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**Theodicy in political theology after Auschwitz, a doctoral dissertation  
THESES**

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## **I. Definition of the scientific problem**

The purpose of our dissertation is to review the practical and systematic efforts of the post-Auschwitz theological examination regarding the involving of theodicy (as the theological expression of alterity and subversivity) in the centre of theological examination, especially in its political correlations. This effort has been inspired mostly by the work of the German theologian Johann Baptist Metz, who examines the pursuing of an ‘after Auschwitz’ theology mainly in the political correlations of the problem of theodicy, while expressing a criticism of modernity.

In raising a theological-philosophical problem, Metz reviews the practical and theoretical consequences and an anamnestic-mnemonic methodical approach to the apprehension of ‘*interceptive [or crisis] hermeneutics*’. This approach – *par excellence* – refers to the reflexive attitude of religious naïveté, and to the recalling and reinforcing of the scope of anamnestic mind, while emancipating the (subversive) language and zeitgeist of the biblical, post-biblical or Jewish-Christian apocalyptic and eschatological narratives in the theological discussion.

The debate initiated by Metz about the problem of the theodicy of the ‘post-Auschwitz’ new political theology devotes meticulous attention to the Messianologic (Christologic) symptoms of the ‘empty space’ emphasised by Jacques Derrida and Ágnes Heller, i.e. to the theological (and philosophical) relations of a definitive inclination acting on the level of ‘conditioning’. These relations emerge when confining or privatising (selling out) the biblical and the matching theological-philosophical notions. This ‘conditioning’ repeatedly recall the identification effort prevailing in the heritage of modernity, and when exploring the religious (notions) and (religious) phenomena, primary role is attached to the objectifying-rationalising cognitive recognition act. Realising and appreciating recognition, i.e. the significance of the mind, Metz finally recalls the ‘subversive view’ of the biblical-apocalyptic tradition, which manifests the historical-apocalyptic horizon of the theodicy issue. Thereby, Metz relativizes the primacy of scientific objectifying recognition in the reflexive attitude of the cognitive process, and then by exposing the (new political) theology as a theodicy, it reinforces the reflexion nature of the ‘naïve range of the religion’ in the recognition process of the memory of suffering (*memoria passionis*). Hence, on the one hand, it supports the biblical (memorative-subversive) historical view of Judaism and Jewish-Christianity, which view always recalls the inseparable and (Auschwitz) insurmountable nature of the sufferings (passion) from God *and* the subject. On the other hand, the subject

appears ‘on the horizon [not inseparable from history] of danger’ in Metz’s new political theology approach, which latter gathers information through the eyes of apocalyptic subversion attributed to the biblical narrative.

By exploring Metz’s new political theology concept according to the discussion above, we touch upon the work of several other authors or also upon the intellectual trends behind them, which contemplate the concepts – other than those of Metz – of political theology (e.g. Thomas Hobbes, Walt Whitman, Carl Schmitt), the correlation of modernity and religion as a mythical phraseology (e.g. Nietzsche, Moses Mendelssohn, Taubes, Horkheimer, Adorno, Levinas, Marquard, Nirenberg), the solution attempts of and the responses to the historical problem (Quest) (e.g. Albert Schweitzer, Rudolf Bultmann, Ernst Käsemann, Wolfhart Pannenberg), and historical theology premises which seem to be radical in some cases (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Helmut Gollwitzer, Friedrich–Wilhelm Marquardt, Dorothee Sölle, Rosemary Radford Ruether, etc.) and systematizing in other cases (e.g. Jürgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg).

Metz’s (apocalyptic) history and alterity view (which among others takes into consideration the work of Jacques Derrida, Ágnes Heller, Levinas, Odo Marquard, etc.) avoids irreality by pushing *memory* and its subjectivity prevalent in the subject of history (e.g. in the relation of Job) into the fore. In this case, by exploring the essence of theological phraseology, the memorative practical mind projects the universality of history, and therefore the interceptive-apocalyptic (subversive) world of historical time to the active horizon of memory. Metz points out that God (or M/messiah) rapidly approaching ‘at this sideward of time’ or ‘at the boundary of time’ “does not even let the past rest” (Metz). When the new political theology looks at the universality of history through these eyes, it is also demonstrated that the presence of *memoria passionis* (the memory of “suffering >because of< God”) acting forcefully in the subject recalls also as a historical memory the new political theology (monotheizing) categories of interception, contingency and deliverance.

At this point let us recall Levinas’s eschatological ethical(-anthropologic) views. Although Metz rarely quotes him in his works, it is our firm belief that in spite of this, he does in his very own way take these views into consideration.

