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**THE HYMNOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY PASSIONS AND OF JESUS
CHRIST’S RESURRECTION
SUMMARY – DOCTORATE THESIS**

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THE HYMNOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY PASSIONS AND JESUS CHRIST'S RESURRECTION IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

The hymns of the Church, fully used in the services of the divine Orthodox public cult, are the expression of faithful teaching or dogma in the shape of poetry in order to be sung in the cult place, at the divine Mass.

Establishing the right teaching of the Church, in the great Ecumenical Synods, this became an inspiration source and a subject for the Christian hymnography, which gets richer and richer from one century to another. The religious hymnography remains the largest painting through force and colour of the word in spirit of the holy history of our resurrection from sin and death, through Christ.

In the service of defending the Christian faith from the attacks of the heretics, an entire group of theologians, poets, writers and religious singers with a rich theological culture and a perfect knowledge of the dogma contributed leaving their hymnographical heritage to the Church.

Authors like Roman the Melodious, Sofronie of Jerusalem, Andrew Cretan, Gherman from Constantinople, John Damascene, Cosmas the Melodious, Teofan Graptul, Josef and Theodor the Studious, Anatoly of Thessaloniki, the nun Casia and others enriched the cult books of the Orthodox Church with hymnographical achievements which carry across the centuries the genius of their poetical inspiration and the richness of the undying dogmatic teaching. The Mass books represent in fact the everyday teaching of the church. As a structure, they are the authorized and always alive expression of the entire religious customs, contemporary to all centuries.

The purpose of this study is to discover together with the Orthodox hymns and the prayers from the cult books, the profundity and the importance of Our Saviour Jesus Christ with their culmination being represented by the Holy Cross and the Holy

Resurrection, from a dogmatic and liturgical view point, as a indestructible combination and a reciprocal assumption¹, because through passions and death on the Cross, Jesus restored and consolidated the assumed human nature, and through the Resurrection He renewed it totally and He filled it with all His Spirit.

The present paper is structured in five parts:

Part I: The Theology of the Holy Cross – the symbol of the Holy Passions, underlines the fundamental importance of the secret of the Holy Cross in different periods of the history of the salvation.

❖ The Symbolism of the Holy Cross

All the events tied to the moment of the crucifixion on the Golgotha, - the Passions, the sacrifice, the death, the burial, – became major events of the divine plan which transform the ecclesiastical space, the house of the Lord, in their own icon, a permanent memory and especially a permanent memory of the continuous meeting of the faithful people with Jesus Christ.

Christ brought Himself “*to the God – the Father, offering His own body as the Lamb which sacrifices himself, not on the altar of the temple, but on the wood of the Cross; that is why, the altar and the church – the place where He spills His blood, wear the image of the Cross. The Church-Cross replaces the temple.*”² The Church, being the place of the real sacrifice, not an act of commemoration, symbolic or allegoric, even from the beginnings of Christianity was identified with the space of Golgotha, being a carrier of the Cross.

In the Old Testament, the Saint Cross is imagined as the “*tree of life*” which rose from the Lord’s command, in the middle of the earthly Heaven, together with “*the tree of knowledge of the good and the evil*” (Genesis 2, 6).

The hymnographers create a logical connexion between the wood from Heaven, through which the evil came in the sin and the death in the world and between the redeeming wood of the Cross:

¹ Professor Dr. Dan Ilie Ciobotea, *Legătura interioară dintre cruce și Înviere*, in *Ortodoxiei*, in “Mitropolia Banatului” magazine, XXXIV (1984), nr. 3-4, p. 125.

² Priest. Conf. Dr. I. Moldovan, *Temeiurile scripturistice ale închinării credincioșilor în Sfânta Biserică*, in “Ortodoxia” magazine, XXXIV (1982), nr. 3, p. 440.

“Tasting from wood the first of man was forever lost; and with the terrible banishment from life sentencing us, as with a bodily illness, harmful, he dirtied the entire human nature. But through the wood of the Cross, earning our healing we shout: the One that are so praised, God of our parents and ours, you are so blessed (The Genesis of Chir Cosmas)³.

“With the food from the tree killing us, with the wood from your Cross we resurrected...” (Joseph’s three part song)⁴

Visible signs of the interpretation of the Holy Cross are considered blessings of the Patriarch Jacob:

“For the blessings of the sons, Jacob before all, it was you that signed, Holy Cross; but by showing devotion to you, forever we receive guidance“ (Joseph’s Genesis)⁵.

Cosmas the hymnographer found symbols of the Cross in Moses’ actions:

“Making the sign of the Cross, Moses with the staff divided the Red Sea for Israel, the one who on foot crossed it; and across hitting the sea, he place it back together against the Pharaoh’s carriages, above becoming indestructible weapon” (Cosmas)⁶.

Moses also embodied the face of Christ’s holy Passion of: “It was first inside of Moses that the face of the great Passion was revealed, standing in the middle of the priests. And as a cross imagining himself, extending his arms, he overcame the power of Amalec, the loser.” (Cosmas)⁷.

The hymnographers found symbols also in Aaron’s staff, which signifies the cross which gives life: *“the staff towards the imagination of the Mystery looks upon himself, that through offspring chose a priest and for the Church once the least fruitful, now the wood of the cross flourished for power and strength “(Cosmas)⁸.*

³ *September Menaion, the 14th day, the 7th song, the 1st Stichera, p.214;*

⁴ *Triodion, Wednesday from the cheese Shrovetide week, at the Matins service, Joseph’s three part song , the 3rd, the 2nd Stichera, p. 61.*

⁵ *September Menaion, the 13th day, at the Matins service, the 7th song, the 2nd Stichera, p.198;*

⁶ *September Menaion, the 14th day, at the Matins service, the Cross Canon, the 1st song Irmos, p. 209;*

⁷ *September Menaion, the 14th day, at the Matins service, the Cross Canon, the 1st song, the 1st Stichera , p. 210;*

⁸ *Idem, the 14th day, at the Matins service, the Holy Cross Canon, the 3rd song Irmos, p. 210.*

The events from the Old Testament have thus a symbolic significance for Christians and can be transformed in spiritual realities and concentrated absolutely all on the Holy Cross.

At the origin, the Cross was seen not as a memory of the Christ's passion, but rather as a symbol of God's glory revealed in the embodied Word. Even when it indicates the cross on which Christ was crucified, it will also be understood as an expression of the divine glory which defeats death, its four arms reflecting the cosmic⁹ character of its Redeeming work.

