

SUMMARY

Revelation and History in St. Maximus the Confessor's Thinking

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The current PhD thesis entitled: „Revelation and History in St. Maximus the Confessor's Thinking” is structured in five chapters, preceded by an argument and an introduction.

The reason I was challenged by this thematic relies in shedding more light on the theology of history or on St. Maximus' concept about history, as well as to demonstrate that not only the Patristic Western theology enjoys its place in the theology of history through Happy Augustine's *De civitate Dei* with heavy influence, but the Eastern theology finds its place as well. Among the Greek Fathers, St. Maximus brought the most consistent contribution in understanding history from theological point of view.

In my opinion, the history analyses of St. Maximus' work should be carried out in tight relation with his vision on divine Revelation. His concept on divine Revelation gives contour and full transparency to the prism he envisions history.

In „Introduction” I have specified the purpose of the PhD thesis, resuming basically to St. Maximus' work. The PhD thesis consists in identifying the vision on Revelation and history of the most important Bizantine theologians.

In respect to the research method, I have selected the synthetic method in the first chapter and the textual analyses method for the subsequent chapters. Besides the analytic and synthetic methods I made use of a problematic approach which follows to identify the way Revelation qualifies as a proper solution to understand St. Maximus' vision on history.

Concerning the actual stage of research in the reference literature of theology, I have pointed out that Hans Urs von Balthasar is the first researcher who, in his famous

1941 monography entitled „Cosmic Liturgy,” approached St. Maximus’ teaching (although vaguely), reanalysing his concept on Revelation and history.

First chapter entitled „St. Maximus the Confessor – Interpreter of Revelation” is divided in four sections, where I have concentrated the following themes: „Life and Work”, „Impact of Maximian Thinking in Contemporaneity”, „Maximian Theology Dimensions” and „*Revelation and History* Semnifications in Maximian Thinking”.

In respect to St. Maximus’ life, I approached the subject from two total different perspectives, considering his first decades of his life. Well known in the universe of Maximologists, according to Greek’s *Lives*, St. Maximus is of Constantinopolitan origin. According to the Syriac *Life* discovered by Sebastian Brock in 1973, St. Maximus is of Palestinian origin. Therefore, I made a synthesis of the two biographies in respect to the formative years of St. Maximus.

Concerning the impact of Maximian thinking in contemporaneity, I have briefed his main monographies, symposiums and Maximian studies, beginning with his famous 1941 monography entitled „Cosmic Liturgy” and continuing with his most important studies and monographies published before 2015.

Going further, I have introspected the five dimensions of Maximian theology, already examined in Lars Thunberg’s book *Man and Cosmos*: Trinitarian, soteriological, teandric, social-natural and sacramental-liturgical.

In the final section of the first chapter I have pointed out the semnifications of *Revelation and History* in St. Maximus’ Thinking. His teaching invites us to identify themes of revelational character: Trinitarian dimension of Revelation; Christological dimension of Revelation; cosmological dimension of Revelation; Scripture as Revelation. The semantics of the word history or „historia” in St. Maximus’ vision surprises us in its variety of senses reported to the world existence, where „we live, move and have our being.” St. Maximus’ „historia” semantics anchors strongly in his vision about time, engraved in the ink of the Holy Scripture’s letter. In many of his works he considers the Holy Scripture the clue of „historia”. Envisioned in letter, Scripture is plain history, but contemplated in spirit, Scripture transfigures instantly in Revelation.

Chapter II entitled „Time and History in St. Maximus the Confessor’s Vision” is structured in four subchapters, diversifying in multiple texts. A thorough analyses has been carried out on the fourth subchapter’s themes: „God and Time”, „Eternity and Time”, „Creation and Time” and „History and Time”.

In the first subchapter, entitled „God and Time”, I approached two themes: „God’s Transcendence in relativity of time” and „The time Creator”.

