

TEO, ISSN 2247-4382
72 (3), pp. 82-94, 2017

The Living Icon of Christ as A Paradigm of Justice

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Abstract

Church “*described*” in the Holy Bible is the place of realisation of the “*neighbor love*” (Matthew 22, 37), framework where the faith is complete in unwavering hope (Mark 16,15-16), and of course the perfect gift hope (1 Peter 1,13), therefore the only “rule” to remain in it is the love in Christ and the love of people. The person with a genuine faith cherish only the justice of God (ebr. Tsaedaeq/tse, gr. Dikaiosyne Tou Theou), because through his experience, Himself becomes right (ebr. Tsaddik; gr. Dikaios). Biblic, is establish a sort of “dialectical scriptural”, in this sense: in this sense: righteousness, as the heavenly kingdom is expected (Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied – Matthew 5, 6) and testified with the cost of suffering assumed (“blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” – Matthew 5,10). Passivism is not soteriological (“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well” – Matthew 6,33) and should be replaced with militant activism. The “New Man” (restored) does not need any “judgement” “for we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of Law” (Roman 3,28).

Keywords

justice, paradigm, icon, righteousness, forgiveness, law, love, anthropological legacy

I. Preliminaries

The theme of justice in contemporary times reveals new, diverse and intricate valences, in a society called post-truth. This new phrase, truly violent and implicitly dangerous, opens the prospect of a new, inexhaustible documentation of the paradigm of justice in theology. It is easy to understand that a theology of canon law can present a facet of this paradigm, in the strict context of Scriptural revelation, which for this branch of theology is also the fundamental source.

The Universal History of Law reveals that from the beginning this is a transcendent¹ notion, which is imposed on human reason, as an immutable date transiting Time². The fallen nature of man, however, darkening reason, has created the *empirical positivistic school, according to which there are no transcendent principles of law, but only social phenomena*³, without regard to Law as *an instrument of spiritualization of mankind*⁴, a domain of values⁵.

The desacralization of the Law no longer takes into account the *Tables of the Law* of Mount Sinai, which demonstrates that *the man without God* has forgotten “The Language of Creation” (Jean Ives Leloup) because he was not healed inwardly to have an opening, that is *a right attitude to the Living, as a humble bow of the being in the Presence of Everything*⁶, for *Everything is life. The palace and the brothel. The eagle and the bug. The rattling and the thoughtful reed. We all live. The thieves and the naive.*⁷

The law, subdivided into a multitude of sections, has history, method, philosophy, praxeology, axiology, and even theology, which indicates it as a complex science.⁸

¹ Eugeniu Safta-Romano, *Legal Archetypes in the Bible*, Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 1997.

² Mihai Bădescu, *The Philosophy of Law in Interwar Romania*, Bucharest, 2015, p. 157.

³ Grigore Stolojescu, *Spirit and Law in the Romanian Philosophy of Law*, Bucharest, Pro Universitaria Publishing House, 2016, p. 56.

⁴ Eugeniu Speranția, *Fundamental principles of juridical philosophy*, Cluj, 1936, p. 7.

⁵ Eugeniu Speranția, *Fundamental principles...*, p. 7.

⁶ Mihaela Grigorean, *A transdisciplinary hermeneutics of the Gospel according to Thomas*, Bucharest, Curtea Veche Publishing House, 2014, p. 201.

⁷ Octavian Paler, *Pray that your wings will not grow*, Bucharest, Albatros and Universal Dalsi Publishing Houses, 1995, p. 74.