The Saint Gregory Palamas, talking about the necessity, but also about the consequences of Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross underlines: "*no one, never became God's friend through the power of the Cross... so how else could someone renew and become friends in spirit with God, without having erased the sin and without abandoning life after body? And this is Christ's Cross, meaning the annulment of the sin*"¹⁰.

❖ The anthropology of the Holy Cross

The Holy Cross is the sign of our determination to pass secretly through the things our Lord Jesus Christ passed over. The one who makes the sign of the Holy Cross confesses through this that she/he wants to be Jesus' follower. He/she follows God's words: "*If someone wants to come after Me, leave yourself, take your cross every day and follow me*" (Luke 9, 2-3).

"And the one who doesn't wear one's cross and doesn't come after Me cannot be my follower" (Luke 14, 27).

As other authors of hymns from the cult books tell, the same scriptural advice was followed by apostles, devout people, martyrs and all other who endured the hardships that Christ endured it.¹¹

Referring to the Saint Apostles, the hymnographers reveal their belief in the power of Jesus' Cross, naming it "*divine plough*" which ploughed the entire Earth:

⁹ Jean Daniélou, *Le symbolisme cosmique de la Croix*, La Maison Dieu, 1963, p. 75.

¹⁰ Grigorie Palama, the 11th Homily, in the "*Omiliu*" volum, translated from Greek by Dr. Constantin Daniel, revised by Laura Pătrașcu, Anastasia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 152, PG CLI, 138.

¹¹ Holger Kaffka, *Das kreuz Christi im orthodoxen Gottesdienst der byzantinischen und slawischen Tradition Erlangen, 1995, p. 68.*

“With the divine plough of the Holy Cross you ploughed the ground, divine Apostles, making it fertile and planting the right faith. For this, we praise you loudly for all years to come, we glorify forever Christ.” (Joseph’s Genesis)¹²

In religious terminology, Christ’s sacrifice is the Lamb’s sacrifice for the sins of the world and the mother is the Lambkin that grieves bitterly for her Lamb:

“The Lambkin seeing Your, the Lamb, forever patient Word, crucified on the wood together with the robbers, and with the spear piercing your ribs, as a mother moaned crying: what a marvellous and scary Mystery is this, my Jesus? How will you be covered by the tomb, unlimited God? Unspeakable is the thing that is being accomplished! Do not let me by myself, me the one that gave birth to my sweet Child” (Theodor the Studios)¹³.

The suffering and the death impresses her, the tragic feeling of the human limits, for which the hymnographer finds other metaphors of a remarkable delicacy and artistic flexibility. Sometimes it seems that this feeling of boundaries crushes the moral balance and the hymns slips towards the dark areas of despair, but each time, the author of the hymn goes to another fresh metaphor, bringing the song towards the initial optimism. The Holy Virgin knows the destiny of her Son.¹⁴

*“Thus Saint Gabriel announced me that my Son’s reign would be an everlasting one for centuries and centuries.”*¹⁵

That is why she was praying like this: *“Life, do no linger between dead”*¹⁶

*“Sparkling sun after night shine so brightly, God; and You after Your death shine more, resurrecting from the tomb as a God”*¹⁷

❖ The soteriology sprang from the Holy Cross and from God’s Resurrection

From the three dimensions of Christ’s ministration, those of holiness and divinity mean the cross and the resurrection.

¹² *Triodion*, Thursday in the 4th week of the Great Fast, at the Matins service, Canons, the 4th three-part song, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 351;

¹³ *Triodion*, Friday in the 4th week of the Great Fast, at the Matins service, Și acum...a Sedelnei a II-a, p. 299

¹⁴ Priest Professor Marcu Bănescu, *Poezie și dogmă în serviciul divin al Vinerii Mari*, in “*Mitropolia Banatului*” magazine, XXXII (1982), nr. 4-6, p. 237

¹⁵ *Triodion*, the Lord’s Funeral, the 2nd part of the Mass, the 49th song, p. 658;

¹⁶ *Idem*, the 2nd part of the Mass, the 54th song, p. 658,

¹⁷ *Idem*, the 2nd part of the Mass, the 22nd and the 27th song, p. 656,

The death on the Cross of our Lord represents the core of the holy ministration and it is proven by divine prophecies, by the Lord's and the Apostles' words, by the symbols and the faithful confessions and by the holy Fathers' voices¹⁸.

Thus when it comes to the organization of the Anaphora, the words belonging to Isaiah were used because they underline this reality about Christ's sacrifice on the Cross in order to save humanity:

“As a lamb that was going to be stabbed He went and as an innocent sheep against the one that shears it He didn't open His mouth.”

“By His godliness His judgement rose and His people who will tell it. As his life was taken from this earth” (Isaiah 53, 4-8).

The hymnography praises the Holy Cross, the symbol of sufferance and passions of our Lord, because all the believers were redeemed:

“We praise the wood of your Cross, you, the one who loves people, because you were crucified on it, you, the one who represents everybody's Life; you opened Heaven to the robber who through belief recognized you as his Saviour ...”¹⁹; and the passions and the insults that He suffered protected Him from torment and helped the believers to know the heavenly life.

In several troparia taken from canons dedicated to the Resurrection and the Holy Cross is accentuated the idea that Christ's humility up to the idea of being a slave, as a form of absolute devotion, of patience, of voiceless suffering, brought the salvation of the entire humanity:

“Profound compassion and mercy overwhelmed us through Your pitiful descent; by embodying a man and by becoming a slave, my Lord, you deified me and together with You, You glorified me”²⁰.

❖ The Holy Cross's attributes

¹⁸ Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Crucea în teologie și cultul Bisericii ortodoxe*, in “Ortodoxia” magazine, XXV (1973), nr. 2, p. 48.

¹⁹ *Oktoichos*, Friday at the Matins Service, Tone I, sedelna a IV-a, p.73;

²⁰ *Idem*, Sunday at the Matins Service, Tone III, the Canon of the Cross and of the Resurrection, the 6th song, the 1st *Stichera*, p. 187;

Here are some qualifiers of the Holy Cross from the Third Sunday: “*the spring of grace*”²¹, “*the piouses’ adornment*”²², “*the martyrs’ glory*”, “*the believers’ strength*”²³, “*the monks’ praise and salvation*”²⁴, “*victorious weapon*”²⁵, “*the tree of fertility*”²⁶, “*life carrier*”²⁷, “*life of the being*”²⁸, “*brighter than the sun*”²⁹.