With reference to the first theme: „God’s Transcendence in Relativity of Time”, I reiterated St. Maximus the Confessor’s concept on eternity (αιών) and time (χρόνος) from the first decade of his *Chapters on Knowledge*, focusing on God’s transcendence.

Within chapter 1.1, the holy Father tells us that God has no beginning and no end, therefore He excludes the categories of existence, namely: the time expressed through the term „when” (πότε) and the mode expressed through the term „how” (πώς). Following this direction, Father Dumitru Staniloae adds: if God would not exclude time from His being, this may dismantle Him from His character of absolute infinity. God is beyond space and time conditions, to which the existence of beings fully submit. In chapter 1.6 St. Maximus sustains that God’s eternity is totally different from the two forms of temporality – time and eternity, specific to the sensible and intelligible creatures.

Regarding the second theme, I have evidenced the fact that, in St. Maximus the Confessor’s vision, God is the Maker of both matter and temporality, the *sine qua non* dimensions for created beings. Beginning with the natural faith based on natural revelation, St. Maximus states in *Ambigua* 10 that God can be known as the Maker of the world and time, of all created beings from age and time. The Pope says that God is the Maker of time and age, in context of Platonic Origenistic refuting theory on two realities: infinite Oneness (God) and dyad (matter and form). If dyad, namely matter and form, is infinite, then time should be infinite, because it is tightly bound to the nature of things. Therefore, God would not be the Maker of matter and time for the simple reason that infinity can not be the maker of another infinity. St. Maximus the Confessor came strong against this Saint-Origenistic Platonic vision which assumed the following idea: if matter is infinite, then time becomes implicitly infinite. St. Maximus’ statement that time is something that has been created, brings forth the conclusion that all the things which exist in time and space are created, therefore, matter is coeternal with God: "If time and age have a beginning, the more those contained in them".

In the second subchapter entitled "Age and Time" I have analyzed the definition of time and age, as given by St. Maximus the Confessor in *Ambigua* 10. I have evidenced further the meaning of "age" as concept, and ended up with the analyses of Chapter 22 from *Replies to Thalassius* on the Ages of Incarnation and the Ages of Deification.

First of all, I have shown that in St. Maximus’ vision, time is the temporality of the sensible realm and the numbering of motion, and Aeon is a time without movement, the

temporality of the intelligible creation. Time corresponds to the term νοητα (Sensibile), respective κτιστον (Created), and the Aeon corresponds to the term αιθητα (Intelligibile) and ακτιστον (Uncreated). St. Maximus defines time using the Aristotelic concept of „movement”. Aeon is time, when its motion ceases, and time is the Aeon, when measured in its motion. We cannot draw the conclusion that the Aeon St. Maximus is referring to is the „time” of the uncreated, for the simple reason that Aeon has a beginning. St. Maximus did not just take over the Aristotelic definition of time in the context of his ecclesial ontology without change, but only with the inclusion of Aeon, a „time deprived of motion”. Sotiris Mitralaxis considers that, in St. Maximus’ vision, one can follow up a threefold concept about time consisting of: (1) time as χρόνος, the temporality of the sensible realm and the numbering of motion, (2) αἰών i.e. the Aeon, a ‘time without movement’ and the temporality of the intelligible creation, and (3) the transformed temporality of the ever-moving repose (στάσις ἀεκινητος), that is both absolute timelessness or “temporality” of deification.

In the second instance, I have evidenced the fact that St. Maximus confers in his writings to the αἰών notion a wide diversity of meanings: eternity as infinity; time share; God’s eternity; history of mankind from man’s fall into sin to Parousia of the Lord; sensible world or intelligible world.

In the third instance, I have analysed chapter 22 from *Replies to Thalassius*. Here, St. Maximus makes difference between the ages of embodiment and ages of deification, whose reasons pre-exist in the atemporal Communion of the Holy Trinity. As consequence, I Corinthians 10.11 indicates that the ages of embodiment reached to an end through the embodiment of Logos, while in Ephesians 2,7 it makes reference to the ages of deification which have not arrived to us yet, when God will bring His work of embodiment to an end, abducting man to deification through grace.