⁸ Edmond Picard, *Le Droit Pur*, Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1923; Christian Atias, *Phi-*

The Human creation is often related to the Biblical Genesis⁹, probably because *Reading it with teratological interest, «Genesis» is a projection of freedom as a will to limit. Before the Genesis, «the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters».* Any demiurgic act begins with this flood of the spirit that approximates the deed, but in order not to remain

l'osophie du Droit, Presses Universitaires de France, 1999; Mihai Bădescu, *Legal sanction to the theory, philosophy of Law and Romanian Law*, Bucharest, Lumina Lex Publishing House, 2002; Ioan Biriș, *Philosophy of Law*, Timișoara, West University Publishing House, 1997; Mihai Bădescu, *General theory of law*, Craiova, Sitech Publishing House, 2013; Gheorghe Baboș, *General theory of law*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1994; Mihai Bădescu, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*, Bucharest, Lumina Lex Publishing House, 2003; Nicolae Bojdoiu, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*, Bucharest, Europa Nova Publishing House, 1998; Valeriu Capalea, *Philosophy of Law*, Chișinău, A.R.C. Publishing House, 2004; Ion Craiovean, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*, Bucharest, All Publishing House, 1998; Nicolae Culic, Constantin Stroe, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*, Bucharest, 1993; Ion Craiovean, *Law Philosophy or Law as Philosophy*, Bucharest, Universul Juridic Publishing House, 2010; Gheorghe Dănișor, *Philosophy of law to Hegel*, Craiova, Ramuri Publishing House, 2001; Mircea Djuvara, *Dialectique et expérience juridique*, Bucharest, Tiparul Universitar, 1938; Liviu Stan, *Juris ontology*, Sibiu, 1948; Mircea Djuvara, *Essays on the Philosophy of Law*, Bucharest, Trei Publishing House, 1997; Andreea Dragomir, *Romanian legal philosophy*, Aius Printed Publishing House, 2010; Mircea Djuvara, *Contemporary Philosophy and Law*, Cluj-Napoca, Grinta Publishing House, 2005; Ștefan Georgescu, *The Philosophy of Law. A history of the Ideas of the Past 2500 Years*, Bucharest, All Beck Publishing House, 2001; Jürgen Habermas, *Droit et morale*, Paris, Seuil, 1997; W.F. Hegel, *Principles of Law Philosophy*, Bucharest, Academia Publishing House, 1969; Hans Kelsen, *The Pure Theory of Law*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2000; Henri Lévy – Brühl, *Sociologie du droit*, Paris, PUF, 1979; Geoffrey May, *Introduction à la science du droit*, Paris, M. Giard, 1920; Bjerne Melkevik, *Reflections on the Philosophy of Law*, Iași, Cugetarea Publishing House, 2003; Gheorghe Mihai, Radu Matica, *Fundamentals of Law. Law Theory and Philosophy*, Bucharest, All Publishing House, 1997; Petre Pandrea, *Judicial psychoanalysis*, Bucharest, Cultura Românească, 1934; Irineu Ioan Popa, *Moral substance of law*, Bucharest, Universul Juridic Publishing House, 2009; Jipa Rotaru, *Philosophy of Law*, Constanța, Europolis Publishing House, 2002; Eugeniu Speranția, *Introduction into Law's Philosophy*, Cluj, Tipografia Cartea Românească, 1946; Constantin Stroe, *Prolegomena to legal philosophy*, Bucharest, Lumina Lex Publishing House, 2001; J.M. Trigeaud, *Métaphysique et éthique au fondement du droit*, Bière Publishing House, 1995; Constantin Stroe, *Compendium of Law Philosophy*, Bucharest, Lumina Lex Publishing House, 1999 ș.a.

⁹ Viorel Sârbu, Miron Corici, *The Sociology of Creation*, Timișoara, West University Publishing House, 2006, p.15.

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*mere wandering, it must be determined by truly doing. [...] ... Man proves to be the highest satisfaction of primordial appetite for Form.*¹⁰

II. The Perspective of Justice in the Old Law

After the dramatic moment of the fall - *Everything*: Understanding, Interpretation - is reimposed¹¹, and the notion of *nothing* will require an epistemological and gnoseological reevaluation, knowing that the *Philosophers have endeavoured to understand it (Nothing, a/n), while the mystics wanted to imagine it; scientists have done their best to create it; astronomers have tried in vain to locate it; logicians were disturbed by the very idea, while the theologians would have liked it to be possible that everything would flow from it; and mathematicians have succeeded.*¹²

The God - Trinity creates from *nothing*, designating the Face of All = Things and Beings, conferring on everyone the right to a specific existence, in Heaven on Earth, where Adam and Eve *were most loved.*¹³