Levinas agrees that Christianity has been and is taking into consideration contingency, which is manifest simultaneously in the visible (natural or profane) and in the invisible (metaphysical) world in a way that the mind or the faith is unable to rule or systemise the processes/phenomena taking place by (the contingency) and in it (metaphysical or natural effects). But, Levinas points out that while Christianity has increasingly faced this reality (as

Metz calls it: the shock) of contingency, in the meantime it has either overestimated or relativized it, when it realized the scope of human initiative against it. While Christianity again and again found the *raison d'être* of its original tradition, it has also urged the ultimate fixation of the historical profane or metaphysical processes, which development finally weakened its faith in the validity of human acts, on all levels of interrelations and initiatives in view of the historical processes. This weakness of seeing the Christian essence was manifest in that the possibility of being of human action was subordinated to the weight of reality, while this latter naturally resisted any human or metaphysical initiative which questioned natural reality. And, also in that seeing the tremendous force of world events, Christian faith ultimately underestimated and laid this aside, and returned to hope, in which God's intervention was the only factor to make influence on the processes taking place in the world.

As Levinas sees it (and in our view this is shared by Metz), paganism which ultimately became a Church, insisted on the heritage of Judaism, to guarantee access to the holy scripts, and at the same time it urged the religious emancipation of humanity by such an institutionalized wording, in which the letters confessed unrooting, the replacement of the ground by text or desolation. We believe that Levinas and Metz share other views, too, namely that both point out the eluviation with letters/spirit of the heritage of Judaism, i.e. the original soil of Christianity, which entailed a kind of unhappiness that infiltrated the zeitgeist of Christianity. True, this unhappiness was not generated in itself by the general uncontrollability of the processes acting in the world (the shock due to the simultaneity of contingency and alterity experience). This was much rather a homelessness, i.e. lacking the soil of Judaism, which came out from among the new entwined (pagan) roots, which latter then did not have any soil to find an answer to the contingency interlacing the world experiment, and to the alterity which permanently turns against the system of dogmas built up in the meantime. The thinning of the soil of Judaism entailed the decreasing of the value attributed to alterity as recognised by Judaism and/or Jewish-Christianity; eliminating the coexistence of danger and memory, and the subversive religious theology experience of the correlation of grace and contingency on the experimental plane of the Christian spirit.

On the joint level of the approaches of Metz and Levinas, the paradox experience of the euphoric salvation of the Christian spirit had a relativizing effect on the expression of yearning for the real manifesting of dialectics. This relativizing textualized and spiritized the correlations of inclusion and recognition, the tradition of biblical (and post-biblical) monotheism: the shock-like (Metz) togetherness of alterity and contingency, or the barbarism

(Levinas) always acting and surviving in the subject, which is founded where the space is not exposed in its very own depletion (Heller, Derrida).

In our view, Metz does not imagine theology as a linearly built structure, but rather as a text, the components of which come together or are used up in the *process of a dialectic dialogue*. This process does not get around the issue of whether the participants of the dialogue during the discussion have a cultural-lingual identity which is a subsequent (occasional) or a primary (dominating) factor, but reveals the primary (simultaneous) validity of the participants' cultural and religious-lingual identities. This makes us believe that it is far from this dialogue to create such a universal language, which will be a general carrier of the various paradigmatic initiatives. On the contrary, the credibility of paradigms is critically emphasized in the "scene interwoven with shouts" (Nelly Sachs) in the current discussion.

Because Metz's dialectic view is not in line with the discussion-consensus (formalism) of enlightenment, and therefore finally the (among other factors, negativizing) dialectic view of the new political theology after Auschwitz is mainly set against the teleological dialectics of 'political Darwinism'.

However, the dialectics prevalent in Metz's political theology do not have an impact with the purpose of resistance, but take into consideration the current social, political, historical-memorative circumstances in a way that they furnish evidence with a 'critical-liberation excess'. This dialectic approach on the one hand carries in its foundation the (Judaizing) heritage of the Jewish-Christian spirit, and on the other it relies on the excess of anamnetic practical mind; as a result it is not static, but it 'moves'. The dynamism of this movement is determined by the memory of suffering (*memoria passionis*), which in the case of Metz primarily means the suffering of the Other, the stranger.

## **II. Hypotheses of the essay**

We assume on the basis of defining the problem that Levinas's way of thinking latently made an impact on Metz's points of view, which we believe can be shown in the way Metz presents the problem.