In the third subchapter, entitled „Cretion and Time,” I have analysed another five Maximian themes dealing with time.

In the first instance I have noticed that St. Maximus makes distinction between God’s things created in time and the divine works uncreated in time, such as: kindness, life, immortality, simplicity, unchangeability and infinity. Therefore, the holy Father evidences two creatures/entities created by God, the eternal creations and the temporal ones. The eternal creations were not made by God in time, but the temporal ones have their beginning or origin in time.

In the second instance, in respect to „Time, Space and Created Being” I have shown that St. Maximus levels accent on the idea that created beings cannot exist but in time and space, as time and space is a *sine qua non* condition of created matter.

In the third instance, I have analysed the genesis-kinesis-stasis triad of *Ambigua 7*. Correction of Origen’s Triad and St. Maximus’ Critics on Origenism bring with them a profound change in the Origenistic vision on time and history. The Origenistic stasis-kinesis-genesis triad will have negative implications in understanding of time, history and eschatology. Movement, in Origen’s interpretation, was seen as sin or fall of the pre-existing spirits in God. Therefore, if time is related to movement, in Origen’s vision, the history of mankind and the life of each human being in particular, is seen as a confinement and punishment for the sin of movement and the fall of spirits from primordial henad. Another negative consequence is linked to the ascension of the gnostic: as the temporal movement is evil, man has to evade from it to return again to repose or in his primordial state of stability. Concerning Eschatology, the Origenists considered that once arrived in God’s rest, the souls will be annoyed and wander again in their love for God, therefore will be a never-ending revolving cycle: fall – temporary punishment – stability. St. Maximus comes against the negative consequences of the Origenist triad with the positive characteristic of movement and time, including the historical life that generates the ever-being state of man in vision of St. Maximus (being, well-being, ever-well-being). Correction of the Origenist triad tells us that in St. Maximus’ vision, the history of the world, and man in particular begins with the act of creation, continues with the movement of creatures and ends up in the stability or rest of God.

In the fourth instance, in section „Time and Sabat”, I have introspected the text from *Chapters on Knowledge* 1.35. In this section St. Maximus explains the ascetic ascention from an inferior level of perfection to a superior one. The spiritual ladder of believer is temporal and atemporal at the same time. First level of ascention is limited or finite, while the second level is unlimited or infinite. At this level, God intervenes and absorbs man into an infinite ascention.

On the fifth instance, entitled „Transcendence of Time” I reiterated that transcendence of time is a *sine qua non* condition to reach deification, the purpose of man’s creation. Man is called to transcend time and enter in Aeon, to release from the constraints of time, depreciation and death. A starting point of this release is to accept that the Aeon is a world and time free from predeterminations, needs, depreciation, distance and fall into sin. St. Maximus sees the Aeon as a distinct form of temporality and not as

simple eternity. In his thinking, time is envisioned as slavery of humanity, its enemy due to man's fall into sin. Therefore, man has to transcend both time (*χρόνος*) and Aeon's „temporality”, in his struggle for a ever happy existence.

In subchapter “History and Time” I have introspected six themes that enables one to make an impression on St. Maximus' vision on history. First two sections are dedicated to man's fall into sin and the relation between the Embodiment of Logos and history. Fall and Embodiment come forth as two fundamental themes in understanding St. Maximus' vision on history.

First of all, man's fall into sin is the starting point of the history of humanity, rolling under the wheels of sin, death, corruption and instability of the present age. St. Maximus draws a pretty pesimistic painting of fallen mankind. In *Quaestio 59* the holy Father speaks about a sevenfold fall of human being. He foresees history as a time-space galaxy where human being is submitted to atonement, because it did not bring to an end its task of mediator between God and His creation. History or the world we live in is the time-space galaxy where humanity collapsed, not listening to God, and where it will be confined till the Resurrection to come. In St. Maximus' vision, the seven years of Nebuchadnezzar spent away from people, abiding with wild beasts, is the history itself and the „sky dew” is pure „Revelation”, dropping in with a certain intensity and in different moments of history.

