

THE ICONIC ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE “EIGHTH DAY”

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The Western dogmatic anthropology, in its post-conciliar trend of returning to the first centuries of raising the Christian self-consciousness, discovers, in new cultural contexts, the Paleo-Christian category of the “Eighth Day”. It originated from the Greco-Roman symbolism, for which even the numerical meaning of the digit “eight” contained a message of perfection¹. In the mythical meaning, above the seven spheres of heaven, on which planets and stars circulate around the stationary Earth, there was also an eighth sphere of immobile celestial bodies which were the “home” of the deity. The static heaven, the immovable seat of the Perfection². Plato left a literary trace of this belief in his “Republic”³. In the modern, liberal Biblical exegesis, the concept of the *eighth day* occurs within the theology of creation (*ktiseotheology, theologia creationis*)⁴.

In the case of the human being, the Perfection, symbolized by the Eighth Day, is a synonym for the “True Man” – the Man who is Perfect, Holy, Redeemed, included in the everlasting union of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Due to this, the day of the resurrection of Christ – Sunday – marks the first day of the week. “The number seven is passed away, the octave is arrived. Yesterday is gone, to-day is come”, notes St. Ambrose in his *Letters* (no. 44)⁵. The Risen Christ reveals himself to the Apostles on the eighth day from the fundamental event that marks the novelty of the Church against the Synagogue (John 20: 26)⁶. To determine the doctrinal synthesis of the Kingdom of Heaven,

¹ D. Forstner, *Świat symboliki chrześcijańskiej*, trans. W. Zakrzewska et al., Warszawa 1990, pp. 48–50.

² Ibidem, p. 48.

³ Platon, *Państwo*, 616 B–617 A, quoted after: D. de Chapeaurouge, *Symbole chrześcijańskie*, trans. G. Rawski, Kraków 2014, pp. 122–123.

⁴ The new creation, after the seven days during which God was arranging the world, matured to give new properties to the matter in the modern times. In the inanimate matter, it is done through nanotechnology, and, in the animate matter, in the processes of molecular biology. The interpretation of the studies, from the position of natural sciences, is disputable. Nevertheless, it opens up a methodological prospect that valorizes the idea of novelty of the Eighth Day. See from the perspective of the American environment: H. F. Judson, *The Eighth Day of Creation: The Makers of the Revolution in Biology (Commemorative Edition)*, New York 1996, p. 720. Whereas, in the context of the liberal feminist theology, the creation of a woman is recognized as God’s act of creation, temporally separate from the creation of Adam, vide: R. R. Ruether, *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*, New York 1992; also: *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*, Boston 1983. This idea is also present in literature, e.g. in the spectacle *Ósmy dzień stworzenia (The Eighth Day of Creation)* from 2008, by the Panopticum Theatre, Lublin.

⁵ Cf. Cyril Alexandrine, *Glaphyra in Exodum*, II, 2.

⁶ Biblical Citations according with polish edition *Biblia Tysiąclecia*, Poznań-Warszawa 1968.

he applied, in the Sermon on the Mount, the symbolism of eight blessings (the octagonal ideal of the Holiness – Matthew 5: 3–10). The octagonal character of the Bible has its beginning in the account of the Great Flood. The renewal of the world is associated with the vision of saving eight souls (Genesis 7: 13 and, parallel, 1 Peter 3: 20–21)⁷. Hence, the octagonal symbolism was commonly used in the baptismal architecture. In the eschatological perspective, Parousia denotes “the great day of the Lord”,⁸ which marks the beginning of a new time in the world created, which shall, henceforth, exist in God. The theological suggestion for this condition is included in a known passage from the Epistle to the Romans from Corpus Paulinum: “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God [...] in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Romans 8: 19–21). According to St. Augustine, it is on the “Eighth Day” that the judgment will take place to reveal the reward or the punishment for human actions⁹. This interpretation links the understanding of the “Eighth Day” to heaven or hell, as the existential sanction for the choice the man makes, either towards God or against Him. For the Christian iconography, this denotes the analysis of the motives associated with:

- the icons of Christ – the True Man;
- the always Holy Mother of God (with parallel icons e.g. more spacious than the heavens, holier than the angels);
- the typology of hagiographic icons;
- the theme of groups of saints in the icons of the Last Judgment;
- the presence of the saints in the Heavenly Liturgy.

1. The ambivalence of the iconic and dogmatic anthropology of the Eighth Day

An ontological and epistemological connection, rich in meanings, takes place between the canonical, Christian icon and the human being. The man, through the power of the Creator’s voluntary gift, is by nature the image of God, while in the icon, through the mystery of the Incarnation, God has a human face in the figure of Christ, who is the true man and the true image of the Father. Theodicean anthropomorphism epitomizes in itself the cognitive content of the icon – any icon – as each and every one of them is essentially Christocentric and, thus, shows the model for the True Man, the Son of Man, as it is emphasized, in particular, by the Gospel according to Matthew¹⁰. Verbal elements in icons, attributes and symbols, complete the image of the iconic prototype, constituting together a “window to eternity”, which shows the model of a fulfilled man who lives

⁷ The artistic representation of this symbol is included in, among others, a sarcophagus from IV century with aquaristical motifs of the flood, which is located in the Landesmuseum in Trier. Furthermore, medieval interpretations of the octagonal theme are present in Frederick Barbarossa’s candlestick from 1165, today in the Cathedral of Aachen. The Western art of painting (e.g. van Eyck’s in the Ghent Altarpiece) refers to the symbol of the eight in order to denote the novelty of temporal and spatial perspectives.

⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *In Psalmorum inscriptiones* II, 5.

⁹ *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 6. St. Augustine treats the number eight as a symbolic term for “sempiterna beatitudo” – the eternal happiness, “regnum, cuius nullus est finis” – the kingdom which has no end. *Patrologia Latina* 33: 212.

¹⁰ In the Gospel according to Matthew, there are 29 references to this category. In the case of the other Gospels, it is respectively: Luke – 25, Mark – 13, John – 12.

in eternity, sustained by the fruits of salvation. In this way, you can define the iconic anthropology inscribed in the Christological pattern, which is the visualization of the Nicene-Constantinople dogma of the hypostatic union.