We assume that 1) in the case of Metz, the consecutive analysing text parts are given as fragments, which are seemingly associated loosely and not directly. We assume that therefore the way Metz writes does not represent a linearly developing body of text, but it projects a dynamic arch, the moving image of a wording which ties the texts to each other like a cluster. The text parts so generated reveal a leeway stemming from their own internal dynamism.

Further, it is also our view that 2) the text cluster proper also has its own dynamism, which is manifest in a complex way in the case of Metz (and also in our essay following Metz). The writings representing parts of the text cluster are attached to each other by a sensitive strand, which is hidden or only becomes visible in details. We assume that the strand joining Metz's writings does not shine continuously either, but glitters from time to time from its hiding place (hermeneutically) distanced from the viewer. The so attached text parts move dynamically, and may rotate in relation to one another. The strand, which connects these fragments would not freeze the overall picture of the final body of the text, but much rather reveal the multi-direction movement stemming from the nature of wording. Therefore, the sequential text parts are in friction from time to time, but this happens in each case without their movement coming to a final rest after a time. Our hypothesis is that on the hidden strand running across Metz's writing, the intellectual heritage of Emmanuel Levinas glitters from time to time. This especially applies to places where in their case the following topics crop up: ethics, the thinking spirit, dialogue, dialectics, naivety, alterity, subversivity, the convergence of theology and (historical) philosophy or their dispersion (eschatology, apocalypics).

### **III. The aims of the research**

Our objective is on the one hand to prove that

- the theodicy related conclusions of Metz's political theology adopt in their own right the political ethical relations of Levinas's philosophical eschatology,

and on the other to demonstrate

- how the political theological importance so far confined by the biblical, post-biblical and Judaic intellectuality and that of the Jewish-Christian monotheism are looked upon and discussed, with special regard to the problem of alterity and subversivity in correlation with modernity.

Further, our goal is

- to follow the fragmenting method mentioned above, and to demonstrate the conclusions stemming from this, focusing on Metz's theodicy problem;
- to present Metz's dialectic dialogue view of the new political theology after Auschwitz, among others with special regard to the correlations of the apocalyptic eschatological view prevailing therein, with the subject's situation of being, the eschatology of the Messiah of peace, the ontology of war, the Jewish-Christian monotheist heritage, the singularity of historical events and the fright caused by contingency.

#### IV. Research methods

In the case of Metz, the dialectic nature of memory recalls such a cultural memory, which brings forward the dialectic heritage of Judaism, and finds that its exposure and undertaking are not substituted by any formal discussion conducted for the purpose of a mutual compromise. In our research, we have basically reviewed Metz's *memoria* (*passionis*) 'a priori tied to suffering' which is manifest in the sense of responsibility of the subject.

In reviewing our research subject, some different initiatives were also decisive for us, namely those, which show the problematic areas of political theology perhaps from a side which had been less detailed by him. This includes, but not limited to the following: Hobbes's political theology concept, the heritage (Mendelssohn) of Jewish enlightenment (the Haskalah), the attempts to solve the historical problem (Quest, New Quest/Neue Frage), the effect of Walt Whitman's poetry ('new America', 'new Bible', 'new spirituality', 'new Genesis creation', 'new [American] political theology'), the radical (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, Dorothee Sölle, Rosemary Radford Ruether, in a certain respect Helmut Gollwitzer, etc.) and the non-radical (e.g. Moltmann, Pannenberg) theological readings, which (prior to and) after Auschwitz view the theoretical and practical political legacy of the earlier examinations on the 'ruins' of conventional theology, contributing in their own way to Metz's political theology concept. In addition, in the critical review of the intellectual reserves of modernity, we have taken into consideration among others the works of Karl Löwith, Jacob Taubes, Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Jacques Derrida, Ágnes Heller, Odo Marquard and David Nirenberg, the theoretical efforts of modernity aimed at recognition and at the experimental and objective discovery of things, which critically examined numerous characteristics of the religion, including the mythical phraseology of Christianity.

By means of the critical text interpretation and critical text analysis applied in the course of comparing and clashing the examined trade literature, we try to explore the various forms of the process during which the post-Auschwitz theological effort involves theodicy (as the theological expression of alterity and subversivity) in the area of theology, clarifying its relationship by the method of political theology (or political philosophy).

The dissertation is made by a similar method or concept as we presented Metz's writing method in the hypothesis. Our consecutive analysing text parts are seemingly loose and unrelated directly, in other words they are associated with each other as 'independent' fragments. Our writing does not deliberately present a linearly structured static body of text, but the writing method joining the texts like a cluster is like a dynamic arch, a moving image.