In the second instance, concerning the relation between Embodiment of the Logos and history, I reiterated that in St. Maximus' vision, through Embodiment, Resurrection and abduction to Heaven, Christ the Savior reunifies in Him all ages. In other words, He assumes or reconciles in Him the three stages of human being: before the Fall, after the Fall and deification. The Embodied Logos takes from the primordial state the unisefulness and creation, from the ages after the Fall It assumes the sinful trait and birth, and from the age to come of the Kingdom of Heaven It takes the mode of existence of the diedied human being.

In the third instance, I have analysed St. Maximus' teachings on the reasons of time and history. In *Ambigua 10*, the holy Father sustains that the reasons of time are in God. The reasons of time bridge the reasons of Providence and the reasons of Judgment of God. Beginning with the text from *quaestio 121*, I have emphasised there is a strong link between history and Providence, which interface through the reasons of time or the reasons of history. Related to the positive or negative events throughout history, St. Maximus says that these events are foreseen by God before they are released in time, and fulfilled later on. Therefore, the good or bad events made their appearance in history when the

Providence decided to let them come, dressed up in the mantle of historical events. St. Maximus advises us to elevate our intellect to a state of contemplation, so we can look into the divine reasons hidden within the events from the Bible and the history of humanity, as reasons of history or reasons of time. St. Maximus gives sense to the theology of history identifying the hidden divine reasons and intentions, revealed in events from the Bible, history and humanity as reasons of time and history. Contemplation of the reasons of time impells the transcendence of time and space through one's virtue and knowledge of God.

In the fourth instance, I have shown that, in St. Maximus' vision, holy prophet Moses identifies with time, for he is the first who counted down the time since Genesis, as well as, due to the symbolism of the historical event of Moses, he was forbidden by God to enter the territory of Canaan. In St. Maximus' concept, if Moses is the typology of time, then the historical event happening at the dusk of Moses' life, his end of journey before entering the promised land, shows us that time will not enter the doors of eternal life with those accompanied by it all the way, same as Moses ended up his journey at the border of Canaan, prefiguring the eternity to come. Time will not enter eternity because it has Jesus Christ as successor of time and age. The same Moses found his successor in Joshua who led the Israelites in the promised land of Canaan.

In the fifth instance, I have analysed the *Ambigua* 71, where St. Maximus gives interpretation to the Gregorian motive of the high Word playing in every kind of form, mixing as It wills, with the world. The text represents an interesting theological vision on the high Word playing with the world or the history envisioned through Providence. „The Play of God” refers to the interactions between God and humanity through the visible and temporal created world. The visible world is a playing field between God and mankind or the world is the time-space coordinate of the play between God and humanity. In His play with the world, God abducts us to Him through the nature of visible things, helping us to look inside them and give them a better understanding. Then, He leads us to contemplate the reasons beyond nature and, finally, He invites us through theology to know Him in His mystery.

In the sixth instance, I have analysed the text of *Ambigua* 46, where we come across a Biblical expression: „the year of the Lord's favour” (Luke 4,19), considered by theologians to be the complete spread of ages. God, same as an intelligible Sun, is the One Who illumines history through the rays of His Providence, diversifying the ways of riping the good seeds sown inside the things He created in time. God overflows the chalice of time, the rays of His Revelation finding their way through the sand of history. At the end of

history, He will harvest the fruits of the seeds of His creation. History is divided in several successive stages of breeding the divine seeds or the divine reasons sown by God in His creation. As the successive ages of history in mankind' redemption consume in time, the divine reasons' seeds come closer to harvest time, the end of the history of mankind. History will come to an end when the seeds of good will reach maturity, what for the believers in Christ means deification.