The dogmatic esthetics acknowledges a connection between the canonical icon and the man as the ontological icon in the anthropological tractate, which is a systematic representation of, among other things, the category of the "Eight Day". Namely, this tractate interprets the article of faith on the creation of the man, his being called into existence as the Creator's *eikon* and his resemblance to the spiritual, transcendental God, solely Holy, being the community of people. Within the dogmatic anthropology, the dogmatism also indicates the complex nature of the man, in which materiality and spirituality define the mystery of his existence as a human, parallel to the materiality and spirituality of the icon on the dogmatic basis of the Eastern Churches, which, after all, touches the sacramental reality. There are also significant parallels in terms of the human destiny and the meaning of an icon. The destiny of a human being is salvation (in the Eastern tradition recognized as deification), understood as the participation in God's glory (*doxa*) for all eternity. In turn, the icon touches the same reality from the opposite angle – namely, it reveals, to the physical human eyes, the invisible contents of heaven, God's existence within the community of angels and saints in the eternal heavenly liturgy¹¹. In both cases – the man and the icon – heaven seems to be the ground for an ontological and cognitive encounter.

The realism of this encounter guarantees the cognizance of the concrete, the existential individuality and, at the same time, existential obviousness of the human existence – so necessary in the contemporary perspective of the virtual world. The realism of the encounter with the Transcendence is, paradoxically, also the cognitive circumstance that reveals the manifested dynamics, which is, in this case, guaranteed by mysticism, liturgy and para-liturgy and, within its framework, the canonical icon. It happens because, according to the anthropology of Corpus Paulinum, the body of a believer is a temple of the Holy Spirit ("Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?" – 1 Corinthians 3:16). It is known that this mystical idea is being developed by the patristics of the Christian East.

Moreover, when it comes to the presence of the prototype in the icon, there were a few systems of doctrinal interpretation in the East¹². The most radical interpretation, fully anthropocentric, was given by Paul Evdokimov who was convinced that: the Incarnation comes from God, from His desire to become a Man and to make Theophany of his Humanity, a place and a living icon of his Presence¹³ (let us add: this Presence is an old-testamental category of *Shekinah*¹⁴ – K. K.).

¹¹ Significant in this regard is especially the Cretan icon of the *Heavenly Liturgy* that dates back to the seventeenth century.

¹² The typology of such interpretations was presented by i.a. K. Klauza, *Uobecnienie w ikonie*, „Roczniki Teologiczne” 51 (2004), vol. 2, pp. 157–170.

¹³ P. Evdokimov, *Sztuka ikony. Teologia piękna*, trans. M. Żurowska, Warszawa 2003, p. 166.

¹⁴ The analysis of this category in the classical approach was presented by Gerhard von Rad in his book *Teologia Starego Testamentu (Theologie des Alten Testaments)*, trans. B. Widła, Warszawa 1986, p. 60 (the presence of Yahweh in the tent and in the ark), p. 103 (the presence of God in the Holiest Place of the temple, spatial and substantial

In the praxis of the Christian life and in the history of salvation rooted in the Church, what happened to the icons heralded the subsequent fate of a believer, from glory (*doxa, doula*) to the final testimony of martyrdom (*iconoclasm, martyria*).

1.1. ...in the context of the nature of beauty

Thanks to the contemporary method known as *via pulchritudinis*, which is still being developed in the theological methodology, the systematic theology has enriched its sources with the achievements of the Christian iconography. Due to their scientific descriptions, in accordance with the principles of semiotic, aesthetic and cultural studies analysis, the achievements of the theory of the sign and symbol, of cognitive psychology, of the socio-cultural conditioning behind the iconographic creativity throughout history, are found in the sphere of dogmatic interests.

Discovering the beauty of God is a derivative of the specifics of the trinitological tractate. At some point, it shifts from the contemplation of the beauty of the single nature of God to the beauty of individuals – the hypostases of the Father (the beauty in the field of Patrology¹⁵), the beauty of the Son (the beauty within *christologia visualis*) and the beauty of the Holy Spirit (*pneumatologia visualis*). The beauty of the Son in the Holy Trinity is revealed through the perfect obedience to the Father and through the bond of love with the Father in the Holy Spirit. The semantics of the moral excellence is used to describe the ontological dimension of this beauty, although, in fact, it applies to the method of updating the fundamental value of existence. The Son also represents the beauty of the eternal, creative, life-giving and luminous Word of the Father (John 1: 1–5). At another level of relationship, the Son is a manifestation of God's beauty inscribed into the mystery of God's image (2 Corinthians 4: 4; Colossians 1: 15). The beauty of the Holy Spirit grows out of the dynamism and energy of love, manifests itself in the works of inspiration, gifts and charisms and in the beauty as a consequence of "teaching the world about sin" (Paraclete of John 16: 8). There are three main forms of presence that are the object of seeing God's beauty through the eyes of the soul and by the power of the faith granted by the Holy Spirit, which allow us to see the unimaginable and inexhaustible beauty. They are, in a descending order (the kenosis of God): the sacrament

incomprehensibility, the material presence of a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of light at night, during the release of Israel from Egyptian captivity), p. 136: "By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light [...] Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people" (Exodus 13: 21–22), pp. 148–149 – the religious and etymological meanings of presence in the name of Yahweh are also included in i.a. Exodus 3: 14 (in the Septuagint, *ego eimi ho oon*, present in the initials placed in the arms of the cross in Christ's nimbus). Also the category of the *glory of the Lord* (respectively the *glory of Yahweh*, the *glory of God*) has a character of a presence: on Mount Sinai (Exodus 16: 10), in the shrine (Exodus 40, 35; Sirach 49:12), in a gathering (Leviticus 9: 23; Numbers 14: 22; 2 Chronicles 7: 3; Sirach 36: 13; Baruch 5: 9) in the temple (1 Kings 8: 11; 2 Chronicles 5: 13; 7: 2; Psalm 22: 4; Ezekiel 11: 23, 43: 5; Daniel 3: 53), on Zion (Psalm 102: 17–22) in all creation (Psalm 48: 11, 57: 6, 72: 19, 85: 10, 108: 6; Isaiah 6: 3; 59: 19). In the New Testament the present glory of the Lord is embodied in the glory of the Son of Man (e.g. Luke 9: 31–32, 21: 27, 24: 26; Mark 8: 38; John 1: 14, 8: 54, 17: 1; Acts 7: 55; Revelation 5: 12, 15: 8, 21: 23).

¹⁵ The current of the dogmatic reflection enveloped around God the Father and the Fatherhood of God can be found in John Paul II's preparatory program for the entry into the third millennium of Christianity. The year 1997 was designated for that reflection as the Year of God the Father. At that time, several important essays were created on the grounds of the Polish dogmatism.

of the Eucharist, the inspired Word of the Scriptures (*locutio Dei*) and, at the lowest, quasi-sacramental level, the icon (a window, a border facing eternity). The Eucharist is a way Christ chose for the manifestation of the presence and the materialization of the Incarnate God-Beauty. The said presence is fulfilled *vere, realiter et substantialiter*.