Adam of the Old Testament was the *Unified Being* (Adamology), *Eve also has the Divine Face of God, but not directly, but through the Face of MAN - Man Adam (Evitology, Ghelasie Gheorghe, The Face of Man, vol. 10, Bucharest, Platytera Publishing House, 2013, p. 185), and Christ is the Multiple Original.*¹⁴ The Proto-Parents of the Human Nation have violated the Divine Command, being deceived by the devil in the image of the Serpent (Genesis 3, 1): *Do not regard the present serpent; do not regard, how we flee it and feel repulsion towards it. It was not such in the beginning. The serpent was the friend of man and the closest of those who served him. And who made it an enemy? The sentence of God: «Cursed are you above all the cattle, and above all wild animals I will put enmity between you and*

¹⁰ Gabriel Liiceanu, *Man and Symbol. Interpretations of the symbol in art theory and culture philosophy*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2005, p. 174-179.

¹¹ Charles Seife, *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2007.

¹² John D. Barrow, *The Book of Nothing*, Bucharest, Tehnica Publishing House, 2006, p. VI.

¹³ Ghelasie Gheorghe, *The face of man*, vol. 10, Bucharest, Platytera Publishing House, 2013, p. 190.

¹⁴ Olivier Clément, *Christ, the Earth of the living*, Bucharest, Curtea Veche Publishing House, 2010, p. 116.

the woman». It was this enmity that destroyed the friendship. I mean not a rational friendship, but one of which an irrational creature is capable. Similar to the way that now the dog manifests friendship, not by word but by natural movements, just so did the serpent serve man. As a creature who enjoyed great closeness to man, the serpent seemed to the devil to be a convenient tool (for deception). Thus, the devil spoke through the serpent, deceiving Adam. [...] Many ask: How did the serpent speak – with a human voice, or with a serpent's hissing, and how did Eve understand? Before the transgression Adam was filled with wisdom, understanding, and the gift of prophecy... The devil noticed both the wisdom of the serpent and Adam's opinion of it – because the latter considered the serpent wise. And so, he spoke through it, so that Adam might think that the serpent, being wise, was able to mimic the human voice also.” (Saint John Chrysostom)¹⁵

After the fall of Heaven, the devil was left with an unbearable envy of man, who became the home of Heaven. *And he said unto the woman: Yea, hath God said: Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said: Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman: Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.* (Genesis 3, 1-6)

The ease with which the first people break the only commandment given to them by the Creator shows the *untested nature of their virtue*.¹⁶ The devil proves to be a good psychologist, acting at a precise moment: *This, therefore, is my first approach, namely, to deceive him while he is desirous of improving his condition. In this way an attempt will be made to arouse his ambition* (s.n.) – Saint Ambrose.¹⁷

The devil seduces Eve because she knew the commandment only indirectly from Adam, and as such she considered she was not directly

¹⁵ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation and Early Man*, Bucharest, Sophia Publishing House, 2001, p. 127.

¹⁶ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation ...*, p. 128.

¹⁷ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation ...*, p. 128.

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*responsible for strictly guarding it.*¹⁸ The tempting word would not have led into sin those who were tempted, if the tempter had not been guided by their own desire. *Even if the tempter had not come, the tree itself by its beauty would have led their desire into battle. Although the first ancestors sought an excuse for themselves in the counsel of the serpent, they were harmed more by their own desire than by the counsel of the serpent.* (Saint Ephraim)¹⁹

The ignorance of the commandment draws the curse of the Earth - thorns and thistles - and of man: *“See how after Adam’s disobedience everything was not as it had been before in his life? I, God says, bringing you into this world, wanted you to live without afflictions, without labours, without cares, without sorrows; to be in contentment and prosperity and not be subject to bodily needs, but to be a stranger to all this and enjoy perfect freedom. (s.n.) But since such freedom was not of benefit to you, I will curse the earth so that henceforth it will not be as it was formerly, giving forth fruit without sowing and cultivation, but will do so only with great labour, exertion and cares. I will subject you to constant afflictions and sorrows, and force you to do everything with exhausting efforts, that these tormenting labours might be for you a constant lesson to behave modestly and know your own nature.”* (Saint John Chrysostom)²⁰