Chapter three entitled „Revelation of Holy Trinity in St. Maximus the Confessor's vision" is structured in eight subchapters. In the first subchapter entitled „Oneness and Trinity", we can see that the movement of divinity from Oneness to Trinity could be understood in the sense of a true gradual Revelation. The process of Revelation brings with it a certain movement of God. This movement is not a divine advance towards something superior, because within Alpha and Omega, the movement finally finds its rest. The divine reason of this movement is to come into our way and mesmerise us, inviting us to discover, step by step, the truth about the Trinitarian reality.

Section „The Divine Communion of the Holy Trinity", reveals us the mystery of the atemporal Communion of the Holy Trinity, a silent encounter of the Trinitarian Persons with purpose to restore the members of the Body of Christ in Father through His Son. Therefore, the atemporal Communion of the Holy Trinity follows up in Its divine plan the process of man's deification. Following Adam's Fall into sin, God's plan with man's redemption suffered no adjustment. There was no change in God's reason in man either, only the way of bringing His plan to fulfillment was different. This new assignment was given to the Embodied Logos, fulfilling the mystery of the Holy Trinity Communion's divine plan. The separation of history in two ages was first thought as a concept, in the atemporal Communion of the Holy Trinity, a concept descended in the divine plan of creation under the ages of embodiment and the ages of deification. In Its hypostasis of an Angel of the Communion of the Holy Trinity, the Embodied Logos reveals the Father, because the Embodied Word only, can know the Mind (God the Father) according to nature. Therefore, the Logos is the only One that can reveal the insights of His Mind's plan with man's redemption and deification.

In section three, entitled „God the Maker, Provident and Supreme Judge", describing the relation between God and His Creation, St. Maximus speaks about the three attributes of God. We may call them divine energies, streaming from the Maker, Provident and Supreme Judge. The three communicable properties of the Persons belonging to the Holy Trinity (the energy of creation, providence and judgement) define the relation of God

with creation and of man with God. Analysing the five modes of contemplation in *Ambigua* 10, St. Maximus tells us that only three of them, namely those referring to substance, movement and difference, allow us to know God as Maker, Provident and Supreme Judge.

In section four entitled „Reasons of Providence and Reasons of Supreme Judgment” it has been set forth the role and purpose of the Providence and the Supreme Judgment to assist mankind’s movement towards God, besides its role of preserving and keeping the world in balance and existence. God steers the world and history through the reasons of Providence and Judgment, towards the final aim of their existence. St. Maximus says that through the reasons of Providence and Judgment, God leads the daily life and the life to come of all generations in a wise manner, sowing in each generation His intention. The reasons of Providence and the reasons of Judgment interface and cooperate each other, they are in an ongoing *perpetuum mobile*. Both reasons are used by God to give man an impulse towards goodness, using inspiration and welfare of the good things He brings in his way, but in the same manner the tribulations and punishments as correction. The dynamics of reasons (ideas-force tandem) keeps working throughout the ages of history, conferring a unitary sense of movement. History is not a flat line, because the divine reasons are not the same. Each generation is led according to its own reason of existence, coming with its own particular mission, its mode of integration in history and its development. In St. Maximus the Confessor’s vision, the eternal life runs according to the reasons of Providence.

Section five focuses on creation out of nothing. In St. Maximus’ cosmology, the idea of creation *ex nihilo* is a fundamental expression that „measures” the absolute distance between God and His creation. It brings forth God’s superiority towards the created beings, telling us that God needs no pre-existent matter to create. Creation *ex nihilo* reiterates a certitude: God is the Maker of all things and depends on nothing else. God in His benevolence brought the creatures from non-being to being not as a necessity, but due to abundance of His kindness.