On the other hand, the Word is a manifestation of God's beauty *vere, realiter et intentionaliter*, because this revelation addresses the human mind and implies a complex process of reasoning, going as far as the humility of the mind in the act of faith. However, even then, perception through the word leads to an idea expressed in words and, therefore, does not reach the substantial level. The only exception is "Word made Flesh" (John 1: 14). And ultimately, the icon allows us to see, in an artistic representation of the presence, the beauty of the created world, of the Invisible God, who exists in his transcendence, or as he existed before the creation and towards which history advances, that carries in itself the hope for perceiving *vere, realiter et mystice*. There are a number of circumstances that provide a chance to perceive in the icon. The most important among them are: the context of the liturgical life of the Church (even when it comes to the notion of the domestic Church), the canonicity of the icon, the adequate spiritual formation of the iconographer and a spiritual formation, synergistic towards the former, of the person who contemplates (sees).

Among those who indicate them is Paul Evdokimov who recalls the dogmatic principles for such a notion of seeing: "God adorns Himself with splendor and dresses in beauty. A dazzled man contemplates the glory, which light in the heart of every creature triggers a song of praise"¹⁶. Thus, the icon in its essence is a wordless doxology and seeing in itself means nothing, but a wordless prayer. Whilst, in the entirety of the spiritual life, the icon that gives a chance to perceive personal transcendence and the sacred is not only a window into eternity, but also the ground for meeting with the archetype (the prototype of the icon). Thus, through seeing, it builds, on the solid foundation of a meeting, a community of the Church in time and is a visual manifestation of the truth revealed in its beauty.

The notion of seeing God – *visio Divina, visio beatifica* – achieved in the icon and through the icon – allows the believer to relate with the evangelical statement *Blessed are the eyes that see* (the Son of God, and in Him, the Father – K. K. cf. Luke 10: 23). Even more so, as in the eschatological perspective, according to the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5: 8). Furthermore, the entire Christian life is not limited only to being a witness to the acknowledged Word (the Gospel), but also to proclaiming *what we have seen* (1 John 1: 3).

1.2. ...in the context of the mystical seeing

Hitherto, we come across the problem of using in the theology of beauty the testimonials of mystical experiences, which lead to complementary forms of cognizing the beauty of God. Despite the fact that God's beauty was revealed in whole in the Old and New Testament – in the Word of Scripture and in the Word made Flesh – the history of

¹⁶ *The Art of the Icon: A Theology of Beauty*, Oakwood 1993, p. 159.

theology indicates certain doctrinal elements that were developed under the influence of private revelations, which were, subsequently, subjected to a conceptual substantiation. The elements which **anthropomorphize** the mystery of God (and, therefore, substantiate the mystery of absolute Beauty) include, i.a. the names for the divine perfection (the Heart of God – through the revelations of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque; the Mercy of God – through the revelations of St. Faustina), the elements of eschatology (the visions of purgatory – e.g. according to the descriptions of revelations in the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great; in *Dialogus miraculorum* by Caesarius of **Heisterbach**), elements of Mariology (the title *the Immaculate Conception* – through the revelations of St. Bernadette Soubiroux; the penance as a way to reverse the wrath of God, according to the revelations from Fatima, Medjugorje, Kibeho). From the point of view of the mystics, the difficulty lies in the verbalization of the cognized truth and beauty. For St. Basil, the mystical advancement into the sphere of God's light resulted in a condition which he described with the following words: "Suddenly, I awoke as out of a deep sleep. I beheld the wonderful light of the Gospel truth, and I recognized the nothingness of the wisdom of the princes of this world"¹⁷. It is relatively the easiest to reveal the effects of seeing with "the eyes of faith", for those iconographers for whom the way of the mystical cognition is indeed the basis for the ecclesial vocation. However, for those advancing along the path of existential ethics towards perfection, understood as the contact with God through contemplation, the proclamation of the experience of beauty causes certain difficulties. Thus, for example, the German mystics of the Protestant tradition pointed out to the disproportion between the object of cognition and the verbal possibilities of the religious language. For Jacob Böhme (1575-1624), for example, the basic feeling was the exclusive nature of the private revelations which he experienced: "I write for myself and impose myself on no one. [...] If there were no God-fearing people who came for this and asked for this fervently and with a truly Christian intention, I think I would not have given anything to anyone". When it comes to the subject of this cognition, it is constituted by the depth of God and, accordingly, within the image of the man – the man's depth:

The entire depth between the Earth and the stars is like the human psyche [...] Why not above, in the arts? So that no one would want to boast that he did it and for the devil's pride to be exposed and destroyed"; "You will find no books, because you could find the divine wisdom if you explored the inside; when you walk through a flowering meadow, then you can see, smell and taste God's miraculous power, even though it's just a resemblance. But for the person who searches, it is a dear teacher. He will find much everywhere"¹⁸.

The interpenetration of the images of the beauty of nature, of the man, with the beauty of God, which, according to the mystics, is the ground for all substantiation of beauty, leads to the mysticism of unification. This unification means a "novelty" of existence to

¹⁷ "Wreszcie jakbym się przebudził z głębokiego snu i skierowałem swój wzrok na przedziwne światło prawdy ewangelicznej, oplakałem moje poprzednie życie i prosiłem o pouczenie i wprowadzenie w prawdy wiary i religii". As cited in: Ignacy Loyola, *Pisma wybrane*, ed. by M. Bednarski et al., vol. 1, Kraków 1968, p. 651.

¹⁸ G. Wehr, *Jacob Böhme in Selbstzeugnissen*, Reinbek 1975, p. 83, 107.

the man, being a "man of the Eighth Day". Depending on the content of the contemplations, it may be the Trinitarian mysticism, when the whole Trinity is a reference to the divine-human dialogue, or the mysticism of Christ, when it is associated with "being with Christ", as understood by St. Paul or St. Ignatius of Loyola¹⁹. In the case of the Trinitarian mysticism, a close relationship with God, experienced as the personal fulfillment, sometimes leads to the so-called mystic of marriage. An example of such unification is the topos *Song of Songs* as well as the relation of the Church to the Ecclesia. For theology, the recognition of the components of this beauty is only possible through the analogy to the universal revelation and in connection to it. Here, a specific *novum* is created by the culturally conditioned expression, which sometimes uses art, poetry and theology of testimony as its matter. In this kind of expression, both in the content and the form, the leading role is designated to the Holy Spirit, who "writes" the private revelation, leading it to an existential "fiat".