On the one hand, this ensures that all text parts have a visible leeway stemming from their own inner dynamism. On the other, the dynamism of this text cluster is manifest in a complex way: the writings representing its parts are tied by a sensitive strand. The strand shown in our writing – similarly to the way Metz writes – does not shine continuously, but glitters from time to time from its hiding place (hermeneutically) distanced from the viewer. The so attached text parts move dynamically, and may rotate in relation to one another. The strand, which connects these fragments would not freeze the overall picture of the final body of the text, but much rather reveal the multi-direction movement stemming from the nature of wording. Therefore, the text parts are in friction from time to time, but this happens in each case without their movement coming to a final rest after a time.

Since the essay is not aimed at maintaining the linearity of the discussion, presenting a kind of ‘text evolution’, consequently it may not contain a conclusion in the conventional sense. Instead, there is a kind of ‘Excuse’ at the end of the essay, a kind of ‘post-script’, which is not merely a summary of the research achievements and does not put an end, but returns to the discussion, thereby maintaining its dynamism.

## **V. New scientific achievement**

In our conclusion, the way Metz discusses the topic proceeds along the linguistic path of a non-formalist, non-teleological dialectic dialogue, and thereby dwells on the central topic of political theology: the problem of theodicy, as the primary aim and also the discussion method of theology.

Although the (negative) dialectic view of Metz’s political theology mainly opposes the teleological dialectics of ‘political Darwinism’, the dialectics therein do not make an impact on the basis of opposition, but in view of the current social, political and historical-memorative circumstances. This negativizing dialectic approach ties the (ritual) traces of biblical, post-biblical, Judaic and Jewish-Christian spirit with the (modernizing) extra features of the anamnetic practical mind. In our conclusion, the group of elements so connected indicates such a monetheizing movement, the dynamism of which defines the memory of suffering (*memoria passionis*) and Metz’s negativizing dialectic dialogue.

## **VI. Summary conclusions**

On the basis of our research, Metz does not present theology as a linearly built structure, but rather as a text, the components of which come together or are used up in the *process of dialectic dialogue*.



Metz's dialectic view is not in line with the discussion-consensus (formalism) of enlightening, and therefore he contrasts the (negative) dialectic view of his political theology mostly with the teleological dialectics of 'political Darwinism'. At the same time, the dialectics prevailing in Metz's political theology do not make an impact on the basis of opposition, but rather take into consideration the current social, political, historical-memorative circumstances in a way that they furnish evidence with a 'critical-liberation excess'. This dialectic approach carries in its foundation the (ritual) traces of the Jewish-Christian spirit, and therefore it relies mainly on the excess of the anamnestic practical mind, or 'moves' accordingly. The dynamism of this movement is determined by the memory of suffering (*memoria passionis*), which in the case of Metz primarily means the suffering of the Other, the Stranger.

In the case of Metz, the dialectic characteristic of memory recalls such a cultural memory, which manifests the dialectic heritage of Judaism, and reinforces the fact that its exploration and strengthening cannot be possibly substituted with a kind of formal discussion, and especially not with a discussion aimed at a mutual compromise, carried out for the purpose of mutual reconciliation, to settle the '*a priori* tied to suffering' in the subject's sense of responsibility.

When exploring the tight boundaries of the methodology of Schweitzer's historical research (Quest), we have reviewed a number of responses, which attempted to find a solution in the correlation of modernity for the simultaneously apocalyptic and eschatological tension/reflexivity of the suspicion *due to* the Messiah emerging on the apocalyptic horizon of history. These thoroughly examined frequently religious historical, psychologizing and positivist-rational theological views and analyses are mostly intended to prove the historical and political correlations of the creedal identity of (Jesus and) Paul.

1.) We have shown that the paradigms recognised by these scientific undertakings were less successful in leading to an overall change, and rather pointed out the controversies deepening therein, while reviewing the possibilities of objectively recording the apocalypics, the eschatology, and the historical Messiah issue.

2.) On the contrary, the efforts of others like Jürgen Moltmann's history and hope theology, Metz's new political theology, the socio-ethical sensitivity of Bernhard Grümme's practical theology or Albert Friedlander's dialogic criticism recall at the same time the problem of the dialogue (and dialectics) consensus oriented lingual expression or indeed the permanent lack of this consensus, and its correlation with the historical and political ethical

projection of the eschatological hope (Lord, how far yet?!) in the “scene interwoven with shouts” (Nelly Sachs).