In section six entitled „Revelation of Trinity in the History of Redemption of the Old Testament” it has been analysed chapter 28 from *Replies to Thalassius*. St. Maximus the Confessor envisions two explanations on how God or His Word manifests in single or pluriform manners in the Old Testament, taking a human-subjective or a divine-objective direction. From the human-subjective point of view, „Holy Scripture envisions God according to the disposition of those found in His care”. God reveals Himself in two ways. To those in perfection God reveals as He did to Abraham, revealing him the reason of

Oneness and Trinity. To those who could not purify their minds to detach the intellect from matter and could not reach beyond reality, God-self reveals in duality, same as the two angels revealed to Lot. Understood in the sense of Trinitarian objective Revelation (suggested by divinity's pluralism), the Holy Trinity in Oneness reveals in Genesis in hypostasis of Maker, Provident and Supreme Judge.

In section seven, entitled „Holy Trinity's Economic Work through the Embodiment of the Logos”, I have examined the well-known theological formula of the Trinitarian economy in the following structure: benevolence (ευδοκων) of the Father, the work (αυτουργουντι) of the Son and the all-together work (συνεργον) of the Holy Spirit. The Persons of the Holy Trinity Who decided in the atemporal Communion the deification (*theosis*) of man, bring together their own contribution in man's redemption and deification. Embodiment of the Logos opened way to redemption and deification (*theosis*) of human being and it is a work proper to the Son, fulfilled in a godly manner, accompanied by benevolence of the Father and the co-working of the Holy Spirit.

In section eight, entitled „Revelation and Theology in the Lord's Prayer, interpreted according to St. Maximus the Confessor” I endeavoured to emphasise that St. Maximus contemplates the prayer to Our Father as a revelation of the divine plan. The Lord's Prayer is a treasure of Christianity. It holds inside the mystical aim of the embodiment of the Divine Word, preached to bring to completion the divine plan of redeeming the corrupted human being and, finally, take it to deification. The prayer includes petitions for everything the divine Logos effected through his self-emptying in the embodiment.

In fourth chapter entitled „Revelation, Embodiment and Law” I have depicted various themes to substantiate an important idea in St. Maximus's vision: the Embodiment and presence of the Logos in Creation and history is the cornerstone of Revelation.

First of all, I have emphasized that in the triangle „Logos-Creation-Revelation”, according to St. Maximus' vision, God reveals out of His kindness throughout the world entities from the very first moment of Creation. The Logos reveals instantly with Its multiplication or embodiment in the reasons of things.

Following a textual analyses, I have substantiated the presence of the Logos in history and Creation through the Embodiment, as the cornerstone of Revelation. St. Maximus' affirms in *Ambigua* 10 that „God is present and He reveals in everything and through everything”. This assertion gives us access to the core of St. Maximus' vision upon God' presence in Creation, as foundation of Revelation. Bringing this idea in line with the idea of *Ambigua* 7, where God wishes to make His Embodiment work in all

creatures, and with the idea of Triple Embodiment of *Ambigua* 33, we come to the following syllogism: 1. God is present in all things and reveals through them (*Ambigua* 10); 2. God's presence in Creation, Scripture and man is carried out through the embodiment of Christ; 3. The previous points confer to the Embodied Logos a double valence: it is the way God marks the beginning of His presence in creatures (His full-print presence will take place in God's Kingdom's age to come) and in the same time, the Embodied Logos is the cornerstone of Revelation.

In respect to the „Maximian' dialectics in Revelation" I have pointed out that St. Dionysios the Areopagite might be the key of understanding the Revelation in St. Maximus' vision and interpretation. St. Dionysios transfers to St. Maximus the tension emerged from a transcendent God, wrapped in the mantle of concealment and Revelation. St. Maximus envisions in Revelation an interactive dialectics leading to a divine-human re-composite. The inherent of this dialectics is the paradoxical nature of Revelation: God, the Maker of universe, by nature invisible, in appearance conceals Himself, and in concealing Himself is made manifest. Therefore, when it comes about Revelation, we need to take into account a basic consideration: God's invisible form in His manifestations. This hide-manifest tension evolves in a progressive movement of the Logos, while descending in creation and history. In Its movement, the Logos magnetizes all the creation through man, abducting them in the come-back journey in the Oneness of God. This is a Oneness to diversity and reintegration in Oneness movement. The divine oikonomia of the Logos develops in two phases: the descent and embodiment of the Logos, a phase already completed, and another phase of ascension, in progress in mankind, to be completed through the Embodied Son of God alone.

