

The Divergences and the Convergences between Zizioulas's and Congar's Communion Ecclesiology

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This paper's purpose is to show the divergences and the convergences of two models of Communion Ecclesiology belonging to Yves (Marie-Joseph) Congar and John Zizioulas. Even though these two authors belong to different denominations, viz. Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, they still bear a remarkable resemblance as both embrace the Communion ecclesiology model and highlight the importance of the Eucharist. Furthermore, they distinguish between history and mystery, with its eschatological perspective, and try to shed some light on the significance of Pneumatology in relation to Christology. The adaptation of this model also allows for the possibility of a great ecumenical extension, which could prove crucial as it could possibly cure the schism between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. Both Zizioulas and Congar approach theological discussion historically, as they focus on the significant biblical and patristic figures who formulated the Christian doctrine of the first millennia, in order to bridge the gap between the two Churches and to return to a form of Christian doctrine that is as pure as in the first centuries after Christ. In this way, both authors reach towards an exposition of the Christian doctrine that aligns with both sides and respects Jesus's prayer of unity that they may all be one (ἵνα πάντες ἕν ᾧσιν)¹.

Keywords: Zizioulas, ecclesiology, Congar, triadology, christology.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is clear that the interest of this paper lies in the fact that Congar and Zizioulas have given a very clear and systematic exposition of their espoused doctrines and

¹ John 17:21.

devoted their whole lives to the effort to unify the ecclesiological East and West. However, undoubtedly many differences arise as both Zizioulas and Congar, like their respective denominations, think in entirely different categories. The Roman Catholic West, on the one hand, thinks in Aristotelian categories due to the translation of *logica nova* in the late twelfth century². So does Yves Congar, as a Neo-Scholastic himself. On the other hand, the Orthodox East expresses itself in Platonic schemata and images, thus making the methods of approach of each Church clearly distinct (e.g., natural theology in contrast to apophatic theology)³. The same can be said of Zizioulas. However, in an era where information and communication travel much more quickly than a century ago, and now that the rivalry between the Churches has calmed compared to the medieval ages, these differences do not present the formidable obstacle they once did.

On the contrary, now that new ecumenical movements have been introduced, such as receptive ecumenism, such differences could prove a fertile ground for the rediscovery of a Church's true doctrine⁴. From a doctrinal differentiation between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism, each could learn from the other by admitting their own weaknesses, imitating the good features of the other denomination, and working towards a greater understanding of the original expression. The fact that both Zizioulas and Congar are open to change and renewal, through Neo-Patristic Synthesis and *Nouvelle Théologie*, respectively, leads to discussion and dialogue thus justifying their participation in ecumenical dialogues.

This paper will start by shedding some light on the different models of ecclesiology espoused by the two theologians, before moving on to a treatment of the different schools of thought to which Congar and Zizioulas belonged. Then, it will analyze two different models of communion ecclesiology they espoused and will finish by showing the two models in the context of ecumenical dialogues.

II. MODELS OF ECCLESIOLOGY

Before investigating into the writings of Zizioulas and Congar, it is essential to define the key terms and categories that will be used in this paper. Basically, there

² *Lydia Schumacher*, *Early Franciscan Theology: Between Innovation and Authority* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 12–13.

³ *John D. Zizioulas and Paul McPartlan*, *Communion and Otherness* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), p. 161.

⁴ *Paul D. Murray*, 'In Search of a Way', *The Oxford Handbook of Ecumenical Studies*, 2017, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199600847.013.45>> [Accessed 18 January 2022] pp. 611–629

are two central terms considering the subject of the essay: ecclesiology and a particular model of ecclesiology called communion ecclesiology. Naturally, I must define ecclesiology itself before I can analyze the different models that have emerged and why these models were introduced and observed in the first place.