3.) We attempted to show that among others, Metz is also sceptic regarding the confining of the nature of discussion or dialectics exclusively on the basis of the achieved consensus, although this also encourages the broadening of the discussion about this problem.

4.) Using the extra content of the historical and political ethical field of apocalypics, Metz deepened the suspicion against the conceptual-intellectual performance of the religious and theological terminology. In his view, the splitting of religious-metaphysical zeitgeist after the enlightenment (and the effect of Marx’s ideological criticism) represented a serious challenge to the current pursuing of theology. Therefore, Metz urged a new kind of dialogue in comparison with the earlier one along the lines of ‘post-idealist political paradigm’ (programme). This initiative exposed the heritage of theological examination in a new way, in the theodicy correlation of the apocalyptic and eschatological heritage of modernity on the one hand, and of Judaism, Jewish-Christian and biblical tradition on the other.

5.) Metz’s political theology method (as the theological way of discussing theodicy) can be misleading, especially if it is considered to be a criticism of modernity. We believe that Metz’s modernity criticism is much more like a theology criticism, which opposes certain privatisation tendencies of theology. Because the view of modernity has gained ground without any criticism, the Christian theologoumenon and the exercising of faith/worshipping frequently disregarded the dialectic discursiveness of the tradition of Judaism and when they were ‘sold out’, it was no longer able to face either the relationship of the modern view to religion or to the historical developments (Auschwitz) of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

6.) We have exposed that Metz’s experiment, however, does not represent a novelty due to the critical review of the discussion between theology and modernity, but it is rather new that the problem of theology was placed in the category of the political historical case of memory (the memorative mind), theodicy and the subject.

7.) Metz has involved a different science, too, in the field of theology, namely philosophy, and especially the ‘historical philosophy-historical theology framework of the French political philosophy’. With the latter, Metz initiated a new and broad ranging discussion against historicizing or intellectualizing the contents of theology: re-discussing a qualified case of religious naivety, which abolished the subject’s distance from politics and history, while at the same time focusing more on the staring and opening nature of the practical mind. We think that by this approach, Metz (re)vitalized the discursive heritage (‘second reformation’) of the Jewish-Christian tradition: and believed that the biblical content

of theology (*and* conducting a ceaseless discussion with conventional Judaism) is ready for discussion with the intellectual trends of modernity. The political attitude of the content of theology was given an outstanding role: the theological discussion *launched because of* history, society, the subject and the theodicy problem, became a political discussion, too.

8.) In Metz's new political theology, the problem of the post-Auschwitz theology and that of 'modernity boundary' theology are linked. The most important reason for this is that Metz's new political theology is decisively an ideology criticism presented in a theological manner, which takes into account the intellectual heritage of modernity – from the edge of modernity. As Schweitzer's modernity criticism or Moltmann's political theology criticism (which expressly focuses on Hobbes's and Schmitt's state theory), Metz's political theology criticism is also such an ideological criticism which is aware of the thin wall separating the theoretical and practical pursuing of theology and the basic theoretical and practical principles of the (social) policy directives issued by the valid or inherited state theory. It can be concluded that similarly to Schweitzer and Moltmann, Metz also recognises the development that religion and theology are surrounded by a new kind of myth consciousness, which attaches fundamental importance to creating notions of the axiomatic deductive type within the modernizing view and to thereby legitimized religious and cultural criticism.

9.) We have already mentioned that although he refers to Karl Schmitt's works very rarely, Metz grasps the legitimization myth consciousness of modernising theology especially from the side of political theology, and then sharply confronts this myth consciousness. This confrontation is evident in his relativizing criticism of the new age/modern civil religious theory. Metz (similarly to Moltmann) confirms the human history of freedom, which expresses criticism of the political power over the sanctional political-theology axioms of the cult concept of Hobbes's (Leviathan-state) or Schmitt's (stoical philosophy, secondarily Christianizing) state theory. This critical history of freedom paves the way for a creedling theological statement which provides publicity for the historical/salvation historical correlation and memorative-practical expression (*memoria passionis – compassio*) of the frequently rejected or ultimately unidentifiable hope.