In reference to St. Maximus' teaching on the triple embodiment of the Logos, tracing down Origen, St. Maximus tells us about a triple embodiment of the Logos in the reasons of creation, the words of the Holy Scripture and man, almost gradual. Historical embodiment represents a theological model to describe God's presence in creation and Scripture. Teaching on the triple Embodiment of the Logos, sets forth the idea that Its seal comes with every creature endowed by God with its own divine reason. St. Maximus admits in his teaching on the triple embodiment of the Logos the real and active presence of the Logos in Scripture's words as well as in all creation. Without it, we cannot speak about God's revelation all over history through the Holy Scripture. We cannot speak about God's revelation through the divine grace revealed in the body of Christ either. Therefore,

the embodiment and active presence of the Logos in the reasons of creation, the words of Scripture and man, gives the bricklayer of Revelation.

I pointed out that the triple embodiment of the Logos generates the *theoria* of the three laws. St. Maximus admits in general terms the very existence of the three laws: the natural law (φυσικός νόμος), the written law (γράφτος νόμος) and the law of grace (χάριτος νόμος). These three Laws find their correspondent in the three ways the Logos marks Its presence. These could be considered as stages of the history of redemption as well. Christ is the Lawmaker of all three laws, the One resuming and unifying them. In the same time, He is the End of them all. He is present in them and even embodies in gradual levels. St. Maximus tells us that no law is more important than the other. They all have the same importance, for they invite us to know their body, Christ the Logos. Even though, St. Maximus shows his predilection to one law, the law of grace. And this is probably due to the law's direct way of communication with divinity.

I have evidenced the superiority of the law of grace versus the written law. While the written law manifests in an artificial way (τεχνικώς) using interfaces such as symbols (σύμβολον), enigmas (αίνιγμα) and figures (τύπος), the law of grace needs no interface of symbols, enigmas and figures.

I have shown that the Logos reveals through each of the three laws, but under a different gradient. St. Maximus' interpretation of „Lord Jesus Christ' Transfiguration” of *Ambigua* 10 is an iconic example of the Logos' Revelation through the three laws. The Taboric light is a symbol of Christ the Saviour's deification, while His illumined garments symbolize creation and Scripture. This shows the possibility of transfiguration of matter and history with the revelation of grace. The three laws confer to the Logos three ways of manifestation: natural revelation, revelation through Scripture and revelation through grace. St. Maximus envisions the revelation of the Logos in history and Scripture through the garments which veil the Lord, becoming in the eschatological moment of sight transparent to the flesh concealed beneath: the Words of Scripture and the corporeal forms of creation become translucent to the intelligible realities and hidden principles imbedded in them. God revealed in the law of grace in a dual way: in an objective manner through Christ, a climax of God's Revelation and subjective manner in an apophatic experience. An important feature of the law of grace is the divine light, radiating from a translucent body. Through Christ, the human body is transfigured in an agent of Revelation.

St. Maximus considers in *Ambigua* 10 that the law of grace and the natural law enjoy the same honour, proving of equal revelatory efficacy. As solid argument to his theory, St.

Maximus makes use of an analogy between cosmos and Scripture. The cosmos is like a book and the Bible is like the cosmos. Both consist of words. Reading It, we come across the Word. It makes us aware of Its existence but tells us nothing of Its essence. The written law comes before our eyes as another world made up of heaven, earth and those in-between. This composite represents in fact the moral, natural and theological philosophies, heralding the silent power of the One who has spoken. The natural law and the written law are of the same essence. Each one of them eclipses and reveals the same Reason. They eclipse the Reason by letter and visible things and reveal the sense of Its hidden things.

