documents.

In his book *Christianity* Pavel Filipi offers an overview of the history, doctrine and fundamental marks of individual Christian churches and confessional families.<sup>110</sup> Despite its encyclopaedic nature, the book is an informed perspective on the identity of church traditions.<sup>111</sup> In his second work, *The Church and the Churches* Filipi presented different concepts of church, looked at how they developed and reflected on what from the history of the church is fruitful for contemporary ecumenical dialogue.<sup>112</sup> Another important general study comes from Robert Svatoň, a theologian of a younger

108 These activities also still await a systematic study. So far there are only partial studies or reminiscences of participants. See, for example, those recorded in Hans Vorster (ed.), *Ökumene in Ungarn, der Tschechoslowakei und Polen* (Beiheft zur *Ökumenischen Rundschau* 64) (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 1992).

109 Ivan Štampach, *Nástin ekumenické teologie: informace a úvahy s ohledem na českou ekumenickou situaci* (Prague: Karolinum, 1995).

110 Pavel Filipi, *Křesťanstvo. Historie, statistika, charakteristika křesťanských církví* (Brno: CDK, 1996).

111 Its popularity is evidenced by the fact that a third edition was published already in 2001.

112 Pavel Filipi, *Církev a církve: kapitoly z ekumenické eklesiologie* (Brno: CDK, 2000).

generation, who in his *Spiritual Journeys of Czech Ecumenism*<sup>113</sup> investigates different paradigms of Czech ecumenism.

Other interesting studies of Czech provenance ought to be mentioned. Karel Skalický's work, which follows the origin of the conciliar decree on ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio*, draws on material which the author gathered during his time in exile in Rome from the end of the 1960s, complemented with new findings and literature.<sup>114</sup> In his work *The Ecumenical Method of Edmund Schlink and its Application to the Czech Situation* Jaroslav Vokoun utilizes his extensive knowledge of German Ecumenical Theology, especially of the work of Edmund Schlink, whose discoveries he seeks to use in searching for a methodology for the Czech setting.<sup>115</sup>

There have been a number of studies dedicated to particular themes, such as Jiří Hanuš's collection on ecumenical Church history written in response to a text by Bernd Jaspert,<sup>116</sup> Pavel Hradilek's studies in ecumenical liturgy,<sup>117</sup> or Pavel Ambros's collection on ecumenical pastoral care.<sup>118</sup> Attempts to sketch fundamental theology ecumenically were presented in Pavel Ambros's collection of essays *Freedom towards Alternatives: Continuity and Discontinuity of Christian Traditions*,<sup>119</sup> and by Ivana Noble's *Tracking God: An Ecumenical Fundamental Theology*.<sup>120</sup>

A number of theologians have made important contributions to the relationships between Christian East and West. Here we need to start with the work of Cardinal Tomáš Špidlík, *Spirituality of the Christian East*,<sup>121</sup> published in several languages. In Czech there is another very detailed study dedicated to Western and Eastern monastic

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- 113 Robert Svatoň, *Duchovní cesty českého ekumenismu: Minulost, přítomnost a perspektivy* (Olomouc: Refugium Velehrad – Roma, 2014).
- 114 Karel Skalický, *Ekumenismus na Druhém vatikánském koncilu* (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 1997).
- 115 Jaroslav Vokoun, *Ekumenická metodologie Edmunda Schlinka a její aplikace na českou problematiku* (České Budějovice: Jihočeská univerzita, 2004).
- 116 Jiří Hanuš (ed.), *Ekumenické církevní dějepisectví. Dějiny, analýzy, perspektivy* (Brno: CDK, 2003).
- 117 See e.g., Pavel Hradilek, "Cesty k ekumenické eucharistické liturgii", in Jiří Hanuš (ed.), *Ekumenické církevní dějepisectví*, 137–206; or the web page with numerous texts on ecumenical liturgy from the years 1993–1995, <http://www.iespraha.cz/content/liturgika> (accessed 1/5/2017).
- 118 Pavel Ambros (ed.), *Fórum pastorálních teologů IV: Pastorační situace jako výzva k ekumenismu. Sborník příspěvků z vědeckého semináře (19.–20. března 2007) Katedry pastorální a spirituální teologie CMTF UP a Centra Aletti v Olomouci* (Olomouc: Refugium, 2008).
- 119 Pavel Ambros, *Svoboda k alternativám: Kontinuita a diskontinuita křesťanských tradic* (Olomouc—Velehrad: Refugium, 2008–2009).
- 120 Ivana Noble, *Tracking God: An Ecumenical Fundamental Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010). First published in Czech as *Po Božích stopách: Teologie jako interpretace náboženské zkušenosti* (Brno: CDK, 2004).
- 121 Tomáš Špidlík, *La spiritualité de l' Orient chrétien I–II* (Roma: Pont. Inst. Studiorum Orientalium, 1978, 1988); in English translation: *The Spirituality of the Christian East I–II*