The term ecclesiology refers to the branch of dogmatics that examines the structure, function, nature, and essence of the church, in their earthly and eschatological appearance. The church is the kingdom of Christ that prepares its members for the eternity of the heavenly realm and is a source of healing for its members in terms of their will and nature⁵. The object of ecclesiology is also to identify, describe and define the mystery of the Church in the history of salvation. There are two dimensions to the ecclesiastical reality, the vertical (communion of the divine with the human) and the horizontal (communion of a human with a fellow human being) in all their manifestations, which are the object of ecclesiology as well⁶. It is a fact that the Fathers of the first centuries lacked the special ecclesiastical treatises, which were created, beginning in the late 13th century, mainly by Roman Catholic theologians, and later followed by Protestant theologians. This initiative in Western Theology does not mean that ecclesiology is generally absent from the Orthodox patristic texts and dogmatic teaching. It was simply not analyzed in a scholastic way (e.g., using sub-categories and divisions) but with images and terms aligned with other axes of doctrinal theology and, primarily, with Christology. For instance, John of Damascus develops the content of ecclesiology as the body of Christ and considers it impossible to speak about the Church without first talking about Christ himself⁷. Later on, with the development of sociology and ecumenical theology in the twentieth century, ecclesiology became an independent branch of doctrinal theology, with more practical and social features⁸. This phenomenon mainly appeared in the West because of the correlation between the Church and the notion of societies.

The sociological and pragmatic approach of ecclesiology ultimately lead to a categorization of different models of the Church. In order to compare these models in the context of symbolics and ecumenical theology, a categorization of mutual features was needed. Thus, in 1978, Cardinal Avery Dulles published his book *Models of the Church*, which summarized the five most popular models of the Church. Later, in 2002, this was enriched with a sixth model in his expanded

⁵ Nikolaos Matsoukas, *Theologia ktisiologia ekklesiologia kata ton Mega Athanasion* (Thessaloniki: Pournaras, 2001), p. 161

⁶ Marios Begzos, *Thriskiologiko Lexiko* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2000), p. 577.

⁷ John of Damascus, *Expositio Fidei*, trans. by Nikolaos Matsoukas (Thessaloniki: Pournaras, 1992), p. 24.

⁸ John Zizioulas, 'Dogmatics', on Oodegr.Com, 2007 <<https://www.oodegr.com/english/dogmatiki1/F1.htm>> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

and third edition⁹. Some researchers, however, disagree with a blueprint model of ecclesiology that is applied in all cases and places¹⁰.

The first model, the Institutional model, emphasizes structure and order in the Church¹¹. This model emphasizes the hierarchy of the Church, as Jesus says to Peter, 'You are a rock, and on this rock, I will build my Church'¹². Dulles also supported that this model is evident in the Council of Jerusalem in the New Testament. Generally, this model gives a clear insight into what is right and wrong, but it could easily lead to a dry, legalistic view of the Church. The second model is that of the Church as Sacrament¹³. The Church serves as a visible witness of the presence of Christ in the world and as a means of demonstrating the work of Christ in the world. This model provides a strong focus on both the human (visible) and spiritual (invisible) side of the Church. Even though it helps the believer to see the world in a Catholic way, with signs and symbols, this model requires a deep knowledge of theology.

The third ecclesiological model is that of the Church as Herald¹⁴. The Church in this model is the messenger, the voice of God transmitted through the Gospel. This model highlights the new reality that is established here on earth but not yet realized. However, it can lead to a misunderstanding of faith and a degradation of the sacraments. The fourth model is that of the Church as a Servant¹⁵. This model prioritizes social justice and action over words and preaching. Believers of this model are usually more consistent with their beliefs (more practical), but they disregard faith and doctrine in general. The fifth model is called the Church as a Community of Disciples¹⁶. In this model, the Church is essentially a community that tries to imitate and follow Christ in everything. Even though this model is Christocentric, it is usually too local and restricted, thus neglecting the universal nature of the Church.

The sixth ecclesiological model, and the one of interest to this paper, is that of the Church as a (mystical) communion, or communion ecclesiology¹⁷. This model is closely related to the idea of *koinonia* (*communio*=*κοινωνία*), denoting a community in which people own something in common, share a common inter-

⁹ See Avery Dulles, *Models of The Church* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2002).

¹⁰ Nicholas M. Healy, *Church, World and the Christian Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 50.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 21–28.

¹² Mathew 16:18.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 39–46.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 47–53.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 54–63.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 123–136.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 29–38.

est, or simply communicate. The model has sacramental, mystical, and historical aspects. It is based on Paul's letter to the Corinthians, which refers to the Church as the body of Christ. Communion ecclesiology pictures the community of the faithful as having one mind and one heart. It creates a strong sense of belonging within the community of the believers. They are bound together by God's Spirit, through the living Christ, combined with external social bonds. Also, the eucharistic side of the Church elevates the local Church to an equal level with the universal one. The potential flaw of this model is that it sometimes lacks an objective theological content and purpose. However, both Zizioulas and Congar have an answer to that, in the eschatological and trinitological aspects of their communion ecclesiology. Another weakness of communion ecclesiology is that it is considered to be socially reductionist due to its mystical element. Again, however, both Zizioulas and Congar acknowledge this weakness; that is why they focus on history as well as eschatology.

