

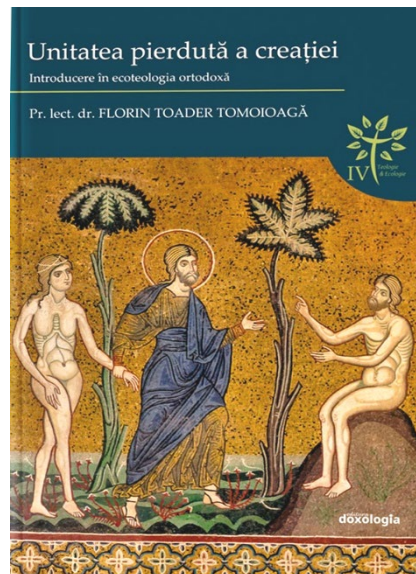
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**Florin Toader Tomoioagă, *Unitatea pierdută a creației. Introducere în ecoteologia ortodoxă* [ *The lost unity of creation. Introduction to Orthodox Ecotheology* ], Ed. Doxologia, Iași, 2022, 241 p.**

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The work *Unitatea pierdută a creației. Introducere în ecoteologia ortodoxă* [ *The lost unity of creation. Introduction to Orthodox Ecotheology* ], introduces us to the issue of the theology of creation from a perspective specific to the Orthodox school of thought that capitalizes on biblical, patristic and philocaly foundations in a methodological presentation that gives it scientific value. It is also of genuine ecumenical openness, critically taking up the encyclical *Laudato Si* of the Pope Francis, presenting similar concerns from the writings of the great Orthodox theologian Dumitru Stăniloae.

This book is the most recent editorial appearance of the Florin Toader Tomoioagă, priest and teacher at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology “Dr. Vasile Coman” from the University of Oradea, which proposes a new direction of research. Ecotheology is inspired by the vision of God’s creation and man’s place in it, expressed eloquently by important theologians such as Ioannis Zizioulas or John Chryssavgis. The author makes use of interdisciplinary analyzes to rethink Creation in its natural context. It reminds us that the balance between man, the environment and natural resources is the balance between soul and body through a holistic approach to life, targeting the route from *homo economicus* to *homo adorans*.



The message emerges throughout the reading, the conclusions saying that the “theological aesthetics compels us to social responsibility.”

The title of the book - and of the third chapter - is inspired by the dialogue that took place in 1985 between the great Greek theologian Panayotis Nellas and the painter Andreas Fokas, entitled “*Η χαμένη ενότητα των πραγμάτων*” (The lost unity of things). If Andreas publishes his dialogues talking about painting and architecture in Greece, Florin Tomoiogă offers us a theological vision that he integrates into the field of ecotheology. Ecotheology is a new branch of Christian theology, which aims not only to defend and preserve nature, the environment in which we live, but also to promote a healthier way of life, in a clean and healthy environment and promoting the universal values that religion Christian has been defending them for 2000 years. All this in a world that we must all take care of and clean it of any physical and moral pollution. Issues related to environmental protection and conservation issues and climate change are among the most pressing moral challenges in today’s world, which we must not only be aware of, but also get involved in solving them. It is a problem that does not only have to do with the quality of life, but with the very life of humanity and, perhaps, of the entire creation. Indeed, it is very difficult to find in the space of what we call “evil” or “sin” something that can cause such universal desolation and destruction as ecological evil.

The current ecological crisis is largely the consequence of the application of a philosophical system, about man’s position in nature, a system that does not take into account history, the objective nature of the laws of nature. Without a doubt, nature – God’s creation – is in danger. And there are very few who in one way or another do not contribute anything to the incessant destruction of the natural environment. What is characteristic of man is that he arrogantly blames technology rather than himself. Viewed from the beginning of the Earth’s existence, the evolution of the environment is characterized by periods of stagnation punctuated by abrupt and impetuous changes.

After the introduction and the necessary critical notes, the author presents the biblical bases and the connection between the state of “inner purity” and the contemplative experience that starts from the aesthetic experience of the perception of beauty. From the aesthetic level, man comes to perceive the sacredness and beauty of God’s creation. The next chapter is entitled *The world as a sacrament*, presenting the symbolic universe of Mount Athos as a microcosm of transfigured creation, reaching the connection between the state of original justice and the state of holiness that is reflected, out of necessity, in maintaining the balance between consumption and good exploitation of natural resources. That is why we reach the state of the “lost

unity of things,” from the natural and liturgical sacramentality of matter reaching the cosmic liturgy and the Eucharistic celebration that connects us with the world restored in Christ.

Chapter IV, titled Creation as Church by Father Dumitru Stăniloae, introduces us to the Orthodox theologian’s thinking dedicated to the theology of creation and what today we identify as an “ecothology.” For Dumitru Stăniloae, the keystone of creation and of the Church is the divine Logos, the historical Church being the visible face of the eschatological Church that is transfigured into the Kingdom of God as a cosmic liturgy in a transfigured world which permeated by the grace of unity and perfect communion with God. The next chapter captures Education for the environment: from the Holy Fathers to eco-literature. After this foray into the mentioned issue, chapter VI is dedicated to the natural Revelation between support and challenge. In this last chapter, the author makes a synthesis of the problem of knowing God from creation in the perspective of Orthodox thought, where we find the foundation of cataphatic theology and the affirmation of the fact that man is capable of the mystical experience of seeing God.

In the spirit of a critical analysis, Father Professor Florin Tomoiogă brings up natural revelation and its challenge to Karl Barth and analyzes the issue of mystery and the “silence of creation” in the context of the challenges posed by positive sciences and contemporary research, bringing into discussion the position of Richard Dawkins. The Christians must take care of creation, and this care can be considered as a dimension of obedience to God’s will. If we do not do this, we disregard God’s creation and give a wrong testimony to the world. True Christians are responsible people towards nature, the world, values. Caring for nature is also a dimension of love for God and people. The world is a gift of divine love to man, and man must not destroy this gift.

The work ends with appendices and the bibliography used in writing these syntheses, which are methodologically necessary. Ecotheology is an interdisciplinary research to reflect theologically on the environmental crisis and its focus is the relationship of humankind, nature, and God. Some critics, who do not understand the complex dimension of ecology and the theology of creation, confuse the researched theme with politicized positions of the so-called “political environmentalism.” Far from the positions of certain “eco-theologists” who approach the issues in a vision close to liberation theology, Marxism or feminism, the author of this book proposes an “orthodox” vision of a theology of creation and a theological aesthetics. Theology, as the study of God, should reflect the truth of the Creator rather than the time-bound sub-creations of a particular group of God’s creatures.

ALEXANDRU BUZALIC

Our author, a true researcher in the issue of the theology of creation, produces a work of conceptual maturity and a broad ecumenical breath, which are imposed by itself in the bibliography of future studies carried out by theologians of any confessions or theological schools of thought.

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