1.3. ...in the sphere of God's light

The biblical basis for determining the object of cognition for the specifics of a person in the context of the Eighth Day is connected to i.a. the definitions of God's existence. St. John comments on this subject: "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1, 1–5). The sphere of light is, therefore, one of the hallmarks of the human existence of God and man. The icon, for which the light is a basic cognitive requirement, undertakes the visualization of God's light through the following symbols:

- the Tabor Light, in which St. John watched the dimension of the Eighth Day in the person of Jesus Christ, experiencing cognitive happiness (an aesthetic experience) expressed in the phrase "It is good (beautiful) for us to be here";
- nimba in all their iconic typology (nimba of Christ's cross, aureole of the blessed and the saints, mandorlas);
- gold threads accentuating the radiation of God's energies (created graces);
- golden (white) backgrounds and surfaces in icons as symbols of excellence, which symbolism is sometimes deepened by the so-called "kowczeg".

From a dogmatic point of view, since the time of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, the theology of light has been based on the doctrine of the absolute transcendence of God – on His "unparalleled luminosity" (gr. *ypertheos theotés* – superdivine deity). For the believer, the icon is the primary opportunity to learn, through the light, about the nature of the existence on the Eighth Day, in the likeness of God. According to Pseudo-Dionysius, theophany in the icon addresses both "seeing" (gr. *Theoris*) and "internal cognition" (gr. *Episteme*)²⁰.

¹⁹ Ignacy Loyola, op. cit. In the mystical experiences from Manresa, St. Ignatius saw three stages of cognitive contemplation: *Vidi, sensi et intellexi omnia fidei christianae mysteria* – op. cit., vol. 1, p. 642.

²⁰ R. Roques, *L'univers Dionysien*, Paris 1954, quoted after: E. Sendler, *The Icon. Image of the Invisible. Elements of Theology, Aesthetics and Technique*, trans. S. Bigham, Terrence 1999; p. 169. The earlier works on this topic, which retain their value, are i.a. A. Grabar, *La représentation de l'intelligible dans l'art. Byzantine du Moyen Age*, [in:] *Actes du VIe congrès international d'études byzantines*, Paris 1948; vol. 2, Paris 1951; pp. 127–143.

1.4. ...on the grounds of the dogmatic iconology

The Christian iconography tries to show the effects of an individually recognized beauty of God primarily through the vision of Tabor, which is the mystery of the Deity inscribed in the expression of the light “in which it is good for a man to be”. He is ready to stay and live in the space of Tabor, forsaking the need for the existential dynamism, which is the first vocation of the man. Within its structure, he is to convey to others what “he saw with his own eyes, touched with his hands” (cfr., 1 John 1, 1) in order to build a sphere of faith. In this way, the substance of mystical cognition, immaterial and transcendent in its essence, shifts into the sphere of the word and other methods of passing on the faith. Thanks to this, faith becomes at all possible and the dynamism of Revelation lasts for generations, radiating on the arts. Indeed, the art of the spirit comes from the mystery of Tabor, which is a synthesis of human contemplation of God’s beauty. In art, it is divided into a number of subjects showing the human face of God in Jesus Christ – from acheiropoietia to the contemporary performances of quasi-theological nature.

Iconology is gaining importance on the ground of theological sciences, mainly thanks to its preserved Eastern tradition. In the Christian theology, only the mystery of the icon (as opposed to the image of a sacred nature, which does not have the canonical form), defended during the iconoclastic dispute of VIII-IX century (and later, in the XVI century, in a dispute against the iconoclasm of reformation), harmoniously combines the ontic and cognitive aspects as well as the dogmatic, catechetical and mystical ones, and leads into the sphere of the presence while maintaining the realism of the symbol’s material existence. Together with a hermeneutical turn in the postmodern culture (the transition from the culture of words to the culture of images), this trend led to a renaissance of the icon’s theological meaning in the consciousness of the Christian churches of all denominations. This is reflected, i.a. in the contemporary biblical exegesis, which focuses on showing the contexts of the aesthetics and hermeneutics of the beauty, contained in different layers of the Revelation. In a similar manner, in the current of the canonical iconology, the iconological method, proper for the theological studies, uses well-defined principles for representing dogmas (true to the requirements of the authority of the Church and the sanctions of authenticity for truth and beauty of a palatable expression of a symbol of faith). Concurrently, it is proven that every biblical theophany has the value of the so-called “kalo-fania”. That is why, i.a. in the exhortation *Vita consecrata* of Pope John Paul II, in the chapter on the confession of faith in the Holy Trinity as the Christological and Trinitarian source of consecrated life, one is reminded of the scene from Mount Tabor and the Greek version of Peter’s exclamation: “it is beautiful (Kalon estin Hemas) for us to be here” (Matthew 17: 4; Mark 9: 5; Luke 9: 33), which is different from the Vulgate version and its derivatives, where it is reduced to the sense of goodness. Meanwhile, the Greek meaning behind the description of this scene (which took place shortly after Peter’s primatial confession (Matthew 16: 16; Mark 8: 29; Luke 9:20)) links the fact of cognition and the mystery of existence of God-Incarnate with the predominant process of recognizing and experiencing beauty. This corresponds to the paradigm of uniformity of absolute beauty and the mystery of God’s existence. Therefore, it is the task of theology to extract from this experience, inscribed in the Revelation of the Old

and New Testaments, all the possible connotations for the systematic theology. A special place in its structure is also currently assigned to the theological aesthetics, which is a discipline competent in i.a. the field of argumentation on the credibility of Christianity.

A cognitive experience in the tradition of St. Paul, that is parallel to Tabor, is the testimony of the historical event recalled in 2 Corinthians 12: 1–5:

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

Paul's testimony also indicates a revelation ("in the body or out of the body") of elements that delight us with its truth and beauty ("caught up to the third heaven", that is, close to God) to such extent that it cannot be expressed in words. Resulting from this vision are aesthetic values that are transformed into personally experienced and remembered categories, captured as concepts, even though this conceptual language is too poor to fully capture the perceived beauty. The only thing remaining from Paul's testimony are the experiences (sensations) intended for, and addressed to, the human consciousness – the testimonies which, when revealed in life, may then be discovered through contemplation, spiritual cognition or through cognition by prayer, preferably liturgical.