In the power of the Cross there is the ultimate conviction of the devil, as well as in the releasing of the being from its domination:

“*The power of Your Cross, my Lord, is great: that is why just imaging it among ourselves, on the spot we cast away the strength of the demons*”³⁰.

The Cross represents thus the triumphant chariot belonging to our Saviour which pulls along, linked and won all the demonic powers that had fought against Him and the entire humanity³¹.

“*The one who with Your Cross ruined the break up and the middle wall of the hatred, renewing the rich peace at all the ends of the world;*” (Joseph’s Genesis)³².

That is why the entire nature is glad that it is no longer humiliated by us through its use as a way of enslaving the spirit:

“*All the woods of the forest praise seeing the wood of the Cross, the one like you, embracing itself today*”³³.

The nature’s wood in the shape of the cross is no longer an alluring one towards pleasures and a way of linking the faithful person to the world, but it is a transparent way

²¹ *Oktoichos s*, the 2nd and the 3rd *Stichera*, Lauds, the 2nd *Stichera*, p. 321.

²² *Idem*, the Vesper service, *Doamne strigat-am*, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 312.

²³ *Idem*, the Vesper service, *Doamne strigat-am*, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 312.

²⁴ *Idem*, the Matins service, Laude, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 321.

²⁵ *Idem*, the Vesper service, *Doamne strigat-am*, the 2nd and the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 312.

²⁶ *Idem*, the Vesper service, *Doamne strigat-am*, the 2nd *Stichera*, p. 312.

²⁷ *Idem*, the 3rd Sunday of the Great Fast, the Vesper service, *Doamne strigat-am*, the 2nd and the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 312.

²⁸ *Idem*, Tuesday in the 4th week of the Great Fast, the Matins service, *Sedelna a III-a*, p.331.

²⁹ *Idem*, the Matins service, the 8th song, the 1st *Stichera*, p. 333.

³⁰ *Idem*, Friday, the 1st week of the Great Fast, the Matins service, another three part song, the 9th song, the 2nd *Stichera*, p. 183.

³¹ Priest Professor Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Învățătura ortodoxă despre mântuire și concluziile cercetărilor din ea pentru slujirea creștină*”, in “Ortodoxia” magazine XXIV (1972), nr. 2, p. 208.

³² *Triodion*, Friday, in the cheese Shrovetide week, the 5th *Stichera*, p. 79.

³³ *September Menaion*, the 14th day, the Little Vesper Service, “Glory...both now...Theotokion”, p. 203.

towards God, being reduced to its fundamental essence, with all the alluring ornaments taken off.³⁴

In the Cross's canons, affirming the destruction of the demonic power and implicitly, of the devil is categorical:

*“Through Your cross the impure got ashamed ... and the power of those pious rose for Your resurrection, Christ...destroying the destroyer, You, Glorious One, all together You resurrected them...”*³⁵.

The wood from Heaven creates the hell but the wood of the cross destroys it³⁶. The Orthodox song book underlines this fact in the hymns dedicated to the Resurrection:

*“Wonderful Your crucifixion and Your descending in hell is, You the One that loves people, because robbing the devil, you resurrected the ones damned together with you for the glory, as a god, and opening Heaven, you made them worthy of acquiring it. Because of this, forgive our sins to us, the ones who glorify your Resurrection after the Third Day, and make us worthy of living in heaven”*³⁷.

In the Easter sermon, St. John Chrysostom uses a powerful language referring to the destruction of hell by Christ: *“...the one who descended in hell robbed it ... Hell received a body and by God it was struck. It received ground and it met the sky. It received what it saw and it fell through what it didn't see”*³⁸.

❖ The days dedicated to the Holy Cross

• The Elevation of the Holy Cross

The departure point of the public and official cult of the Holy Cross was the celebration the Elevation of the Holy Cross on the 14th of September³⁹. In the same day

³⁴ Priest Professor Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Crucea în teologie și cultul Bisericii ortodoxe*, in “Ortodoxia” magazine, XXV (1973), nr. 2, p. 174.

³⁵ *Oktoichos*, Sunday, the Matins service, the 3rd voice, the Canon of the Cross, the third song, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 185;

³⁶ Priest Professor Dr. Nicolae Buzescu, *Sfânta Cruce în înnoștrfa cultului orthodox*, in “Ortodoxia” magazine XXXIV (1982), nr. 2, p. 296.

³⁷ *Oktoichos*, Sunday, the Matins service, the 4th voice, *Stihurile* Învierii de la stihoavnă, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 346;

³⁸ *Pentecostarion*, the Easter Service, Saint John the Evangelist' Teaching word, p. 25.

³⁹ After the confession of some chronicle, the celebration of the Holy Cross took place on the 13th of September 335, when it was christened the famous basilica built by Konstantin the Great above our Lord's tomb (Μαρτυριον), and the second day Bishop Macarius of Jerusalem showed for the first time the wood of the Holy Cross to the ones present. Since then, the day of the 14th of September remained for good the celebration of the “Elevation” or the “Showing” of the Holy Cross. In time the day of the 13th of September remained as a simple pre-celebration of the Elevation of the Holy Cross as Pr. Prof. Dr. Ene Braniște sustains in *Liturgica generală*, the 2nd Edition, The Biblical and Missionary institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church Publishing House, Bucharest, 1993, p. 215.

we celebrate: the finding on the Cross that our saviour was crucified on and its solemn elevation by Bishop Macarius of Jerusalem in front of the people on the 14th of September 335; also we celebrate the fact that the Holy Cross was brought from the Persians in 629, during the reign of king Heraclius, being laid in the Church of the Holy Tomb from Jerusalem, after Patriarch Zechariah lifted it for every believer to see it on the 14th of September 630⁴⁰.

- The third Sunday from the Great Fast or Lent (of the Holy Cross)

The celebration of the Cross from the third Sunday of the Great Fast was called “*The Celebration of the Third devotion of the Cross*”⁴¹ in a manuscript from the XII century Jerusalem⁴².

It completed thus the celebration of the Elevation of the Holy Cross from the 14th of September which marked its discovery by Saint Helen and the one of the procession of the Cross from the 1st of August which reminded King Heraclius’s victory over the Persians and the return of Holy Cross to Jerusalem in 630⁴³.

In the IX-X century, the celebration of the Cross appeared exactly in the middle of the Great Fast, on Wednesday, and not on Sunday⁴⁴. The transfer of this celebration in the third Sunday was done gradually imposing itself in the entire Church.