10.) We have shown that Metz's subject criticism takes shape on the horizon of this history of freedom, and this criticism depicts in the historical-ethical relationship of the subject the insensibility of the rationalism of the evolution epistemology: the axiomatic-deductive ideology of the development theory first devaluated, and then neutralised the notion of vice within the historical process or at the most it has taken this into consideration secondarily (e.g. Marx). Metz had proven on an item by item basis that the historical

interpretation and general comprehension (universalism) of biblical monotheism will always be incompatible with the conceptual-practical standpoint of any prevailing political-religion based on the normative-assimilation principle (Peterson). Hence, the basic historical ethical idea of Metz's (and Peterson's) subject had opposed the political theological principle aimed at determining the identity, which devoted the intellectual dogmatism of political religion to working out the totalizing structure of politics. In the case of Metz, the universalism of biblical monotheism opposes the universalism of political monotheism. This opposition initiates discussion in a new way about the historical philosophy and historical theology projection of the subject issue, pointing out at the same time the complex problem of the political philosophical and political theological correlations of this discussion.

11.) In addition, the new exploration of religious studies and theology by Metz not only ultimately deepened the suspicion that the totality view of political religion infiltrates the theoretical and practical consequences of modernizing theology, but in the wake of this suspicion it has also thrown bright light on the fact that the political conceptual content of theology or the monotheism of theology cannot be separated from the universal lingual world of apocalypics and eschatology, respectively. In this matter, Metz specifically recalls Emmanuel Levinas, who – in our firm belief – in his own way deeply influenced Metz's works.

12.) Regarding Metz, Levinas's undoubted significance (and at the same time difficulty) is that the latter critically revealed and laid down the original semantic field of the notion of apocalypics.

In Levinas's view, the apocalyptic zeitgeist does not stem from the biblical narratives of end times, and he does not even look back to them. In the case of Levinas, apocalypics much rather show a fundamental correlation with the non-theological or quasi-theologizing notion-creating habit of the historical view of modernity. The evolutionism of this habit is far from the semantic fields of the original perspective of the biblical, Jewish-Christian zeitgeist. As a result, Levinas rejected bringing the conceptuality of the apocalyptic view into correlation with the biblical expression of the eschatological perspective, thereby linking the original conceptual world of apocalypics with the heritage of Jewish-Christian thinking. In the case of Levinas, the sharp separation of apocalypics and eschatology on the basis of categories and views finally led to the depletion of the conceptual horizon of apocalypics when revealing the historical existence of the subject and the correlation of biblical narratives. It is Levinas's firm view that the philosophical (and theological) discussions have never really been able to lead the principal problem of apocalypics out of the hermeneutic paradigm, i.e.

trap, which ultimately connected the notion of apocalypics to the memory of historical disasters, i.e. to the tragedy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century dominated by Auschwitz. In this case, apocalypics rather brought to the surface the forced identification tendency of modernity, which tendency was then uncovered in the interpretation background of cataclysms: the yearning for catharsis or the religious-ecstatic desire covered by the Messiah's shroud, which desire is repeatedly intoxicated with the overall naïve-craving vision of modern reconciliation experience. It is Levinas's firm belief that the apocalyptic vision of the (modern) reconciliation experience did not wind up and did not even decrease, but rather increasingly deepened the inhumanity of the world. This is because this advanced natural objective of the reconciliation experience as well as the fixing of the concept left out of consideration the historical correlations (in the process) of the *originality of vice*. On the contrary, Levinas (just like Metz) emphasises that vice is not manifest as a false or secondary consciousness of history (as seen, for example, in the case of Marx), but it always emerges in the historical processes as the original manifestation of the history of man (the subject). If we disregard the originality of sin in history, we must forget about uncovering the vice any time on this sideward of history. The modernizing interpretation made historical responsibility irrational in a way that it relativized (transcended) the historical ethical dimension of downfall and collapse on this sideward of history. This paradox led finally to the transcending of the historical ethical correlations of vice and downfall on the so-called other sideward of history. From this time, each story of incompleteness which looks for its place on the scene of world history accumulated on the other sideward of history, and then it was projected to the historical enemy image exiled here. The modern eschatology view finally led to the doubling or dualism of history: to an unresolvable unrest, which on the one hand stemmed from the opposition of this sideward of history and the other sideward of history. On the other hand, this unresolvable or useless unrest, appearing on this sideward of history which is free of vice, *ab ovo* eliminated all forms and contents of mercy, forgiving, liberation and alterity (the Other's diversity, which is inexhaustible and therefore unweakenable by any experiment). In the dualist history interpretation of modern eschatology, the individual or community evaluation of the existence of the Other (the diversity), and the value judgement resulting from this repeatedly returned to viewing itself (its dualism), and then finally it collapsed in itself. The alterity experience of modern eschatology remained unidentified in the area beyond this world of history, and when the distant voice of the prophetic cry 'how far yet' remaining from pre-modernity fell back as a vague and illegible afterimage, it was then scattered in the stone-walled inner yard of this sideward of history. This yard embraces an enclosed and

protected, sterilised world, which is released from vice and is ultimately freed from the burden of cataclysms. The confining stone wall has many suspicious gates up to the S(s)entry of the first and simultaneously last gate. And, behind the S(s)entry, increasingly dimmer gateways disappearing into the infinite apocalyptic distance emerge, and they are repulsive with the hopelessness of getting through and transcending (Kafka).