Generally, there are six biblical images that are being used by theologians to avoid misconceptions: the Trinity, the Body of Christ, the Communion of Communion, the People of God, and the Leaven of the World, with the latter focusing on the social side of the model. The other dimensions of these images are divine, mystical, sacramental, and historical¹⁸. Having defined the major terms (the one being a subcategory of the other) of this paper, a point has been reached where the exposition of both Congar's and Zizioulas's ecclesiology can take place.

III. CONGAR'S COMMUNION ECCLESIOLOGY

For Congar, the Church is primarily a Church of love. Beginning from God as a triune being not only in his psychology but in reality, also lives in a loving society and community, we move analogically onto humans and the church itself. In the Trinity, there is mutuality and inclusiveness among the persons. Human life is involved in the perichoresis of the Trinity. Thus, as Congar states, *'The church is not only a framework, an apparatus, an institution; it is a communion'*¹⁹. It is impossible to understand Congar's communion ecclesiology without taking into consideration Johann Adam Möhler (especially on true and false reform)²⁰. Congar's Communion Ecclesiology emphasizes the sacraments, particularly the

¹⁸ Dennis Michael Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), p. 16.

¹⁹ Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1962), pp. 22–26.

²⁰ See Johann Adam Möhler, *Unity in the Church*, trans. by Peter C. Erb (Washington DC: The Catholic University of American Press, 1996).

Eucharist, as the means of reconciliation, as well as the Communion of bishops as a link between the local churches and the universal Church. By advancing an organic theory of the Church that combines conciliarity and collegiality with Christological, pneumatological, and ecumenical elements, Congar contributed to a holistic understanding of the Church. The Church, according to Congar, can only be described, rather than defined, by a plurality of complementary theological images. Throughout his career, his use of such images centred on three thematic images, all with biblical roots: Christ's mystical body, the people of God, and the temple of the Holy Spirit²¹.

The Roman Catholic theological tradition of the mystical body of Christ was eclipsed by *Societas perfecta ecclesiology* in the post-Reformation period²². Congar made his own contribution to the renewal of this mystical body image. In fact, in 1937 he defined the Church as being the mystical body of Christ²³. Adapting this biblical paradigm to his ministry, Congar acknowledged that the theological side of the Church, apart from the social one, enriched his ecumenical work and made him more careful concerning the laity's role within the church. It was in this schematic context that he identified Christian mystical unity with that of Communion, and not union as in a unity or fusion. Participants of the mystical body of Christ do not share Christ's essence, according to Congar; they just relate with it. They are receiving the content of Christ's life and they receive it freely (not as instruments), and do not simply imitate it. While the hypostatic union brought together the Word of God with human nature, the mystical union brings humanity together with Christ. Human persons are not only ineffably included in a mystical body that reflects God's love, but they are also made visible and tangible by the life that mystical body leads within the body of Christ. Rather than being an intangible entity, the mystical body, according to Congar, is the visible Church herself. Consequently, divinity and humanity are united within the Church without confusion, but there is not a lack of division, and the Christological features do not apply to the Church²⁴.

According to Congar, the Holy Spirit constitutes the immanent form of the mystical body of Christ²⁵. Unlike the human soul, the Holy Spirit is not the soul

²¹ Timothy I. MacDonald, *The Ecclesiology of Yves Congar: Foundational Themes* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), p. 223.

²² Gabriel Flynn, 'Yves Congar', *The Oxford Handbook of Ecclesiology*, ed. by Paul Avis, 2018, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199645831.013.27>> [Accessed 18 January 22] p. 397.

²³ Yves Congar, *Divided Christendom* (Frome and London: Butler and Tanner Ltd, 1939), p. 80.

²⁴ Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 120–121.