The holy Fathers of the Church support the idea that the death chastisement was not a punishment altogether but also a good, for man fell once, if he had remained immortal, he had no way out.²¹

The Old Testament or Covenant is after the fall a true *Penal Code*:

1. The Cain-Abel Fratricide (Genesis 4);
2. The asymptotic multiplication of Evil, Noah and the Flood (Genesis 8);
3. Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19);
4. Chasing Ishmael away (Genesis 21);
5. The sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22);
6. Isav, without the blessing of Jacob (Genesis 27);
7. Joseph and his Brethren (Genesis 37);
8. Plagues of Egypt (Exodus 9-11);
9. Penalties against the Jewish people in Sinai Desert and others etc.

¹⁸ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation ...*, p. 129.

¹⁹ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation ...*, p. 129.

²⁰ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation ...*, p. 135.

²¹ Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation ...*, p. 137.

*The Ontology of the Incarnation*²² of the Son of God explains the *Mystagogia Trinitatis*²³ - chenosis and perichoresis - although Christianity, since ancient times, has been confronted with the ancient philosophy, precisely due to the Mystery of Christ's divine image from the first centuries.²⁴ Christ himself reveals the image of God (John 1, 18).

III. The Revelation of Justice in the Light of a New Thought

The fall of Heaven *has shaded us the sight of God, and at the same time darkened, to blindness, our own Face of Creation.*²⁵ The man desirable of Divine Knowledge needs the *Divine Theological Language.*²⁶ Dogmatics recognizes that, *The Face is «before» The Being, being the one who proceeds the Being and giving birth to Existence*²⁷, and *the Person-Icon-The Absolute Face is the only Absolute Totality that already has the Trinitarian Model itself, as a possibility of a Trinity outside of His Own.*²⁸

The Holy Trinity, defined as Absolute Love²⁹, no longer finds its reflection in the Fallen Man, opacified by the *Antifaces of Sin*. The dogma – *the conceptual form of a timeless revealed truth, directly certified by the Holy Scripture, confirmed by the Apostolic Tradition, received in confession, in the cult and discipline of the Church*³⁰ – internalized in human life can establish the unburning flame of faith leading to the *Restoration of Man.*³¹

²² Tănase Nichifor, *Ontology of the Incarnation. Triptych of Being-Essence-Phenomenon*, Bucharest, Paideia P.H., 2008.

²³ Ioan I. Ică jr., *Mystagogia Trinitatis. Issues of Trinitarian Theology, Patristic and Modern, with Special Reference to the Triadology of Saint Maximus the Confessor*, Sibiu, Deisis Publishing House, 1998.

²⁴ Ghelasie Gheorghe, *Small hesychast dictionary*, Bucharest, Platytera Publishing House, 2015, p. 164.

²⁵ Ghelasie Gheorghe, *Small hesychast dictionary*, p. 167.

²⁶ Ghelasie Gheorghe, *Small hesychast dictionary*, p. 168.

²⁷ Ghelasie Gheorghe, *Small hesychast dictionary*, p. 169.

²⁸ Ghelasie Gheorghe, *The memories of a hesychast*, vol. 1, Bucharest, Playtera Publishing House, 2006, p. 15-16.

²⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Holy Trinity: In the Beginning There Was Love*, Bucharest, E.I.B.M.B.O.R., 1993.

³⁰ Ion Bria, *Treaty of dogmatic and ecumenical theology*, Bucharest, România Creștină, 1999, p. 11.

³¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ, or the Restoration of Man*, Craiova, Omniscope Publishing House, 1993.

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*The world of Here is nothing to the Beyond*³², where Everything is visible, without any hiding; that is why the spiritually advanced Man must not cease at all the climb to the height by slavophile worship.³³

The Ascension is relieved by the helping hand of the Mediator – Pantocrator, Sotér, Iatros³⁴ – *The Conqueror of Hell*³⁵ - *The one who pulls your sleeve to follow Him - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits, to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water* (I Peter 3, 18-20).