In the recognized theophany of Peter and Paul, there is a joint element constituted by the paradoxical existence of the element of suffering and death in beauty (divine and human). At Tabor, at the apogee of the discovery of the perfection of God's existence enclosed in the category of *kalon* (*ο πετρος προς τον ιησουν [ραββι] επιστατα καλον εστιν ημας* – Luke 9: 33 (also: Matthew 17: 4; Mark 9: 5), there is also the announcement of suffering and death. St. Paul, in his experience of "the third heaven" is given "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me" (2 Corinthians 12: 7). We can find similar elements of beauty and ugliness, order and chaos, humility of exaltation, paradoxically linked together, in the biblical Christology and Trinitology. It casts a certain light on the way of understanding beauty outside of God, which will always be tainted by his absence. This fact allows a diversification and graduation in the substantiation of beauty. The claim is legitimized i.a. by the analogy to the category of holiness, which is also fully achieved only in God ("God alone is holy"), and only analogically in creatures.

1.5. ...in the context of the arts

Apart from the visual context behind the recognition of the beauty of God, the theological esthetics is also turning to audio-materials and regards music as a parallel domain for making God's beauty present and recognizing that beauty. The esthetic value of music results from its unique nature among the sensual and intellectual qualities. It results in profound experiences and, through associations with other art forms (words, images, architecture), it plays a fundamental role in expressing the spiritual life of the man. In addition, music is a sort of a symbolic language. It introduces the analogy of feelings

(between the composer, the performer and the listener) through the use of a tonal cortege. Meanwhile, it engages the whole personality (up to dancing). Rudolf Otto, in his theory of the sacred, talks about the connection between music and art, and the existential experience of holiness. In his opinion, the religious mystery behind the existence of what can be described as *remendum and fascinosum*²¹ results from this experience. Those categories are shifted from the level of reflection upon the idea of divinity to the description of the man's existence, marked by the tension between anxiety and awe.

The development of methods for the philosophical and theological cognition of beauty became possible thanks to the contribution that St. Augustine and Boethius made to the theory of music. St. Augustine, convinced about the internal order of the world, introduced, in his textbook *De musica*, the concept of harmony of the material and spiritual world. As a result, he accepted the existence of the music of the world (*musica mundana*), the music in the man (*musica humana*) and the works of human beings (*musica instrumentalis*). According to him, each of its manifestations is a way of getting closer to God. In practice, *praedicatio sonora* means an active participation in singing and music. On the other hand, for Boethius, human music is just a distant echo of the music of the spheres, the heavens. The sensual pleasure of listening enters the sphere of the spirit and leads to the union with beauty. Since this is done most fully in the liturgy, hence, the presence of various forms of music (singing, instrumental music and dancing – for example in the Mozarabic liturgy) is a subject of detailed research for the theological esthetics.

The Pauline current in the Christian liturgy of the first centuries used the encouragement of the Apostle of the nation to glorify God through psalms and hymns. Its essence was the ritual compliance with *praxis Ecclesiae*: “When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up” (1 Corinthians 14, 26); “[B]e filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5: 18–19); “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts” (Colossians 3:16). Also the individual prayer can take the form of spiritual singing: “I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding” (1 Corinthians 14: 15).

In the Johannine current, especially in his apocalyptic vision of the liturgy of heaven, that was to be represented in the liturgy of the Church on Earth, the human voice, applied to model the music of heaven, is taken into account: “[T]he twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll” (Revelation 5: 8–9). St. John notices the moral preparation for the worship of God through singing, saying:

²¹ R. Otto, *Das Heilige – über das irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen*, Breslau 1917. This typology affected Paul Tilich and Mircea Eliade in their works devoted to the understanding of the transcendence and the human God.

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14: 2–4).

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty!" (Revelation 15: 3).

St. John repeatedly recalls the use of instruments by the participants of the liturgy of heaven. These are the aforementioned harps (Revelation 14: 3), but also trumpets: "So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound" (Revelation 8: 6). Basically, this instrument is associated with the eschatological context (cf. Matthew 24: 31; 1 Corinthians 15, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4: 16; Hebrews 12 19).

For the synoptics, the worship of the Son of God Incarnate takes place through a choral singing of angels (Luke 2: 13); Christ worships the Father through ritual hymns (Matthew 26: 30; Mark 14: 26) and the same is done by the apostles: "[A]t midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God" (Acts 16: 25). The apostles, in their kerygmatic teachings, paid attention to the possibility of using singing in the acts of worshiping God: "Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms" (James 5: 13). However, it is presumed that the way of performing hymns resembled a kind of a recitation, rather than singing. The ecclesiastic hymns were created under the influence of the musical culture of the Christian communities in Syria and Palestine.

The fact that music was allowed into the Christian liturgy was at a later time the subject of patristic polemics. Tatian (the end of the II century) opposed its introduction, because it was then associated with the pagan culture and also dubious from the moral point of view, as it served the body. Also John Chrysostom condemned instrumental music as too sensual and, therefore, not suitable for the liturgy. However, thanks to the Hellenic culture, it was incorporated into the liturgical practice of the Church. Under the influence of Platonism, music began to be treated as a spiritual activity. In the West, the use of the organs was allowed since the VII century. What is more, two musical traditions of the Church developed, the Eastern and the Western, serving as tools for the historical representation of God's beauty in the world through the liturgy of the sacraments and especially the Liturgy of the Hours.

In the Western Christian tradition, after the secularization of culture in the era of the Renaissance (XIV century) and the Enlightenment (VIII century),

the history of music is going in two directions – the sacred music (i.a. masses, oratorios, ludi, cantatas, hymns, songs and musical instrumental compositions) and the secular music. However, the boundaries between them are blurred – the sacred music is performed independently from the liturgy and elements of the secular music are often incorporated into the liturgy. This speaks in favor of the universality of the language of music, for which the effectiveness of the contact with beauty becomes a more or less conscious way of exploring the transcendental beauty – God.

In the modern theology, music is treated as a kind of symbolism for recognizing and experiencing the content. Hugo Rahner believes that music is fraught with mystery, because God, who reveals Himself in the word, is enclosed in its musical sound. He also creates through the word, which makes the music of the heavenly spheres possible. The human response to this word comes from the faith which, in turn, comes from hearing (Romans 10: 14–16).

Both the visual arts as well as the audial (apart from music, also the rhetoric, the theater) are ways of cognition, and its subject is beauty. In the Middle Ages the scholars from the school of St. Victor (for example Hugh of St. Victor) permitted the cognition of God's invisible beauty as a specific form of extrapolation of visible beauty recognized by reason.