traditions as a common heritage of Christians, *Spirituality of Christian Monastic Traditions* by Václav Ventura.<sup>122</sup> The Catholic-Orthodox relations were studied by Walerian Bugel, who published edited documents of the consensus.<sup>123</sup> The ecumenical impact of the theology and spirituality of Orthodoxy have been further studied by the group of researchers working under a five year project *Symbolic Mediation of Wholeness in Western Orthodoxy* headed by Ivana Noble,<sup>124</sup> and in books by Karel Sládek.<sup>125</sup>

#### 4 Changing Contexts and New Possibilities

To write a survey is always difficult, but it is still more difficult to conclude it, because substantial new works are still being discovered which are not included and we are continually confronted with the limitations of our selection. We hope, though, that this insufficiency will be overlooked and that the previous pages will prove of some use as an introductory overview.

In conclusion we return to where we began, to the need for a broader context for Ecumenical Theology. We need to grasp what the discipline is, what methods and aims it uses, how they are changing today, and indeed how the understanding of ecumenism itself is changing. In his preface to a book of interviews with Olivier Clément, Pavel Ambros writes:

The ecumenism of the 1960s was very different to that which is vitally important today. It was a programmed ecumenism, with the aim of the mutual recognition of traditions and different confessions. Traditions or churches would bring their practice and theory closer together, in order to progress in mutual awareness.

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(Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1986, 2005); in Czech: *Spiritualita křesťanského Východu: Systematická příručka* (Velehrad: Refugium, 2002).

122 Václav Ventura, *Spiritualita křesťanského mnišství I–III* (Prague: Benediktinské arciepiškopství sv. Vojtěcha a sv. Markéty v Břevnově, 2006, 2010).

123 Walerian Bugel (ed.), *Ekumenické konsensy. 1. Katolicko-pravoslavné konsensy na světové úrovni* (Velehrad: Refugium, 2001); *Ekumenické konsensy. 2. Katolicko-pravoslavný dialog: texty z let 1965–1995* (Velehrad: Refugium, 2002).

124 See Ivana Noble, Kateřina Bauerová, Tim Noble and Parush Parushev, *Cesty pravoslavné teologie ve 20. století na Západ* (Brno: CDK, 2012), in English: *Ways of Orthodox Theology in the West* (Yonkers NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2015); in Russian: *Путь православного богословия на Запад в XX веке*, (Москва: Издательство ББИ, 2016); *Wrestling with the Mind of the Fathers* (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2015); *Mnohohlas pravoslavné teologie ve 20. století na Západě* (Brno: CDK, 2015).

125 For example, Karel Sládek, *Cesty k bohosloví: Spiritualita v kontextu příběhů osobností „stříbrného věku“ ruského myšlení a ruské emigrace* (Červený Kostelec: Pavel Mervart, 2013).

The experience of the 1980s and 1990s clearly showed the limits of dialogue as a path to unity. New ecumenism can only be a meeting of people, who experience the same thirst, shared fears and joys of our shared world. It searches for a real answer to the question of how to exit the blind alleys of the civilization in which we live today. This type of ecumenism is very important, because as Christians we are also responsible for indifference towards this civilization.<sup>126</sup>

In the first part we asked if at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries Ecumenical Theology had not come to “a winter time”, in which not much happens, and when the enthusiasm for the unity of Christians which burned so brightly in the 1960s, has gone and no one knows what will come in its place when spring returns. This question in turn led us to two subsidiary questions, related to the two types of Ecumenical Theology. Going back to this theme, we can say that in the small group of specialists who are involved in the first form of ecumenical reflection, it would be as if the seasons do not change, perhaps not even in the greenhouse. “Greenhouse” is not meant to slight their work. Sticking with the metaphor, we can hope from this special environment that “seedlings” will grow that can be planted out and prove viable even outside the greenhouse, but which will not survive the beginning of their lives without it. Reflection on ecumenism lived in concrete relations between people is however an indispensable enrichment and expansion of that first form of Ecumenical Theology. It is also a challenge to take more into account the situation in which the handing on of traditions occurs and in which neither division nor unity occur principally according to denominational imagery.

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126 Pavel Ambros, “Předmluva”, in Olivier Clément: *Pohledy do budoucnosti. Flaminia Morandi a Michelina Tenace v rozhovoru s pravoslavným teologem Olivierem Clémentem* (Velehrad – Rome: Refugium, 1998), 5–6.