If some sceptics assert that *the whole New Testament is but a divine pamphlet against this world. Christianity looks too far from us*³⁶, others admit that *Christianity is a tremendous restoration in the name and under the sign of the Mediator* (s.n.)³⁷. The Reformation of the pagan world was accomplished by *oriental monotheism*³⁸, which convinced through God's saving action³⁹: *He who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* (Galatians 1, 5) and gave the New Commandment: *Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must*

³² Constantin Noica, *Pages on the Romanian Soul*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1991, p. 57.

³³ Iacob Coman, *Theo-Doxa-Logia. The Theological-Doxological Signification of the Religious Hymns in the Great Religions of the World from a Christian Perspective*, Episteimon Publishing House, 1999, p. 409.

³⁴ Picu Ocoleanu, *Jesus Christ the Mediator. The diaconal meaning of Orthodox social ethics*, Bucharest, Christiana Publishing House, 2008, passim.

³⁵ Ilarion Alfeyev, *Christ the Conqueror of Hell: The Descent into Hades from an Orthodox Perspective*, Bucharest, Sophia Publishing House, 2008.

³⁶ Emil Cioran, *Loneliness and destiny*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1991, p. 295.

³⁷ Constantin Noica, *Stories about man. After a book by Hegel*, Bucharest, Cartea Românească, 1980, p. 193.

³⁸ Charles Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Bucharest, Herald Publishing House, 2008, p. 245-278; Ilie Chișcari, *The Mystery of the Son of Man. Exegetic-theological study of the preaching of the Passion and the Resurrection in the Synoptic Evening*, 2 volumes, Bucharest, Basilica Publishing House, 2017.

³⁹ Wilhelm Egger, *How to Read the New Testament*, Târgu-Lăpuș, Galaxia. Intenberg, 2006, p. 119.

love one another. (John 13, 34). Jesus over the centuries is the same.⁴⁰ His kingdom is one of freedom⁴¹, offering man immortality⁴², though he committed the drama on Golgotha. He was nailed to the Cross, and we pierced him with the Spear.⁴³

The original anthropological legacy is an axiological revalidation:

- the revelation of Christ's universality (Matthew 5, 45-48);
- the Christological imperative of the Alterity (Matthew 22, 39);
- Identity Closing and Alterity Openness (Matthew 22, 20-21).⁴⁴

Reminding us that the Iconic Face of Christ as Person and Trinity was revealed in Epiphany, His teaching being essential and transcendentalized, was shared by Proverbs or Parables, as *the story has life. It has body, meat, breathing. [...]. The story is a concrete, three-dimensional "vivid painting"; it does not give anything to think, without giving anything to live [...].*⁴⁵

The words of Christ are an unmistakable textual anxiety, which is why they are offered with purpose, because *they do not provide answers, but stimulate their search. To sum up, it would be said that the story goes unnoticed, lets the throbbing of the words, beyond and above them, play before the one who listens.*⁴⁶

The deaf ear does not hear the symphony of the parables, and the blind eye does not see the evidence of divine vibration. There are so many biblical parables (gr. *para-bollo* = throwing together, putting together) - The Vinegrowers (Mark 12, 1-12); The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18, 10-14); The Healing of a Centurion's Servant (Matthew 8, 5-13); The Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15, 21-28); The Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well (John 4, 4-42); Washing of the feet by the Adulterous Woman (John

⁴⁰ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2001.

⁴¹ Rudolf Kasaner, *God and Chimera. Dialogues, essays, parables*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2004, p. 256.

⁴² Justin Popovici, *Man and the God-Man*, Sibiu, Deisis Publishing House, 1997, p. 64-73.

⁴³ Dimitri Merejkovski, *Unknown Jesus*, vol. I, Antheros Publishing House, 1999, p. 172.

⁴⁴ Vlad Mureșan, *The crisis of anthropology and its original task*, Cluj-Napoca, Eikon Publishing House, 2005, p. 19.

⁴⁵ Andrei Pleșu, *Jesus' parables. The truth as story*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2012, p. 17.

⁴⁶ Andrei Pleșu, *Jesus' parables ...*, p. 18.