The sensory cognition, when considered complementarily (while maintaining the objects of cognition specific to each sense), is the basis for knowing the beauty of nature, for which spiritual beauty becomes the supplement and the transcendental analogate. This truth was strongly emphasized also in *Summa Fratris Alexandri*, from the first half of the XIII century, where it was stated that “the beauty of creation is a certain trace that one follows to cognize beauty that was not created”. On the grounds of the Renaissance literature, the divinization of beauty remained the basic paradigm for its objective existence.

Apart from this, the theological iconology uses extra-rational ways of cognition:

- seeing the Son of God in Jesus Christ (John 6: 40, 12: 45, 14: 8–10; 1 Corinthians 13:12);
- remaining in the rays of God's light, filling human souls and the world (John 3: 21; Ephesians 5: 9–13; 1 John 1–5);
- discovering God with the heart, which is the strength and the meeting space; the eyes of understanding (Ephesians 1: 18), understand with the heart (Acts 28: 27; Romans 1: 21; 2 Corinthians 3: 2–3; Luke 9: 47);
- cognition through the Spirit in the heart (2 Corinthians 1: 22; Acts 4: 32);
- the intellectual meaning of “the eyes” (Luke 19: 42, 24: 16–31; 1 John 1: 1, 2: 11);
- through “love which passes knowledge” (Ephesians 3: 19; 1 John 4: 8);

The theory behind such ways of cognition in the field of the spiritual theology was developed by practitioners and theoreticians of the Christian contemplation. According to them, contemplation as a way of recognizing God's beauty has also a cognitive value. The man, upon reaching the state of mystical cognition (often described in terms of spiritual insight), receives, beside the spiritual elevation, also a type of cognition that is difficult to describe in words and statements.

Among the most important contemporary aesthetic claims from the field of the mystical experience in the sphere of God's beauty are two issues raised by for example by Dostoyevsky. The visions of a world without God, the world subjected to sin, are devoid of beauty. This is the case in *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. The second issue, touched upon in *The Idiot*, refers to the soteriological nature of beauty and has the form of, already classical, adagium, proclaiming that "beauty would save the world". It becomes the instrument of salvation, unless it loses its ontological connection to Truth and Goodness (Christ), which happened frequently in the history of art. The autonomy of beauty, with regard to other values (truth and goodness), takes away its soterical value and makes it a seductive, almost sodomic temptation, which leads the man to (self-)destruction. Meanwhile, beauty merged with truth and goodness exists as God personified, as the Ultimate Beauty, the announcement and anticipation of which are the signs of physical, material and historically determined beauty. In this case, the theology of the icon speaks about the beauty of the Eighth Day, that is, a post-resurrectional reality. Thus, it makes beauty one of God's names, each of which – according to the biblical theology of the name – expresses His essence. From Dostoyevsky's viewpoint, God as beauty is the goal of human aspirations, but also the source of salvific dynamism. Specific iconic works highlight the chosen elements of the anthropology of the Eighth Day – from the icon of Transfiguration to the theme of Parousia in the icon of the Last Judgment.

2. The typology of the canonical iconographic references to the category of the Eighth Day

In the Christian iconography, the revelation of the truth about the man of the Eighth Day, who participates in the community of existence with his Creator, goes in two main directions: the Christological and the Mariological. Both are associated with the presentation of an ideal human being, free from sin and its effects on the human existence. In this sense, the hagiographic icons are only a documentation of selected virtues and perfections, but they do not represent the entirety of the human nature before the drama of sin. From the Christological point of view, every icon contains, within itself, the synthesis of carnality and divine glory which, joined together by the union of natures, constitute a manner of existence unobtainable for a man. "He alone is holy" and in this holiness visibly separated – as *numinosum et fascinosum* – from the angels, the men and the material world²². On the other hand, in the current of the Mariological icons, the the-

²² The contemporary study of the biblical category "QDŠ" was presented by i.a. S. Szymik, *Trishagion. Bóg po trzykroć święty*, „Ethos” 27 (2014) no. 1 (105), pp. 21–34.

me of the man of the Eighth Day is contained in Her being specifically chosen, the carrier of the Holy Spirit (*Pneumatophora*) and thus, more spacious than the heavens (*Platytera ton Ouranon*) and All-Holy (*Panahagia*). The predominant motive behind the economy of salvation is her Divine Motherhood, which found its best psychological reflection in the icon of Eleusa. This relation to the Son of God, the Father and the Paraclete, resulted in her being born for the heaven at the moment of her falling asleep in death. These representations of the anthropological dogma represented in Christ and the Mother of God result in the prospect of eternity for every man, beyond the barrier of the Parousia and the Last Judgment associated with it.

2.1. The Light of Tabor

The icon of the *Transfiguration Of Jesus* (Fig. 3), one of the oldest in the tradition of the Christian iconography, is associated with the theology of dodekaorton²³ (celebrated from the IV century) and, therefore, is an important element of the iconostasis. The reason that justifies the celebration of this evangelical scene (Matthew 17: 1–13; Mark 2: 1–12; Luke 9: 28–36) is the Trinitarian theophany (in addition to the Baptism in the Jordan and the Pentecost). The oldest preserved icons of the Transfiguration come from the VI century, from the Byzantine culture. However, it can be assumed that it was a theme present in the iconography of the other Eastern Churches. The essence of the icon is the light, the glow of a person in glory. Looking at this light gives the man a sense of happiness. “It is good for us to be here” – confesses St. Peter, a character from the circle of history, presented through the figures of the three chosen Apostles. Long after the Ascension, Peter and John would be bearing witness to this existential experience. It was so important for the understanding of the divine, heavenly perspective of the human being. Peter and John believed it was their duty to bear witness to this experience: “for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4: 20). What is more, several years later, at the end of the I century, Christ’s beloved disciple, John, when giving his testimony to the Christians who descended from Judaism but spoke Greek and, therefore, were vulnerable to Gnostic influence, wrote: “That [...] which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands [we] proclaim to you” (1 John 1: 1–2).

The subject of the testimony of Tabor is the radiance of the light of sanctity on the history of the Old Covenant (the testimonies of Moses and Elijah) and the New Covenant (the testimony of the Apostles). The venue of the event, the mountain, is symbolic – it requires that we strive upwards, from where it is closer to heaven, and where the splendor of holiness becomes more visible. The idea of living together in the tabernacle for

²³ The onomastics of Byzantine festivals has a number of references to the philosophical-religious context: 1. The Nativity of Mary (*Gennesis*); 2. The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Eisodia tes Hyperhagias Theotokou*); 3. The Annunciation (*Khairetimos*); 4. Christmas (*Gennesis tou Kyriou*); 5. The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple (*Ypapante*); 6. The Baptism in the Jordan (*Epifania*); 7. The Transfiguration (*Metamorphosis*); 8. Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (*Baioforos*); 9. The descent of Christ into hell (*Anastasis*); 10. The Ascension (*Analepsis*); 11. The Pentecost (*Pentecoste*); 12. The Dormition of the Mother of God (*Koimesis*). The Greek concepts have references to the ideological issues vividly discussed in the context of the polemics with Gnosis and Mithraism of the I–II century.

an undetermined period of time becomes the culmination of the event: "let us make here three tabernacles". It is an allegory of the eschatological community, specific for the man of the Eighth Day.