In the Great Fast, the Cross appears as a tree of life in the middle of Heaven⁴⁵. The way which leads to Easter will be from now on marked by the sign of the Cross: it is a “crucified time” which leads to Christ’s Cross⁴⁶.

“Most glorified Cross which blesses the time of the fast is seen now; to it we bow our heads today and we shout: our Lord, you who love people, gives us the power to

⁴⁰ Pr. Prof. Dr. Ene Braniște, *Liturgica generală*, p. 214.

⁴¹ G. Bonnet “*Le mystère de la Croix dans le carême Orthodoxe*”, *Irénikon* 52, 1979, p. 200.

⁴² Makarios Simonopetritul, *Triodul explicat. Mistagogia timpului liturgic*, translation by the Deacon Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis Publishing House, Sibiu, 2000, p. 337.

⁴³ A. Frolow, “*La vraie Croix et les expéditions d’Héraclius en Perse*”, *REB* 2, 1955, p. 88.

⁴⁴ Joseph Hallit, *La Typologie de la Croix dans l’hymnographie byzantine*, in “*Parole de l’Orient*”, (1979-1982), Université Saint-Esprit, Karlik, Liban, nr. 9-10.

⁴⁵ *Triodion*, the Third Sunday of the Great Fast, the Saint’s biography, p. 318.

⁴⁶ Makarios Simonopetritul, *Triodul explicat. Mistagogia timpului liturgic*, translation by the Deacon Ioan I. Ică jr., Deisis Publishing House, Sibiu, 2000, p. 344.

*pass the other part of the Fast rapidly with the help of the Cross and let us see (...) the sacrifices through which you saved us*⁴⁷.

- The Mass from the Holy Thursday evening (the Mass of the Twelve Gospels or the Little Mass)

What is specific for this is the reading of the 12 Gospels of passions and the solemn placement of the Holy Cross in the middle of the church. Besides the reading of the 12 Gospels, there are also 15 special verses of the day that describe our Lord's passions and that are sung alternatively with other religious hymns.

The ritual of placing the Holy Cross in the middle of the Church after the Fifth Gospel symbolises Jesus carrying His Cross from the judgement place to Golgotha before crucifixion.

- The Mass from the Holy Friday of Passions – (Christ's Burial)

The dramatic character of the Orthodox Cult reaches its culminating top at the morning mass from the Great Saturday, who after the expression of the Russian theologian Sergiu Boulgakoff represents: *"the culminating point of the Orthodox liturgical creation"*⁴⁸.

The core of this service is the funeral, meaning that long series of short religious songs, divided in three moods or groups, in which the Orthodox Church expresses feelings of pain for the crucifixion and the death of the godly Redeemer, but also feelings of hope about his near Resurrection.

Christ's funeral makes us all of a sudden contemporaries with the devastating moments that followed to the crucifixion: the descending from the Cross, the cry of the broken hearted Holy Mother, the burial that was organized through the concern of Nikodemus and of Joseph, "the one with a kind face".

"In the grave, life, you were put ..." and the whisper of pain replies, *"the army of angles got frightened"*. The entire formerly tragedy crosses the centuries and it is besides us, when another voice sounds the pain:

⁴⁷ *Triodion*, Friday in the 4th week of the Great Fast, at the Matins Service, sedelna I, P.357.

⁴⁸ S. Boulgakoff, "Orthodoxie", Paris, 1932, translation by de M. Grosu, Sibiu, 1988, p. 173.

“But how do you die Life?”⁴⁹, question to which we can find a satisfying answer just through faith.

❖ The fulfilment of the Holy Cross Theology into the one of the resurrection

The Holy Cross is no longer Christ’s sceptre that leads us to the kingdom but also the germ of our resurrection. Through sin and lack of repentance, the believer lost the divine adoption that one wants, praying to God not to be abandoned by Him and to be adopted again and renewed through repentance.

*“My good Father, I estranged myself from You but do not leave me, and do not consider me unworthy of Your kingdom. The most cunning enemy took off my clothes and robbed me of my wealth; he dissipated my most precious spiritual gifts as a debauched. So standing up and turning myself to You I shout: Make me as one of Your servants, the one who for me You spread on the cross Your pure arms in order to pull me out from the terrible beast and with the first cloth to dress me as You are the only merciful One”*⁵⁰.

In the Second Part of the paper I presented the person of our Lord Jesus Christ reflected in the hymnography of the Holy Cross and that of the resurrection.

❖ The consequences of the unification of the two different kinds of natures, the divine one and the human one.

The hymnography made evident the true faithful teaching at the times of the disputes regarding the theory of Christ, when either His godliness or His Humanity was contested. Thus, the hymnographers defended the unity of the person of Jesus Christ and together with that the consequences of the actualization of the two natures with the wills and the respective works⁵¹.

Our cult books contain a rich hymnographical poetry in which there are presented the consequences of the hypostatic union⁵² meaning the consequences of the actualization of the two natures, divine and human in “*a functional whole*”⁵³.

⁴⁹ *Triodion*, Denia Prohodului, Section I, the 2nd religious hymn, P. 649.

⁵⁰ *Idem*, the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, at the Matins Service, the Glory from the Lauds, p. 24.

⁵¹ Priest Petre Vintilescu, *Despre poezia imnografică din cărțile de ritual și cântare bisericească*, Bucharest, 1973, p. 39-41.

⁵² Priest Professor Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Chipul evanghelic al lui Iisus Hristos*, Sibiu, 1991, p. 28.

⁵³ *Idem*, *Iisus Hristos sau restaurarea omului*, Craiova, 1993, p. 42.

At the Mass from the Holy Thursday evening from the Great Week, the hymnographer underlines this communication of God's human characteristics, through the already known words:

*“Today on the wood hang the One who hang the land on waters. The King of angels was crowned with a wreath of thorns; with deceiving purple cloth the One Who dresses the sky with clouds He was dressed”*⁵⁴.

*“The unusual offering and the divine richness of Your poverty, my Lord, frightened the angels seeing You crucified on the cross in order to save the ones that faithfully shout”*⁵⁵.

After Resurrection, communicating the characteristics is even more shown by the hymnographers from the perspective of the human being who succeeded in doing, from then on, all the godly things.

The ten apostles in the Resurrection day and the Apostles with Thomas eight days after see the Human Jesus in the flesh, but He enters through the locked doors, but his words and gestures are means through which God Himself cheers up and decides the kingdom's secrecy, came a long time among them, but now He becomes evident, He shines.