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8, 1-11); Zacchaeus the Tax Collector (Luke 19, 1-10), and others who do not cease until the end of ages to unravel the meaningful interpretation of Him who has grown them.

The Scripture of the New Testament contains a Gospel of Judgment (Matthew 25, 32-46) in which the Supreme Judge - Jesus Christ - trumps in a *synedrion of love* where each destiny is *weighed* by some *strength ideas*: Law, Justice, God's Justice, Judgment, Judge and Mercy.

Right - *a term used as a noun and as an adjective, indicating the man who fulfils from the heart the commandments of God* (Romans 2, 13).⁴⁷ The Bible shows us more righteous people who have reported well to God and to men: Noah, Abraham, Lat (2 Peter II, 7), Joseph (Matthew 1, 19), Simeon (Luke 2, 25). God is not *discriminatory* in the sense that *He sends rain on the just and the unjust* (Matthew 5, 45). To the disappointment of the Pharisees, Christ motivates His coming, He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9, 13). The righteous are admitted to the *Fearful Judgment* (Matthew 25, 34), when they will be the heirs of the Kingdom.

Justice means *the deed or the work of the just man – following the example of Christ*⁴⁸, *the one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.* (1 John 3, 7-8). True justice has an inner theme, not an outward look like that of the Pharisees and scribes. This is radically different from that of the pagans *For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.* (Matthew 5, 20). There is an abyss between righteousness and injustice: *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. for what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?* (2 Corinthians 6, 17). New Testament books speak of *the servants of righteousness* (2 Corinthians 3, 9), *weapons of righteousness* (2 Peter 2, 21) and *the crown of righteousness* (2 Timothy 4, 7-8).

Righteous as *a guide, line of conduct or model to follow*⁴⁹ is rarely used in biblical text, but that does not diminish its importance; on the contrary,

⁴⁷ Ioan Mircea, *Dictionary of the New Testament*, Bucharest, E.I.B.M.B.O.R., 1984, p. 123.

⁴⁸ Ioan Mircea, *Dictionary of the New Testament ...*, p. 124.

⁴⁹ Ioan Mircea, *Dictionary of the New Testament ...*, p. 124.

the law is the embodiment of knowledge and truth (Romans 2, 20) and *follows the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.* (2 Timothy 1, 13).

IV. God's gracious righteousness as a real and definitive form of justice

The Righteousness of God is used in the opposite direction to human justice, which is opulent and serenity (Luke 18, 11), counting the measure of the commissive deeds of man. This expression is embedded in the New Testament as a dense thicket - Romans 1, 17; 3, 5; 21, 22; 5, 17 et seq.; 1 Corinthians 1, 30; 2 Corinthians 3, 9; 5, 21; 6, 7; 9, 9; Ephesians 4,21; 5, 9; 6, 14; Philippians 1, 11; 3, 9; James 1, 20; 2 Peter 1, 1. The kingdom of God is above all Justice (Matthew 25,34), because everyone has a place to deserve. Christ gave to man the grace of enmity and righteousness (Romans 3, 25-26; 5, 17), becoming *Justice*.

Judgment is the act of *dividing justice by deed or thought*⁵⁰ and it is the attribute of God – The Righteous Judge (2 Timothy 4, 8, Hebrews 12, 23). We know that the Human Judgment is subjective, biased, even unfair (Matthew 5,25, Luke 18, 2, John 7,24, Acts of the Apostles 8, 33, 18, 15, 24, 10; James 2, 4, 4, 11). The judgment of God also became known in the Old World - the Flood (Genesis 4, 7), the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19, 24), the disappearance of Korah, Dathan and Abiram because of the rebellion against Moses and Aaron (Numbers 16, 32-35). The Day of Judgment is terrible (2 Peter 3, 7), precisely because it is just.