No wonder, then, that seeing this from the perspective of Cristian iconographers gives birth to a new witness, who through colors and shapes tells the truth about God, the man and the world. And it was not just the artistic craftsmanship in writing the iconic whiteness of holiness which decided about the spiritual maturity of a future iconographer. It was determined primarily by kardiognosis, which is seeing the light not of this world, that revealed the truth about the mystery of the Eighth Day man.

2.2. The Harrowing of Hell

It is the visualization of the most important dogma of Christianity: "And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Corinthians 15, 17–19) – St. Paul declared the anthropological foundations of theology at the dawn of the Church. The icon of the *Harrowing of Hell* shows the dynamism of life beyond the barrier of death, beyond the time intended for the earthly life. The Eighth Day is the day of the Resurrection with the living Christ, even if it is fulfilled in the sphere of the Sheol, where the dead wait to be acknowledged as the sons of God: "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8: 29). Therefore, upon looking at the image of the Risen Christ leading Adam and Eve out of the darkness of death, through them and through Him, each of us can be deemed worthy of the participation in the Eighth Day. It is the sphere of the vivacity of grace and life that never ends; it shines with the glow of sanctity of the Risen Christ's white robe, although he still bears the marks of wounds on his hands and feet. And he lasts, marked by the vivifying cross.

The Icon of the *Harrowing of Hell* speaks with the authority of the figures presented from a vast time perspective. It reaches back to the original image of the man in Adam and Eve, who were *created, not begotten*, but who were guilty of losing their resemblance to God. That is why the testimonies of John the Baptist and of David convince us of the real influence of the Risen Lord on the renewal of the prerogatives of the Eighth Day in the man. It is only necessary to believe in the binding of hell and the devil under the feet of the Victorious God in a halo with a divine inscription and a cross in his hand as an efficient tool for the victory over evil.

2.3. Panaghia / Pneumatophora

The gift of the Holy Spirit received by Mary at the Annunciation marks a specific disposition of the man freed from sin and its consequences. It is because the gift of the Paraclete is a peak of dynamic relations between the Father and the Son. According to a contemporary German theologian, Gisbert Greshake, the act of the Incarnation should be seen as one of the stages in the manifestation of the truth about God, who is love (1 John 4: 8–16). For Greshake, the Father is the original gift (*Ur-Gabe*) and as such,

it never exist in isolation from the Son and the Spirit. The Son, in turn, is the existence understood as the acceptance of an eternal gift of Fatherly love (*Da-sein als Empfang*). Through the acceptance, it becomes the Image of the gift and the Word which expresses this gift. As such, in the relations of love to the Father, it gives existence to pure acceptance (*reines Empfangen*) or, more simply, to pure, mutual love between the Father and the Son, which attracted the attention of St. Augustine²⁴. This Spirit, sent into the womb of the Blessed Virgin, in Her makes present the human nature of the Word – her Son, Immanuel, Jesus Christ. The maternal conception envisioned in the icon of the Theotokos (Panaghia) brings us closer to the understanding of the nature of the Eighth Day man, filled with the Holy Spirit, which makes him another Christ (Latin – Alter Christus) and, by making him present, expands the sphere of the Kingdom of Heaven, the sphere of the sacred among the profane.

The hermeneia of the icon of the Theotokos, among the richness of the symbols used, indicates an ecclesiological dimension. Christ in the womb of the Immaculate and All Holy Mary is the prototype of the Church. In turn, the figure of Immanuel imagined in the open womb of Mary, opens up an interpretation of her title of *the woman of the Eucharist*, which is now being explored²⁵. Filled with God, she is at the same time “full of grace”. In the case of the believers, it takes place during the Holy Communion²⁶, which gives a foretaste of being able to everlastingly experience the bond with Christ in the mystery of the Eighth Day.

2.4. The Eleusa

The visualization of the mutual loving proximity between God and the man lies at the basis of the idea of the icon of Tenderness. Numerous modifications of the icon were created through history. For the eastern Slavs, the icon with the classical form is the icon known under the subsequent names of her places of residence – Vyshhorod, Vladimir and now, Moscow. Compassionate towards the fates of those praying before her image, she is, paradoxically, the Mother of God, full of dignity, but also Mary Help of Christians, a loving Mother for the Divine Son and a representative of the humanity, the Mother in whom He embraces, with the hands of a child, each and every beloved man, in whom He is incarnated, for whom he died and has risen²⁷. The man of the Eighth Day is a person enveloped by the love of Christ, by a heartfelt embrace, which will never loosen.

²⁴ G. Greshake, *Trójjedyny Bóg. Teologia trynitarna*, trans. J. Tyrawa, Wrocław 2009. On the application of this Trinitology to the Mariology see: J. Bolewski, *Misterium Mądrości. Traktat sofo-mariologiczny*, Kraków 2012, pp. 299–304.

²⁵ See: John Paul II: “She has become the first tabernacle in history, in which the Son of God (still invisible to the human eye) can be adored by Elizabeth” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 55).

²⁶ Idem: “The Sacramental bread which we receive, is the immaculate Body of her Son: *Ave verum Corpus, natum de Maria Virgine*” (*Mane nobiscum, Domine*, 31).

²⁷ In the Greek symbol of creed this truth was captured through long-discussed terms: “Pisteuoo [...] eis ena Kyriou Iesoun Christon [...] Ton di; hemas tous antropous kai dia ten emeteran sooterian katelthonta ek toon ouranoon kai [...] enanthropesanta – We believe [...] in one Lord Jesus Christ [...] who for us, and for our salvation [...] was made man”. *To Σύμβολο της Πίστεως (ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ) και η ερμηνεία του*, <www.imilias.gr/to-simbolo-tis-pisteos-kai-i-ermineia-tou.html>, [12.07.2014].