St. Maximus tells us that creation and Scripture enjoys the same power of revelation, for both of them include the Logos within divine reasons. Both creation and Scripture reveals or eclipse through letters or the image of the visible things the Reason in Its oneness. St. Maximus makes no difference of essence between the natural, supernatural or Biblical revelations. The latter is nothing but embodiment of the first in persons and historical events. St. Maximus considers creation of the same importance with Scripture in the structure of Revelation. Therefore, the revealing movement of the Logos is mediated by created sensible realities: nature and history.

In reference to section „Law and Revelation in Man’s Spiritual Ascent in History”, I emphasize the relation between the three stages of the spiritual life and the three channels the divine reasons use to communicate with man: the natural law, the written law and the law of grace. Scholium 20 from *Replies to Thalassius* 65 tells us the hierarchy of the laws, where written law stands one level above the natural law. The hierarchy finds its correspondence in the three stages of one’s spiritual ascent: working out of commandments, natural contemplation and deification. This hierarchy could be understood only if extrapolated into each person’s life, not to history in general. The written law stands on the Ten Commandments, therefore their fulfillment is the beginning of man’s ascent to the knowledge of God. The Ten Commandments open a new horizon, wherefrom man can elevate to a state of natural contemplation, following his union with God.

In fifth chapter, entitled „Revelation, History and Scripture”, St. Maximus envisions the Holy Scripture both as history and revelation. The imaginary appearance of the letter, „false” and opposed to the real sense of Scripture St. Maximus called „history” (*historia*). The spirit of Scripture is not another letter but the spirit of this letter. It is another mode of God to reveal to those contemplating Scripture with a purified mind.

On „The Relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament” St. Maximus considers Lord Jesus Christ as „Forerunner” of His first coming through

revelation of the Old Testament, while the Embodied Logos becomes the „Forerunner” of His second coming through the New Testament. The Holy Father makes difference between shadow, icon and archetype of the wellness of the age to come. The old law was the hologram of the wellness from the age to come. The Gospel trains those who believe in God as icons of those good things or icons of Saviour Jesus Christ.

In section „Revelation through Biblical personalities”, St. Maximus contemplates the pre-figuration of Christ in interpreting the spiritual meaning of personalities from the Old Testament, giving examples Melchizedek, Joshua, David and Zerubbabel. Towards the end, I approached the significance of prophet Jonas’ life and personality. In St. Maximus’ vision, Jonas figures Adam, the human being in general, Saviour Jesus Christ, the grace of prophecy and the dissatisfied Hebrew people.

In section „Natural Contemplation and the Knowledge of God”, are presented the five modes of natural contemplation, evidencing the role of senses in the process of knowledge. Concerning the revelation-contemplation-knowledge triad, St. Maximus tells us in *Replies to Thalassius* that God reveals as Creator through the reasons of things. They are the footprints of God in creation. God gives us possibility to encounter Him through the divine reasons imprinted in created beings. These very divine reasons, guide the human mind found in a state of natural contemplation to the knowledge of God.

The last section entitled „Contemplation through Scripture in Knowledge of God” sets forth the second mode of natural contemplation emanated from Scripture. Contemplating the Holy Scripture, we dive into Its spiritual sense, mysteriously disguised behind letters. Even if they start from different angles, both natural contemplation and contemplation through Scripture flow in the same river: knowledge of God. Already on the peak of contemplation, they discover God-the Logos embodied already in the *logoi* of creatures and the words(λόγοι) of Scripture. But they discover something else too: the Holy Spirit, present in creation and breathing in the Holy Scripture. St. Maximus’ *Chapters on Knowledge* drifts us to peak of contemplation, where the embodied Word gains in clarity under a more and more transparent veil of mystery, covering the Holy Scripture’s letter, where the knowledge of God is waiting.