The reciprocal communication of the characteristics of the two united natures implies the fact that Jesus Christ, Who is just one Person, deserves just one crossing oneself and specifically the one deserved by God⁵⁶.

*“The Groom of the Church was nailed with spikes, the Son of the Virgin was jabbed with the spear, and we bow down to your passions, Christ”*⁵⁷. Or at the burial ceremony: *“We praise You, Jesus Christ and we honour your burial and your passions because you saved us from rotting”*⁵⁸, *“All people give praise to Your burial, My Lord”*⁵⁹.

⁵⁴ *Triodion*, Denia de Joi, the Passions Week, the 15th antiphon, p. 610.

⁵⁵ *Oktoichos*, tone VIII, Sunday at the Matins service, the Canon of the Resurrection, the 7th song, the 2nd, p.603.

⁵⁶ *Idem*, p. 86.

⁵⁷ *Triodion*, Denia de Joi, the Passions Week, the 15th antiphon, p. 610.

⁵⁸ *Idem*, the Lord's Funeral, section I, the 3rd *Stichera*, p. 649.

⁵⁹ *Idem*, section III, the 1st *Stichera*, p. 659.

The Cross's secret is discovered also in the kenotic text (Philippians II, 6-10) from which we know that the son of God descended to us in order to adopt us, to raise us to His glory and to make us gods⁶⁰.

“Christ, taking God's face, He didn't consider an offence to be just like God, but He renounced at Himself, becoming a slave just like a man, and resembling a man, He became humble, obedient being until His death and especially until death on the cross”⁶¹.

“Through wood Adam killed himself willingly, disobedient being, but by listening to Christ he became new again. That is why Christ, the Son of God got crucified”⁶².

For Saint Maximus, kenosis doesn't actually mean God's fall from His divinity, but a deed of His kindness and a way of displaying His power in order to strengthen the inside of the human nature⁶³.

“Son! The One that is without sin, how did You crucified yourself innocently on the Cross as a criminal, wanting to resurrect humanity as You are so kind?”⁶⁴

“God, You spread Your arms on the Cross willingly, but you suffered greatly satisfying Your Father's will and you came to save people as You are so generous”⁶⁵.

❖ The plan of redemption from the view point of the Holy Cross and Resurrection hymnography

In the centre of the humanity's redemption act there are the passions and the death on the cross: Christ was crucified for our salvation bringing sacrifice to the Father (I Corinthians XV, 3) and He rose from the dead, being the first who resurrected from death (I Corinthians XV, 20).

⁶⁰ Priest Ioan Mircea, *Crucea Domnului, Taina și Slava Lui*, in “Ortodoxia” magazine, XXXIV (1982), nr. 2, p. 205.

⁶¹ About this text, Saint Justin the Martyr speaks about “the enslavement of the cross” and the “secret of the Cross”. He says that “Christ served until the enslavement of the Cross, for different and distinct people of every kind, obtaining them through blood and the secret of the Cross” (Saint Justin the Martyr, *Dialogul cu iudeul Trifon*, XCI, in “Apologeti de limbă greacă”, translation by Priest Professor Olimp N. Căciulă, Bucharest, 1980, p. 250.

⁶² *Oktoichos*, tune VII, , the Canon of the resurrection, the 7th song, the 1st verse, p. 523.

⁶³ Saint Maxim the Confessor, *Filocalia*, volume 2, translation by Priest Professor Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, Sibiu, 1946, p. 72, PG XCI, col. 615- 618.

⁶⁴ *October Menaion*, the first day at the Matins service, at the 3rd song of the Cross, p. 10.

⁶⁵ *April Menaion*, the 6th Day, at the Vesper service, Stichera of the Cross and of the Theotokion, p. 25.

Through His resurrection from the dead, Christ renewed and deified human nature that was strengthened and restored through the sacrifice on the cross. With it, Christ renewed the entire nature with which man is in an ontological connexion and which through the renewed man through Resurrection He rises again towards God, thanks to the uncreated divine energies, that through God- the Man, Jesus Christ, infuses the entire creation⁶⁶.

The songs from the Hymn Book, the Triodion and the Pentecostarion expose with a lot of details the teaching about the Incarnation, Life, Cross, Death and Resurrection of our Saviour. They tell about the entire act of redemption of our Lord, Jesus Christ, which means the salvation from the enslavement of the sin and man's straitening through penitence.

The hymnographers know about this carrying attitude that God has from the beginning for the fallen man; they know about the fact that, once with the drama of the sin, also began the unwinding of the redemption⁶⁷, which God prepared it from eternity:

*"Today is the beginning of our salvation and the revelation of the eternal secret: the Son of God and of the Holy Virgin is born and Gabriel announces this gift."*⁶⁸

According to the scriptural revelation (Genesis 3, 15), it was with this consolation that man came out of Heaven and on its basis man will live his life from now on.

*"Oh my, what I have to endure, I, the sinner (...). For this even the Saviour towards him (towards Adam) said: I do not want my creation to perish, but I want it to be saved and I want it to come to know the truth. Because I will not send away the one that comes to Me"*⁶⁹;

The two pole of the divine plan from the redemption act of our Lord Jesus Christ are the incarnation, on one hand, and the sacrifice and the resurrection, on the other hand, because the Redeemer had to be a Human- God so as the world to be redeemed from the ancestral sin.

⁶⁶ Pr. Lecturer Dumitru Radu, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁶⁷ Vladimir Lossky, *Essaie sur le Théologie mystique de l'Eglise Orthodoxe*, Paris, 1994, p. 115.

⁶⁸ *March Meneion*, the 25th day, the Troparion of the Feast, p. 117.

⁶⁹ *Triodion*, the Sunday of the cheese Shrovetide, Slava...Stihoavnă, p. 100-101.

“You redeemed us from the curse of the law with your dear blood. On the cross you were crucified and with the spear you were jabbed, you offered immortality to the people, our Saviour, glory to You”⁷⁰.

The third part of the paper underlines the secret of the resurrection synthesized in the hymnography of the Orthodox Church.

❖ The descent into hell

The priestly literature dealt with this issue that the Holy Fathers and the ancient and recent commentators analyzed from all the different viewpoints.

At the times of the great heresies, the Holy fathers used this dogmatic truth regarding Jesus’ descent into hell with a soul united to the divinity in order to fight against and convict the arians, the apollinarians, the doketist and others which refused to recognize a human soul in the embodied Word (Logos).

