



# European Journal of Science and Theology

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## The Annunciation in Byzantine art: patterns of representation

Byzantine art promoted two patterns of representation of the event of the Annunciation: one in which the Virgin and the angel are inside a house and another in the garden, next to a well. The former is based on the scriptural text, while the latter is based on an apocryphal text (the Protoevangelium of James) and on patristic tradition.

According to these non-scriptural sources, the Annunciation, or at least the first part of the dialogue between the angel and the Virgin, took place in the garden; Mary had come out of the house to fetch water from the well. Byzantine art considers all categories of writings, promoting both versions in the frescoes, mosaics, miniatures, and icons made according to Eastern requirements.

The importance of Saint Luke's text would prevail in Byzantine art. In most flagship artistic representations, the event of the Annunciation is depicted as taking place inside a house. Artists developed this pattern along two different lines: one in which the Virgin is sitting on a chair/throne and another in

which she is standing, like the heavenly messenger. Each manner of representation was based on a theological rationale and on well-defined symbolism. In the version where the Virgin is sitting on a chair/throne, the aim was to promote her imperial dignity. The other version was meant to depict an act of protocol from the Byzantine imperial milieu, which expressed respect for the person before whom one stood.

Despite two distinct patterns existing in the Byzantine world - or rather, two moments of the event of the Annunciation corresponding to the above-mentioned sources, the artists who opted for the version recorded by the Gospel did not show any reluctance to the information provided by the other sources. Consequently, in the pattern that shows the moment of the Annunciation indoors, there are a few elements specific to the apocryphal text and to patristic writings. The act of spinning, the wool, the royal purple, the fabric, the spindle, or other spinning instruments

that refer to the task given to the Virgin by the priests are details recorded in the said writings.

Thus, artists have not treated these sources of inspiration differently. They used the Holy Scriptures as a reference but did not neglect the details recorded in the apocryphal text or in patristic writings. This approach, which regarded everything as a whole, enabled them to combine the information in such a way as to highlight the theological message of the event, especially through symbols.

Given that the present research has capitalised on representations employing various media, it would be desirable that a future study should be conducted to analyse the evolution of the Byzantine pattern on a specific medium (fresco, mosaic, miniature, and icon), instead of considering all the media together, as we have done now, for reasons that have been explained.

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## SELF-DECLARATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FAITH AMONG BELIEVERS IN POLAND IN THE FACE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Abstract:** With the arrival of the covid-19 pandemic, questions were formulated about the religious meaning behind this phenomenon in an attempt to indicate its causes and draw pastoral and educational conclusions. Therefore, this paper attempts to solve the research problem regarding the impact of the pandemic on the declarations of believers in Poland about their religious faith. For this purpose, in June 2021, research was conducted on a sample of adult Poles, statistically representative in terms of four key socio-demographic variables: age, gender, class and place of residence in their voivodeship. The data analysis conducted for this paper was limited to a sample of 2,297 respondents who declared themselves believers and practice regularly or irregularly, or believers who do not practice their faith. The obtained results indicate that social isolation accompanying the pandemic and restrictions on organized religious worship did not significantly either weaken or strengthen the respondents' self-declarations about their faith. Nevertheless, there was a group declaring that their faith was strengthened, and only a small part of the respondents stated that their faith had weakened. The research also confirmed the diversity of respondents in terms of religious beliefs and the related declared changes concerning their faith depending on gender, age, place of residence and education. In conclusion, the authors point to the need to continue observing and analysing the changes that have taken place in Polish society, as well as to recognize the long-term consequences of social isolation during the pandemic with its possible impact on the functioning of individuals, families and various social groups. A special subject of interest and concern for psychologists, educators and other researchers of the phenomenon of religiosity are children, adolescents and young adults, since these age categories bear the greatest emotional burden caused by sanitary restrictions.

## A NEW FACE OF FUNDAMENTALISM Q-FUNDAMENTALISM

**Abstract:** We consider QAnon to be a kind of modern and expansive Q-fundamentalism. It has easily overcome the barrier of the virtual world, and - driven by the dissatisfaction with the results of the U.S. presidential election in 2020 - managed to storm the Capitol on 6 January 2021. The multi-threaded QAnon narrative, containing religious, social and political demands, has been fuelled by the covid-19 pandemic crisis and disseminated mainly via social media. QAnon's potential to be a fundamentalist group stems in particular from its radicalistic postulates, growing popularity, the internationalisation of its postulates and the rapid pace of radicalisation of its supporters. QAnon is a group whose objective consists in a broadly understood transformation of religious and political factors, ideologisation, energisation, as well as addition of conspiracy to its character. The version of fundamentalism presented by QAnon displays the traits of anti-Enlightenment, anti-liberalism, moral rigourism, rejection of modernity in favour of tradition. Its characteristics also include militarism, praise of war, fascination with the warrior ethos and building an empire, but in accordance with the rules of ethics and tradition in the hierarchical society. QAnon's recruits or precursors of a new model of Q-fundamentalists are the warriors of QAnon, who has a huge number of followers all over the world.