13.) We have determined, however, that in the case of Levinas, the actual importance of apocalypics did not primarily lose its dialectics on the other sideward of history, but it became silent for good (on this sideward of history) as a result of being depicted as its counterworld. The alterity in Levinas's sense, i.e. the O(o)ther's diversity which is inexhaustible and therefore ultimately unweakenable by any experience consequently appears along the ethical breaking points of the eschatological-anthropologic memory of *a* history, which is indivisible and imprescriptible on this (imprescriptible) sideward, from which the (memoria) *passion(is)* of Auschwitz is undeletable. In Levinas's history concept, the notion of hope appears on this eschatological (non-apocalyptic) ethical scene, the anthropologic expression of which has ultimately broken away from the world of apocalyptic notions separated by him (Levinas) for a dualist historical view. The eschatology manifest in a historical world on this (non-dualist, non-apocalyptic) sideward of history is infiltrated by such a hopeful expectation, which is expressed to the O(o)ther, and this *ab ovo* acts against the endless development theory which disappears in the distance. Rejecting the unappeasable attraction of the modern apocalyptic view to cataclysms, Levinas had ultimately removed all hermeneutic traditions of the apocalyptic approach from the horizon of the alterity problem and of the eschatological view.

14.) When an initiative of the new political theology associated with Metz's name reconsidered the political theology-ethical projection of the subject issue, again a new path was sought 'at the boundary of modernity'. This approach – seemingly against Levinas's efforts – endeavoured to combine ultimately the conceptual topic of alterity (recognizing and appreciating the strange O(o)ther in his diversity) with the apocalyptic view, and mainly with its interpretation through the eyes of the biblical monotheism and/or Judaism and Jewish-Christianity.

15.) In our view, this programmatic initiative by Metz at the same time followed with sensitive eyes the ethical trace of the eschatological anthropology of the alterity experience explained by Levinas: the expression of Levinas's apocalyptic criticism. In our view, in the case of Metz, this Levinas approach of the alterity was given an imprescriptible place in expressing the foreignness, incompleteness, political identity and history of suffering of the

subject, which was worked out by Metz on the horizon of memory embracing the historical suffering (*memoria passionis*). Metz had recognized that the political theological correlations of apocalypics ripened on the Tanakh-biblical soil have similar consequences than the political (philosophical-anthropological) conceptual expression of the eschatological-ethical view of Levinas's alterity. We believe doubtlessly that the ways Levinas and Metz express their arguments are different, and yet they show signs of similarity.

16.) In the section where the notion of the new political theology subject and Levinas's alterity theory meet, Metz identifies the hermeneutic problem which causes an everlasting restlessness due to the Messiah issue. This restlessness is associated with the historical political heritage of biblical narratives, and with the historical ethological and political ethical references of the (empty) place of the Messiah, in association with the theologizing tradition of Judaism and Jewish-Christianity. The deep eschatological ethical structure of the notion of Levinas's alterity brought to the surface the non-emancipated and ultimately non-identifiable possibility of being and its current historical integrity of the O(o)ther's unpossessable and undepletable D(d)iversity. We have observed that Levinas's approach to alterity was given an imprescriptible place by Metz, when discussing the subject's foreignness, incompleteness, political identity and history of suffering, which was worked out by Metz on the horizon of historical suffering and of the subversive memory of the theodicy issue (*memoria passionis*).

In their own ways, Levinas and Metz recalled the imminent clash exposed by Schweitzer (and others) between the modernity and apocalyptic or eschatological view, and made it obvious that it was necessary to continue the dispute about this in a way that in the meantime the discussion is not envisaged to come to a rest.

## **VII. The list of publications prepared by the doctoral candidate in the relevant subject**

“Christianity and integrity in Friedrich–Wilhelm Marquardt's work »Christsein nach Auschwitz«”. In: Péter Hubai — Tamás Majsai (editor): *All these were written in your book. Symposium about the Bible. 2009.* (Wesley Conference Volumes [4.]). John Wesley Theological College, Theologian and Pastoral Studies Faculty. Budapest 2010, pp. 139-150.