In the liturgical cult of the Orthodox Church this can be explained:

“Where was Christ’s divinity in hell and in the tomb, and our salvation, of those who sing: Redeemer, God, you are blessed”⁷¹.

The songs of the Church present Christ’s victory over hell as its inability to keep Him. Hell received Him in its universe, not knowing what power is hidden inside the one that it was going to be received.

The matins and the vespers from the Great Friday represent a real verbal icon related to the descent to hell:

“In that day hell shouts sighing: my power is weak, I received a mortal being similar to all mortal beings, but I cannot keep Him in any way, but I lose together with Him all the others, over which i was king. I had dead for centuries, but This One rises everybody”⁷².

Without a doubt, the Resurrection Canon and Saint John of Damascus (Saint John Damascene)’s hymns composed in the 8th century contributed together with those of

⁷⁰ *Triodion*, the Troparion sung at the end of Denia of the twelve Gospels ,p. 618; Holy Liturgy, the organization of the Anaphora, p. 88.

⁷¹ *Pentecostarion*, the Matins of Resurrection Mass, the 7th song, the 4th hymn, p. 11.

⁷² *Triodion*, the Vesper from the Great Saturday, the 6thStichera, tune VIII, from *Doamne strigat-am*, p. 671.

Saint Andrew's from Crete and those of Saint Cosmas of Maiuma reflecting this reality of descending in hell:

“You descended into the lowest of the low places...”⁷³ or “Although you descended in the tomb...”⁷⁴

This hymn does not show that only the Word descended in hell but Christ, God and the man, who proves that God descended also with His soul as His body was in the tomb.

Saint John Chrysostom in his teaching Word which is read in the night of the Resurrection develops the theme of the descent in hell:

“No one should be afraid of death, because we were saved by the Saviour's death; death was put out by the One Who was kept by it. The One who descended in hell robbed it”⁷⁵.

The Contachion from the Holy and Great Sunday of Pascha contains this truth:

“You descended in the tomb, You, the One who are eternal, and you crushed the power of the hell and you rose from the dead as a winner, Jesus Christ, saying to the sanctimonious women: Rejoice yourselves! And to Your Holy Apostles you gave them peace, You, the One Who raise up the fallen ones.” (Saint John the Evangelist)⁷⁶

It is easily noticeable the essential fact that until hell gives back its dead (Apocalypse 6, 9), those people who are dead for Christ are not abandoned by Him and they are not far away from Him; the rehabilitation of some or the punishment through eternal death remains in God's divine plan through the prayers organised by the Church for the ones that are dead⁷⁷.

❖ The first day of the week – the day of our Lord's Resurrection

Christ rose from the dead in *“the first day of the week”*, meaning Sunday (Mathew 28, 1). In order to indicate the day of our Lord's Resurrection in the Holy

⁷³ *Pentecostarion*, the Service of the Resurrection, the Irmos of the 6th song, p. 20.

⁷⁴ *Idem*, Contachion, the 8th voice, p. 20.

⁷⁵ *Idem*, the Service of the Resurrection, Saint John the Evangelist's Teaching Word, the Matins of the Resurrection Mass, p. 24- 25.

⁷⁶ *Idem*, the Matins from the Sunday of the Resurrection Mass, Contachion, tone VIII, p. 18 .

⁷⁷ Priest Alexa Nicolae, *Temeiuri dogmatice ale Rugăciunilor pentru morți*, in “S.T.” magazine, XXX (1978), nr. 1- 2, p. 92- 105.

Scripture there are used the following expressions: “*the first day of the week*” (Mathew 16, 1- 2) or “*the first day after Saturday, very early*” (Luke 24, 1).

The most expressive and the most explicit song is the one that imagines Sunday similar to a queen and a Lady:

“This noble and holy day, the first day of the week, Queen and lady, the feast of all feasts is also the celebration of all celebrations, with the help of which we forever praise Christ” (Saint John Damascene)⁷⁸.

As it can be observed, it is called both “*Queen and Lady*”, because it is the day of the heavenly Father, Christ, our Lord. And because it is the beginning and the reasons of the Christian celebrations, it is also called “*the feast of all feasts and the celebration of all celebrations*”. That is why it has also the name of “*royal celebration*” of the things devoted to Christ and to the Holy Trinity.

In other hymns, Sunday is presented as the beginning of the salvation and the adoption or our deifying. The song voices the following:

“How sanctified and how celebrated is this salvation night and this shining day that carries the light of the Resurrection, first announcing, so that the eternal light from the tomb as a body shone to everybody” (Saint John Damascene)⁷⁹.

The church concentrated all these true things in the Sunday Mass, truly a Resurrection Mass. This aspect can be seen in the way the Church organised the mass with religious hymns and hymns of Resurrection, the Troparion of the Resurrection on an ordinary voice, sedelna and the blessings of the Resurrection, the ordinary Gospel, the Canon of the Resurrection, and the Light of the Resurrection.

❖ The spirit of the resurrection in Saint John Chrysostom’s Teaching Word

An extremely beautiful image of the Resurrection was offered to us Saint John the Evangelist, integrated in the Matins Mass from the Pascha night, masterpiece of the oratorical genius through the embodiment power of the spirit of the celebration.

“...because God is generous, he receives the last one as well as the first, rests the one from the twelfth hour as well as the one who worked from the first hour...for

⁷⁸ *Pentecostarion*, the Matins of Resurrection Mass, the Irmos of the 8th song, p. 21.

⁷⁹ *Idem*, the 7th song, the 3rd Stichera, p. 21.

this, come all for our Lord's happiness: both the first and the second, accept the payment. Rich and poor, together rejoice. The ones who restrained yourselves and the lazy ones, honour the day. The ones that fasted and the ones that did not fast, rejoice today. The table is full, feed all"⁸⁰.

It is emphasized the endless love that God manifests at the Resurrection, the universal calling. The human reason cannot comprehend anything from this joy if it hasn't been crucified before. It is also a gift the ability to live this joy. The one who opens his heart to God cannot but love all people. Thus the spirit of the celebration draws people in Christ's resurrection. Man's salvation depends also on his ability to rejoice and to integrate in the resurrection. The Resurrection brings in the heart of the people this possibility. The greatest sin is often the one of not being happy. Christ deifies all the human being's dimensions, including death. The sadness and the grief are moods specific to the sin to the limitation⁸¹.