## HUMAN EVOLUTION RECONCILIATION OF SCIENCE AND ISLAM

**Abstract:** Darwin's theory of Evolution states universal descent from a common ancestor for life. The evolution of humans from simple creatures has been debated among religious scholars and scientists. Some consider it a challenge to God's creation. Muslim scholars have four different opinions about this theory. One group states that the Quran and Science have no contradiction regarding Evolution. The other three groups declare this theory a danger to their religious beliefs and reject it. In this article, almost all the verses in the Quran about human creation are mentioned and a few from each group are explained with authentic grammar and a dictionary to see whether there is a contradiction between them or misunderstanding the original language. By comparing modern science and the text of the Holy Quran, we conclude that the Quran and Science have the same point of view on human creation. The dispute is due to a misunderstanding of the truths in the Quran, lack of valuable scholars, language issues, and being extremist in religious views. Hence, it is concluded that the Quran does not face any difficulty with evolution and there is no contradiction between modern science and Islam. Islam is a scientific religion so Muslim scholars should work to explain the text of the Quran in words of growing science.

## PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL HISTORICISM IN MUSICAL ART CASE STUDY OF G. DONIZETTI'S OPERA 'THE GREAT FLOOD'

**Abstract:** The article deals with the phenomenon of biblical historicism, which has been diversely embodied in the artistic space of various eras. The authors examine its fundamental principles, as well as their manifestation in the opera genre of the 19th century. The research is carried out through a case study of the opera 'The Great Flood' by G. Donizetti, created in 1830 based on the famous Old Testament plot. The authors' analysis of the opera makes it possible to conclude that the principles of the historicism of the Holy Scripture have played a decisive role in the formation of opera architectonics. The alignment of the work is determined by the opposition 'Heavenly vs Earthly' which forms both the figurative composition of the work and the means of its implementation. The religious and philosophical concept encompasses all levels of the musical work: thematic, figurative, compositional, and is also embodied in musical dramaturgy. The sacred figurative and semantic symbolism acquires a special role in the opera. The central place in this symbolism is held by the image of the Prophet, through whom God's Will is enacted. The composer builds the musical dramaturgy of the opera on the confrontation of two spheres - 'heavenly' (the sphere of the righteous) and 'earthly' (the sphere of sinners).

## THE PUBLIC ROLES OF EARLY KOREAN PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

**Abstract:** This study explores how the early Korean Protestant movement - a movement that experienced unprecedented vitality in the late 19th and early 20th centuries - initiated a number of positive societal changes in Korea, promoting various forms of human rights. Martin Marty's notion of public Church provides a helpful lens through which this movement can be analysed. Early Korean Protestantism not only guided the future direction of the nation, transcending class and gender. It was a major force in reforming Korean society. The Protestant Church served as a positive agent of social change, enlightening Korean people through the abolition of the class system, the promotion of women's rights, the healing of incurable diseases, the use and spread of a refined linguistic system, resistance to Japanese imperialism, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Using Marty's terminology to analyse the Protestant movement will thus allow us to synthesize the notions of 'public' and 'private', doing away with bifurcations that have limited such discussions in the past. The upshot of our historical analysis will be an exhortation to today's global theological community: we must



take up a more specific and detailed public theology that communicates appropriately with the many publics that make up our global society.

## THEISTIC COSMOLOGY OF RICHARD SWINBURNE AS A PHENOMENON OF THE THEOLOGICAL RENAISSANCE

**Abstract:** The subject of this article is the theistic cosmology of Richard Swinburne, which was a noticeable phenomenon of the theological renaissance at the end of the last century, which even now enriches the present age with new theological meanings. Swinburne sees the main task of his work as a consistent systematic development of a new theological paradigm that would use the achievements of modern science. This mental experiment is carried out by the author from the positions of probabilism, is based on the selection of inductive evidence for the existence of God, and ultimately should demonstrate the proper probability of the central position of the religious worldview - 'God exists'. This, according to the author, is the core of his own 'hypothesis of theism', which explains the emergence of the Universe, the reasons for its appearance, the existence and functioning of its constantly operating laws, its focus on the emergence of animals and the emergence of man. Particular attention in the article was paid to the epistemology of Richard Swinburne, his understanding of the method, not only as a tool for finding and fixing the ultimate theological meanings, but already more as a certain way of building the entire theological system, a system that, in turn, became an intermediary between faith itself and culture.