2.5 The Dormition of the Mother of God

The icon of the Dormition shows the fate of the man viewed through the prism of abandoning the visible world. For Mary, this process was the process of "falling asleep". For all other people, the moment of death is a chance to achieve the happiness of the Eighth Day. However, it requires that we choose "the fundamental option", that, in the last breath of life, we choose God, believing that the outstretched hands of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are waiting on the other side to greet us. And all this in the perspective of the eschatological eternity. The childlike, luminous soul of Mary, held high – as a symbol of hope – by Christ, in front of the surrounding angels and saints, convinces us about that. For such is the true homeland of the believers. They know what future they head towards, because "The sadness of death gives way to the bright promise of immortality. Lord, for Your faithful people life is changed, not ended"²⁸. In the tradition of the Western religious architecture, this truth is beautifully expressed by the Byzantine-Ruthenian fresco of the Dormition from the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Sandomierz, which dates back to the XV century. In the foreground, Christ is presented in a large mandorla against the vast expanse of heaven, surrounded by the choirs of angels and the saints of the Old and the New Covenant. But the axis and the focal point of the event is the white point – the soul of Mary. Over the man of the Eighth Day, who is being born for the heavens, stands the Divine liturgy and the Kingdom of the Saints leans with happiness.

2.6. In You All Creatures Rejoice

The enrichment of the man with the gifts related to the Eighth Day affects all creation. The sanctification of the world through the sanctity of the man and his introduction into the sphere of community with the Triune God is the fulfillment of God's creative and salvific promises:

For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8: 19–21).

That is why, in the icon *In You All Creatures Rejoice*, the four elements, the plants and animals, the classes of the human society, as well as the universe, the choirs of angels, and the world of nature and culture, all concentrate around the Mother of God sitting on a throne. She, the authentic man of the Eighth Day, is a worthy throne for her Son, towards whom all those circles of existence direct their happiness and admiration. This icon is a hymn that brings harmony to the song of glory for God, which Mary leads through her unique dignity. Now, even before Parousia opens the gates to the New Heaven and New Earth:

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, [...] [and] the holy city, New Jerusalem [...] And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God' (see: Revelation 21: 1–3).

²⁸ The Preface of Christian Death.

The hermeneia of this icon inspired the creation of subsidiary icons, i.a. those which tried to explain to the believers the mystery of heaven (see. Fig. 7) by showing the beauty of the real world and the one awaited in the future.

2.7. The Last Judgment

Both in theology and in the iconographic catechesis, the icon of the Last Judgment is the pinnacle of the teachings on the fate of the Eighth Day man, and, at the same time, a synthesis of the previous icons that belong to this theme. Christ remains the axis of the icon, as the Prototype of the man and the Eschaton. Everything is subjected to Him and He decides, through fair judgment, about the fate of good and evil. In the reality after Parousia, there is a place for a rose garden for the redeemed and for the eternally destructive sphere of hell. There is also a purifying path of the aerial toll houses and a red path of love, winding from the throne of the Judge. At the throne of Christ, this love is His glory, but the same love, if wasted, devours the damned in hell, as they have lost it forever. This icon presents, at the same time, the fate of the Eighth Day man and the fate of his anthropological antithesis – the man not fulfilled in his destiny of love. As of love we will be judged. Love is the criterion of the Judgment because God is love and he created the world and the man to love. Even though St. Paul's *Hymn to Love* borrows, in its verbal layer, from the literature of the ancient Greece and Rome²⁹, only on the basis of the Christian theology has it obtained its ultimate reason and existential imperative. A man without love is not human and presents a contradiction to the man of the Eighth Day. In the *Hermeneia* by Dionysius of Fournā, the description of this icon is emphasized by an important passage from the Book of Daniel: "And on both sides of this judgment are the prophets with scrolls, on which it is written "Daniel – I watched [...] and the Ancient of Days was seated" (Daniel 7: 9)³⁰.

Instead of a conclusion

As a result of her doctoral research on the iconological aspects of *sensus fidelium*, which was carried out in the Institut of Dogmatic Theology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, dr Justyna Sprutta mentioned the possibility of further studies on the meaning of the Eight Day for the dogmatic anthropology and esthetics long before the publication of the Polish translation of Hans Urs von Balthasar's monograph on beauty. In 2003 she wrote:

Since Jesus Christ gave the man his 'beautiful face' back through the Mystery of the Incarnation and the Passover, the man expects a fulfillment of the beauty, in which he participates, in the era of the Eighth Day. In his salvific work, Jesus Christ directs reality towards the eschatological (*Theo kalos*) transformation into the eternal beauty. The history of salvation [...] is, therefore, also the history of evolution from Beauty towards Beauty³¹.

²⁹ See: i.a. K. Romaniuk, *Największa jest miłość*, Częstochowa 1995.

³⁰ Dionysius of Fournā, *Hermeneia czyli objaśnienie sztuki malarzkiej*, trans. and ed. by I. Kania, ed. by M. Smorąg Różycka, Kraków 2003, pp. 175-176.

³¹ J. Sprutta, *Ikonologiczne aspekty 'sensus fidelium'*, Lublin 2003, p. 158 (printed version).

Apart from the truth of cognition and the goodness experienced in community, inscribed in the substance of the future heaven that awaits the believers is also the eternal contemplation of beauty. Not only measured to suit the greatness and dignity of the man, but also the Christian humanism and personalism shaped by God's grace, the liturgy and the daily choices of the values that belong to the sphere of the Eighth Day.

STRESZCZENIE

Karol Klauza

Antropologia ikoniczna „Ósmego Dnia”

Słowa kluczowe: antropologia dogmatyczna, teologia ascetyczna, ikonologia chrześcijańska

Antropologia dogmatyczna zachodniej teologii chrześcijańskiej po podjęciu dialogu ze światem współczesnym powróciła do źródeł patrystycznych pierwszego tysiąclecia. Jednym z ciekawszych wątków stał się biblijny topos „Człowieka Dnia Ósmego”. W symbolizmie grecko-lacińskim bogate znaczenie ósemki w numerologii biblijnej Starego i Nowego Testamentu wskazuje na „nowość” stworzenia dokonującą się przez łaskę Bożą. Człowiek Dnia Ósmego to święty doświadczający zmartwychwstania na wzór Chrystusa. Sama więc kategoria ósmego dnia ma charakter soteriologiczny i eschatologiczny. Jako taka znana była Ojcom greckim w odniesieniu do Chrystusa i Bożej Rodzicielki (Całej Świętej oraz Pneumatophory – Nosicielki Ducha Świętego). Chrystotypiczność rozumienia kategorii „Człowieka Dnia Ósmego” czyni z wierzącego osobowy, konkretny podmiot godny zamieszkania na wieki we wspólnocie Ojca, Syna i Ducha Świętego.

Translated by Natalia Misztal