The Judge is *the one who judges right by law or is a divisor of righteousness*⁵¹, and the Old Testament refers to the *Judges of Israel*, who existed until the Prophet Samuel (Acts of the Apostles 13, 20) and judged the affairs of the people. Worldly judges are subject to human laws, which are *more righteous or more crooked*, according to the intention of the *lawmaker*, but consciousness and *deontology* force them to a more righteous judgment - Matthew 5, 25; Luke 12, 58; Acts of the Apostles 18, 15.24. 10. Their objectivity should come from *the fear of the Judgment*

⁵⁰ Ioan Mircea, *Dictionary of the New Testament ...*, p. 256.

⁵¹ Ioan Mircea, *Dictionary of the New Testament ...*, p. 257.

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of God through the Son (John 5,22), who is not *biased* (Ephesians 6, 9). No one comes to the court if he is not accused, defendant, denounced or accused by someone. The great *accuser* of man is the devil (Matthew 5, 25). In such a situation, a good defence is required, as the Apostle Paul had, who was put in chains for the defence of the Gospel (Philippians 1, 15-16), although, the preacher of Christ says, *at my first defence, no one came to my support* (2 Timothy 4,16). The sanction or punishment can come from the man-judge or God (Romans 13, 4, Matthew 5, 38, Hebrews 10, 29, Revelation 13, 3; 12, 14; 15, 1). It is worthy of note that the judgment of God is accomplished in the aura of Mercy, which flows over Man through the Holy Spirit (5 Romans, 5, 9, 23, etc.), as the apostle remarks that God *is merciful to those who have not shown mercy to others* (James 2, 13).

*The Process of the Saviour*⁵² was not an ordinary one, because the accused confused the Synedrion⁵³ - the priestly caste, the elders, the representatives of the old aristocracy in Jerusalem, the scribes, that is, the law interpreters.⁵⁴ The archbishops and the elders belonged to the Sadducees' group, favourable to the Romans and followers of a materialistic philosophy, while the scribes were Pharisees, hostile to Jesus.⁵⁵ The popularity of Christ made the Sadducees join the Pharisees in trapping the Teacher. The chief priests were the masters of the Temple, and the Pharisees of the synagogues.⁵⁶ The judgment of Jesus took place in two stages: a religious one, in Synedrion, the other political, of Pilate.⁵⁷ The Synedrion met in two sessions – at night and in the morning – hearing and witnessing: *And the archbishops, the elders and the Synedrion, sought a ministry testimony against Jesus to kill Him.* But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally, two came forward and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’” Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the

⁵² I. Fruma, I.T. Marcu, *The Process of the Saviour*, Sibiu, 1945.

⁵³ Sanhedrin - Supreme Court of Judea, composed of 71 members.

⁵⁴ Natalia Manolescu – Dinu, *Jesus Christ the Saviour in the Light of the Holy Gospels*, Bucharest, Byzantine Publishing House, 2004, p. 615.

⁵⁵ Natalia Manolescu – Dinu, *Jesus Christ the Saviour ...*, p. 615.

⁵⁶ Natalia Manolescu – Dinu, *Jesus Christ the Saviour ...*, p. 615.

⁵⁷ Natalia Manolescu – Dinu, *Jesus Christ the Saviour ...*, p. 617.

Messiah, the Son of God.” “You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” “He is worthy of death,” they answered. Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him (Matthew 26, 59-67, Mark 14, 58-65, John 18, 19-37).

The tyrannical and toothed authority of the Synedrion falls reaped by the Majesty of Christ, who responds only with dignity⁵⁸, revealing *a master work of positive mystification of the Other*.⁵⁹ The power exerted by the members of the Synedrion in a vanity present, culminating in *capital punishment* melted before Christ the Risen One. With this majestic attitude, the Risen One redeems the injustice as the act of generating the dead, through the paradigmatic face of justice. With His Resurrection he sealed justice, transfigured Divinely from pain to hope, from failure to victory, because the law is defeated by the grace of the Resurrection: *when this perishable (body) has been clothed with the imperishable, and this mortal (body) with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* (1 Corinthians 15, 54-56).

⁵⁸ Vianu Mureșan, *Heterology. Introduction to Levinas's ethics*, Cluj-Napoca, Limes Publishing House, 2005, p. 191-194.

⁵⁹ Vianu Mureșan, *Heterologie. Introduction to ...*, p. 194.