## SENIORS IN ISLAMIC FAMILY POLICY MORAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS

**Abstract:** Social changes, urbanization, as well as the creation of a new lifestyle and culture, began the family crisis. Until recently, this problem only concerned families with the roots of Latin tradition. Nevertheless, more and more often the loss of the authority of the elders affects the Muslim community living in Europe, but also in the affluent countries of the Persian Gulf. Despite the numerous dangers lurking over the unity of the Muslim family, Islam tirelessly surrounds the elderly. He is identified above all with the hierarchical structure of Muslim families and also with the patriarchy of the community. A multigenerational family is a model for the young generation, how to approach and treat other members of the community, especially seniors. The authority is not only enjoyed by the father, but also by the elder of the tribe or family. Islam often indicates a lack of respect for the elderly, sick and infirm, present in the Latin world, which has developed various methods, getting rid of people who require care. The teaching of Islam emphasizes that caring for elderly parents and other family members in the most difficult period of their lives is seen as an honour, a blessing and an opportunity to achieve spiritual development. Probably for this reason, in the Muslim world, 'homes of old age' or care for the elderly are rare. Islam emphasizes the cultural heritage and life experience that is passed on to young people by seniors.

## AN ATTEMPT TO LIQUIDATE THE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC (1945-1956)

**Abstract:** After World War II, the authorities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics intended to liquidate the Greek Catholic Church. In 1946, a non-canonical Church council took place in Lviv where the transition of the Greek Catholics to the Orthodoxy was announced. Also, the Romanian and Czechoslovakian authorities made the same announcement under the pressure of the USSR. Contrary to those countries, Poland did not take any legal steps concerning this matter. The authorities assumed that the resettlement of Greek Catholics to the Soviet Ukraine and to the West and North of Poland within 'Operation Vistula' would eventually eliminate the problem. However, the Greek Catholic priests and followers did not accept it and made efforts to revive their Church in Poland. The authorities counteracted as they wanted to eliminate the Greek Catholic issue altogether with the help of the Orthodox Church. Despite initial success, they did not manage to force the Greek Catholics to transfer to the Orthodoxy. The political events in 1956 in Poland, the USSR and Hungary prevented it. The political changes that took place then as well as the release of the Primate Stefan Wyszyński were favourable for the restitution of the Greek Catholic Church. However, the communist authorities did not accept the demands for domestic and international reasons. Nevertheless, it was necessary to keep the Ukrainians in the West and North of Poland so they agreed for Greek Catholic liturgy to be celebrated based on the Roman Catholic Church. This meant that the foregoing attempts to liquidate the Greek Catholic Church in Poland had ended in failure. When in 1958 the primate granted the Greek Catholic priests the same rights as the parish priests enjoyed, it became possible to start building the Greek Catholic Church structures in Poland until its full restitution.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING DURING EMERGING ADULTHOOD MEANING IN LIFE AS A MEDIATOR

**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the presence of meaning in life is a mediator in the relationship between spirituality and psychological well-being, during emerging adulthood. The sample consisted of 737 students from Romanian universities. Scales measuring the presence of meaning in life, spirituality and psychological well-being were used. The results of the study indicated that the presence of meaning in life fully mediated the relationship between spirituality and psychological well-being. The findings of the study have contributed to the efforts aimed at understanding the factors associated with emerging adults' psychological well-being. The results were discussed in relation to literature from the psychological perspective, as well as the theological one. Practical implications were suggested for university counselling services.

## THE ANNUNCIATION IN BYZANTINE ART PATTERNS OF REPRESENTATION

**Abstract:** The event of the Annunciation has received special attention from Christian artists. A mural painting dating as far back as the first half of the third century has been preserved in one of the most impressive Roman catacombs (the Catacomb of Priscilla), already providing an initial version of the pattern of representation of this biblical episode. The pattern was taken over by artists (painters, sculptors, mosaists, miniaturists), enriched with details/symbols and diversified to capture the theological message conveyed by the biblical text, the apocryphal text and patristic tradition. The present study aims to observe the evolution of the artistic pattern of the Annunciation in Byzantine art. It starts with a chronological overview of the way the pattern was developed in the first Christian millennium, irrespective of the medium employed by the artistic representations. After that, the two Byzantine patterns of representation (the Annunciation indoors and the Annunciation in the garden by the spring) are presented, divided into categories (fresco, mosaic, icon on wood, and miniature), within a time interval that marks the most prolific period of Byzantine art (10th-16th century). The present research will provide the reader with the opportunity to ascertain the appearance, observe the evolution and understand the theological rationale that determined the current choice of a certain Byzantine pattern of representation of the event of the Annunciation.