“On the Christian heritage and possibilities of the Jewish-Christian dialogue” In: *Open your mouth instead of being silent. Birthday Book I for Gábor Iványi's 60th birthday.* (Editor: Pál Bánlaky, et al.) Budapest: JWTC – Theologian and Pastoral Studies Faculty. ([Title of series:] Wesley Jubilee Volumes. 8/a) 2011 pp. 271-286.

“Plurality and analogy; or redemption, radicalism and dialogue in Derrida and Job. *Consubstantiality of redemption – the duality of one.*” In: Hacofe 3. Thematic number: MMXII Vol. I. No. 1 (edited by Tamás Staller) [http://www.orzse.hu/hacofe/vol3/Ivanyi\\_pluralitas.pdf](http://www.orzse.hu/hacofe/vol3/Ivanyi_pluralitas.pdf).

“Relativizing or application? John Wesley’s relativizing of the L(l)aw”. In: László Szávay, et al. (editor): *Town built on a hill. Conference proceedings*. Selection from the presentations delivered by young researchers and doctoral candidates at the international conferences of theologians. Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary—L’Harmattan Publishers. Budapest 2016, pp. 90-96.

“John Wesley’s Church, conversion and (civil) society” In: Balázs Déri (editor): *Conversion. The presentations of the religious conference held at the Eötvös Lóránd University of Sciences, Department of Humanities on 22-23 September 2011*. (AFION Books 1) Eötvös Lóránd University of Sciences, Department of Humanities, Religious Centre. Budapest 2013, pp. 439-448.

“The sin, grace of God, and losing the faith in John Wesley’s works”. In: Péter Hubai (editor): *Confession of sin and grace. Presentations about religion and theology*. (Wesley Conference Volumes [6]). John Wesley Theological College, Theologian and Pastoral Studies Faculty. Budapest 2014, pp. 257-263.

“The world of God and historical victims in Johann Baptist Metz’s works”. In: Péter Hubai (editor): *Victim. Presentations about religion and theology*. Wesley Conference volumes (7). John Wesley Theological College, Theologian and Pastoral Studies Faculty. Budapest 2016, pp. 229-241.

“A dialect without language? Jewish-Christian dialogue as reflected by systematic theology after Auschwitz.” In: *Rambling aimlessly in Caesarea for a long time. JWTC’s Birthday Book for Tamás Majsai’s 60<sup>th</sup> birthday*. Edited by Róbert Géczi, Péter Tibor Nagy, John Wesley Theological College. Budapest 2015, pp. 209-217.

“Dangerous community: the dialectics of curse and promise in Bonhoeffer’s works”. In: Dr. Katalin Palotás (editor): *The four voices of the Bonhoeffer interpretation*. (Bonhoeffer Volumes 2) John Wesley Theological College. Budapest 2016, pp. 15-26.



“The existential challenge of the family from the point of view of the new political theology.”  
In Restancia. Independent Jewish Scientific Journal. (Philosophy). Edited by Kiss Endre,  
Haraszi György, Kocsis Péter. 2019.12.09 <https://www.restancia.hu/filo/ivanyi-csalad-teologia.html>

### **VIII. The doctoral candidate's curriculum**

Gábor Iványi defended his theologian diploma at the daytime Theologian and Pastoral Studies Faculty of the John Wesley Theological College in 2005. The title of his essay was: “Some theological and historical difficulties of interpreting certain parts of the Epistle to the Romans. The Judaism of Apostle Paul and the self-interpretation of Christianity, as the dedicated ecumenical and missiology theological conflict of Christianity.” His consultant was Dr. László Bognár.

In the same year in 2005, he had also defended his cultural historian diploma at the Jewish Cultural History Faculty of the Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies. The title of his essay was: “Jewish-Christian dialogue and the Tharsis Pharisee (Introduction to studying Paul's epistles – primarily the Epistle to the Romans)”. His consultant was Dr. habil. Tamás Staller.

In 2007-2008, Gábor Iványi participated in the course called ‘Ontology, hermeneutics, theology’ at the Philosophical Institute of the ELUS DH. Presenter: Dr. István M. Fehér.

In 2008-2012, at the Assyriology and Hebraist Faculty of ELUS DH, Gábor Iványi participated in the following courses: Classical Hebrew language and reading; Syntax, Literature and science history; Literal approach to the Bible; The Bible's language with a modern linguistic approach. Presenter: Dr. Kornélia Koltai.

Currently, Gábor Iványi is a pastor of the Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship in Szeged, Hungary and its surroundings, an associate professor at the John Wesley Theological College and a divinity teacher at the John Wesley Primary and Secondary Schools in Szeged and Orosháza.