The holy Pascha reveals itself as the joy of life. After the fast has fed our soul, now everything abounds. It is the kingdom that can be found in every little crumb. Something much more priceless fulfils our existence. And the abundance of the Pascha table symbolises this aspect. The Resurrection is the essence, the substance of this feast. The life that is not altered from death is the spring whose water rejoices the soul⁸².

The resurrection is the divine denouement of the human being existential drama. The spirit of the Christianity which conquers the world is the spirit of the Resurrection which conquers hell, and the first definition of the Christianity is that of witness of the Resurrection⁸³.

❖ The resurrection Canon – poetical and theological synthesis

The paschal canon is an illustration of the place the hymnography occupies in the Orthodox Church, in its Byzantine expression, as a way of nearing the truths to the faith.

⁸⁰ *Pentecostarion*, the Mass of the Resurrection, The Teaching Word of the one among the Saints of our Father Saint John the Evangelist, the Archbishop of Constantinople, in the Holy and the enlightened day of the glorious and saving Christ's Resurrection, our Lord, p. 45.

⁸¹ Professor Dr Dan- Ilie Ciobotea, *Legătura interioară dintre Cruce și Înviere în ortodoxie*, in "Mitropolia Banatului" magazine, XXXIV (1984), nr. 3- 4, p. 126.

⁸² Deacon Professor O. Bucevschi, *Învierea Domnului*, in "Mitropolia Olteniei" magazine, XVIII (1965), nr. 3- 4, p. 271.

⁸³ Priest Professor John Breck, *Puterea cuvântului în Biserica dreptmăritoare*, translation by Monica E. Herghelegiu, the Editing House of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1999, p. 183.

The authors to whom we associate traditionally this famous poem are Saint Gregory of Nazianzus and Saint John of Damascus.

The religious song presents the experience of this fulfilling communion, as a tendency of the believers to embrace each other, to see each others as brothers and to forgive the enemies:

*“The day of the Resurrection, let us enlighten ourselves with this feast, and to embrace each other, to call each other brothers and to forgive everything to those that hate us for the resurrection”*⁸⁴.

The celebration is felt as a total transcendence realised through the resurrected Christ’s creation. The Church presents this transcendence as an attribute enumeration that wants to be endless because it is impossible to comprise, and by its means tries to express the voiceless mood absolutely new in which it transforms the nature. In the same time, we reach the highest peaks of the paschal emotion, when our speech and spiritual emotion blend in a single word: Pascha (Easter), repeated as an echo which vibrates towards the sky:

*“The Holy Pascha appeared to us today, the new and holy Pascha, the secret Pascha, the saint Pascha, the Christ the Redeemer Pascha, the pure Pascha, the great Pascha, the believers’ Pascha, the Pascha which opened the doors of heaven to us, the Pascha which deify all believers”*⁸⁵.

Through its poetic character, as well as rigorous of his expressions, the Paschal Canon contributes in a high degree to the creation of an unmistakable atmosphere of celebration.

The diversity of the vocabulary allows touching, in a poetic shape, of a reality that indeed overcomes the human categories of reason.

The fundamental elements of the Christian secret, as for example, the crossing over of the Red Sea, which signifies the setting free of the entire humanity from the chains of the evil, or the women’s visits to empty tomb, events that every participant to the certainty of their own resurrection after Christ’s must be aware, all of these are

⁸⁴ *Pentecostarion*, the Matins of Resurrection Mass, *Glory...but now...from the Lauds*, p. 24.

⁸⁵ *Idem*, the Matins of the Resurrection Mass, Stichera, tone V, from the Lauds, p. 23.

reconsidered and placed in a permanent interaction in the Paschal Canon. This sequel in the poetical shape of the doctrine themes offer to the Paschal Canon the reception in the Church of what must be the authority of the liturgical expression of the Church doctrine. This reception of the paschal canon, with a normative character, comes also from the sources it uses, they themselves being recognised as authority, as integral parts from the Tradition of the Church.

❖ The eschatology – the sense of death and of Resurrection

A conscious life means a life oriented towards eschaton. The eschatological comprehension of life is the possibility of the deepest expiation of the profundity of his person that man makes it.

Man is a being that withers away after God and after eternity: *“man is a being that has forms, but he has forms after God. In this sense man is a homo-sapiens, homo faber, but before all a homo adorans, that wants God”*⁸⁶.

If it is a spiritual death and a bodily death the Resurrection has to be understood exactly in the same way. And as a basis we have here the Redeemer’s Word from the Gospel after John that we read to the dead and through which an amazing, deep and revealing secret is exposed to us:

“Truth, truth I am telling you: the one that listens to my word and believes in the one that send me has eternal life and to the judgement he will not come, but after death he moves into life” (John5, 24)

Through faith, good deeds, virtues, all these accompanied by the Sacred Mysteries, you can already walk on the path of the Resurrection. The most significant act is the perseverance of receiving even from here the sign of the resurrection, as it is obvious from the following verse:

“Truth, truth I am telling you: the time is coming, and it is now, when the dead hear the Son of God’s voice and the ones that hear will rise from the dead” (John 5, 25).

⁸⁶ A. Schmemmann, *La vie du monde*, New York, 1963, p. 15 -16.

God did not create death, it was not God who distanced from man, but man distanced from God, meaning from life.

This idea is clearly expressed in the forgiveness prayer at the end of the burial service:

*“... so that meanness is not without end, out of love for people, as a God of our fathers, you commanded this mixture and this coupling and this unspoken connexion of yours, out of your willingness, the divine one to come apart and to scatter itself...”*⁸⁷.

Thus the hymnographers emphasize the passing character of our instability, of the earthly blooming or of the pain caused by death, of the separation of the body and of everything that man loves on earth, or of the terrors of death and the terror of the rotting.

*“Oh, my God, how much struggle has the soul when it separates from the body! Oh, my God, how many tears then and there is no one to take pity on him”*⁸⁸. Or:

*“I cry and lament when I think about death and I see in tombs our beauty built after God’s face who says: great, without grandeur and without face...”*⁸⁹.

The Christian eschatology is originated from the paschalian experience, which means a fundamental belief in the experience of Christ’s resurrection, a stimulating faith which pushes man in his existential path and in the same time it gives him the certitude that he is already from God’s kingdom⁹⁰.

❖ About the Holy Cross and resurrection in the cult life of the Orthodox Church

The divine cult of the Orthodox Church is conditioned by the Holy Cross and by the Lord’s resurrection⁹¹ because through their presence the faith in Christ embodied and crucified on the Golgotha is confessed. The cross and the resurrection rememorize to the Christianity the divine plan of its salvation.

Without the Holy Cross there are no Sacred Mysteries, any Orthodox prayer is accompanied by the sign of the Holy Cross. The presence of the Holy Cross at the

⁸⁷ *Molitfelnic*, the organization of the funeral of the laics, the Forgiveness Prayer (1), p. 215.

⁸⁸ *Idem*, the organization of the funeral of the laics, Saint John Damascene’s Religious Hymns, tone II, p. 209.

⁸⁹ *Idem*, tone II, p. 211.

⁹⁰ J. Moltmann, *Theologie der Hoffnung*, München, 1965, p. 174.

⁹¹ Leonid Ouspesky, *Essai sur la théologie de l’icone dans l’Eglise Orthodoxe*, Editions de l’Exarchat Patriarchat Russe en Europe occidentale, Paris, 1960, p. 10.

realization of the seven Mysteries is a proof of its soteriological implications, according to the apostolic tradition; the cross is the basis of the liturgical life of every Sacred Mystery.

Praising the Holy Cross is a part of the life of the Cult of the Orthodox Church, which, "...constitutes the greatest and the most precious thing that we have got"⁹².

The liturgical tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church proves that the new Orthodox Christians do not bow to the wood of the cross but to its power.

*"Come, believers, to the power of the cross to devote ourselves – voices a religious hymn dedicated to the organization of the blessing of the cross- as the wood from heaven created death, and this life flourished, having crucified on itself the Lord without sin..."*⁹³.

As everyone knows, the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church confirmed, according to the old habit, the practice of signing the cross with three fingers, as well as the organization of baptizing the cross. About "the new custom from now" of signing the cross with three fingers, in the commentary of the 91st Canon of Saint Basil the Great, from Pedalion, it is said: *"imagining the Holy Cross, the old Christians after another imagination used to make it. Meaning, with the one from the middle and the index, as the pious Peter Damascene...but the actual habit...of the Christians is to unite the two fingers with the big one, and with the three of them sign the Holy Trinity, in order to imagine the cross..."*⁹⁴

In the fourth part of the paper is called the Hymnography of the Holy Cross and of the Resurrection in other churches and Christian confessions. In this part I took as a reference point the Old Oriental Churches (the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Armenian Church), the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, the Protestant Church, the Neoprotestants, and the "God's army" Association.

⁹² Gregory of Nazians, *Discours 1-3 Introduction*, Texte Critique, traduction Et notes par Jean Bernardi in "Sources Chrétiennes", Nr. 247, Paris 1978, p. 93, PG XXXV, col. 387-526.

⁹³ *Molitfelnic*, the organization of the baptism of the Cross, Tone II, p. 616.

⁹⁴ Vladimir Ivanov, *Semnul și semnificația crucii*, in "Mitropolia Banatului" magazine, XXXIV, (1974), nr. 10-12, p. 79.

Making a simple comparison with the hymns from the other cults, we realise the beauty and the importance from the view point of theology, doctrine and the pastoral missionary of the byzantine hymnography.

The hymnography of the other confessions, especially the protestant one, where “*its laic spirit reigns in all its manifestations*”⁹⁵, is characterised through a sentimental exposure, childish or imprecise, poor, being without a doubt inferior to the Byzantine one from all the points of view.

The fifth part presents the literary and the spiritual value of the hymnography of the Holy Cross and the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Byzantine hymnography is the life full of gift of the Orthodox cult, admired by researchers and the Romanian or the foreign liturgical hermeneutics because it is full of Holy Spirit.

Thus M. Pantelakis identifies in the Eastern hymnography the richness of ascetic teaching, profound devotion, poetic lyricism, variety and magnificence⁹⁶.

The poetic character from these hymns is produced by that “*degree of feeling in which there are translated truths of high theology in metaphors and winged forms*”⁹⁷.

The liturgical hymns are among the most valuable theological elaboration and the most brilliant literary production of the Christian spiritual patrimony.

In them there are intertwined, in a brilliant way, a deep theological thinking with a warm devotion and a sparkling poetical flights.

The stylistic devices abound at every step. Metaphors, at which maybe even if the most inspired creators of verses hadn't thought of, we find them in very many of these liturgical pearls.

The stylistic virtues comparable from the point of view from the quantity and the quality with other segments of the liturgical cult are impressive in respect of the specialised receiver (especially) but also the unspecialised one. Beyond a continual expressiveness of the texts (the object of this research) there is a special musicality.

⁹⁵ Priest Professor Dr D. Necula, *Tradition and Renewal*, volume 2, p. 490.

⁹⁶ M. Pantelakis, *Les livres ecclésiastiques de l'orthodoxie*, in the “*Irenikon*” magazine volume XIII, nr. 5, 1936, p. 529.

⁹⁷ Priest Petre Vintilescu, *About the hymnographical poetry*”, p. 21.

Therefore, one of the characteristic features of the liturgical genre is the abundance of the figurative expressions, of the literary image rendered through stylistic devices, that our Sacred Father called “flowers”.

These give to the religious hymnographical genre a specific feature, one of intuition, authenticity, expressiveness and beauty, which can influence the receptive ability of the believer.

The cult books include the following stylistic devices: comparison, personification, allegory, epithet, metonymy, antithesis, parallel, interrogation, metaphor, symbols and others.

The liturgical stylistic devices, besides the ethical functions, the pedagogical and the esthetical ones try to express the clearest they can the divine Revelation.

Thus, the hymnographers observe with great intuition the sacrifice notion when we have to understand the moment of the Holy Passions, the obedience notion, when we discover the Mystery of the Cross and their supreme fruit, the Resurrection. The message of the hymns is that we owe to God the true force of the setting man free from the domination of the evil: the sufferance from the Cross and Jesus’s Resurrection really destroyed the penalty of the demonic domination, once and for all.

Apart from the fact that the texts and the liturgical hymns represent true proofs of faith and profound prayers with deep spiritual echoes, they also fulfil the role of true religious poems⁹⁸.

Wrapped in the poetic garment of the Christian hymnography, the hymns practically determine us to taste the mysterious atmosphere which spreads everywhere in the cult places in which it is glorified Jesus Christ the Redeemer⁹⁹.

⁹⁸ Priest Professor Dr. Nicolae D. Neula, *the Course of Liturgical Theology*, the Theology Faculty, Bucharest, 1995- 1996.

⁹⁹ Idem, *the Holy Passions Week*, p. 35.

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