²⁵ Timothy I. MacDonald, *The Ecclesiology of Yves Congar: Foundational Themes* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), p. 211.

of the mystical body exclusively. If this were true, the Church would have a divine nature. The identification of the Holy Spirit exclusively with the soul of the mystic body of the Church could easily lead to heresy, that of monophysitism, as it would neglect the human and social side of the Church. As a formal cause of the mystical body, Congar viewed the hierarchical apostolic body as existing above and apart from the human persons that make up its members. In the end, it is the Holy Spirit who unifies the mystical body, but prior to this, this unity is enhanced by the formal efficacy of the apostolic body.

Considering the second image, that of the People of God, Congar believed that Pauline and patristic ecclesiology did not make an extensive use of this image (unlike Augustine)²⁶. Unlike other ecclesiologies, people of God ecclesiology prioritizes both the community's destiny as well as the Church's corporate identity. It is precisely because it reaffirms the anthropological dimension of ecclesiology that a people of God ecclesiology contributes to a greater appreciation of catholicity. The ecclesiology of the people of God expresses conversion more than the ecclesiology of the mystical body of Christ. The Church is, after all, a community of sinners, and here the word 'People' is conceived in a theological sense. The Church is also the People of God. In the end, however, any discussion of election, covenant, consecration, and eschatology must be anchored in pneumatology.

Similarly, the eschatological significance of the lives of People of God must also be rooted in pneumatology, since they are the Spirit bearers of the eschaton. However, Congar does not accept a divine intervention of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, thus downgrading the importance of history in the People of God paradigm. Even though Congar believed that the People of God image could not express the freshness of the Christian Doctrine, the Mystical Body of Christ was not the only image that could enhance the People of God. For Congar, the People of God paradigm cannot adequately express the reality of the Church by itself because it is not sufficiently Christological and pneumatological. A pneumatological ecclesiology implies a pneumatological Christology. In addition, Communion is anthropological as well as ecclesiological in nature. The Church, however, attains proleptically to the Communion with God that is the destiny of all humankind, as Congar explained. It is because of his desire to reassert the primacy of the Church as a communion of grace that Congar emphasizes the *ecclesia ab Abel* concept²⁷.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²⁷ *Timothy I. MacDonald*, *The Ecclesiology of Yves Congar: Foundational Themes* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), p. 229.

Lastly, the temple of the Holy Spirit theology accords extraordinary value to human corporeality. Congar reintroduced a theology of the gifts of the Holy Spirit into Catholic ecclesiology in order to underline the importance of charisms as ecclesial realities. In addition, the trinitarian order (τάξις) symbolises the need to understand the temple of the Holy Spirit in its proper Christological context²⁸. The Church is both a means of our transfiguration and an expression of our new life in the Spirit. Thus, eschatologically, the mystery of deification is inextricably linked to the mystery of the Church. The Church and the Holy Spirit were always linked in Augustine's writings, as they are in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed²⁹. The Word and the Spirit are inseparable divine missions that make up the Church. The Church, for Congar, is the We of the believers through the Holy Spirit. Because it transcends time and space, the Spirit is an eschatological gift. According to Congar, the Church is made by the Spirit, in opposition to both christomonic and anthropocentric views of the Church that set aside the role of the Holy Spirit. As the Word became flesh through the Spirit, Congar believed the Eucharistic mystery is connected to the mystery of the Incarnation. A pneumatological view of the Church contrasts sharply with a pyramidal model (hierarchy), in which local communities have a consortium of the priesthood³⁰.

Congar also dedicates a large amount of his writings to defining the words 'unity' and 'diversity'. In *Divided Christendom* (1937), Congar emphasises unity and regarded diversity as a secondary and provisional reality³¹. In *Diversity and Communion* (1982), however, he regards diversity as necessary and positive for Communion³². Finally, in this work Congar realizes that diversity and Communion are not mutually exclusive, as both are actually guaranteed by the Spirit of God. Congar in *Ministeres et communion ecclesiale* proceeds to define the terms 'apostolicity' and 'catholicity'. The former is not simply a remembrance of the past, but also a dynamic attestation of the presence and power of God. The latter entails a believer keeping his eyes open to the manifestations of the Spirit beyond the institutional church boundaries, being receptive to new developments, and being vigilant for the future. Congar also focuses on the term 'Collegiality', the governing of the Pope and Bishops respecting their authority

²⁸ Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 135.

²⁹ Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (New York: Crossroad Pub. Co., 1997), p. 5.

³⁰ Timothy I. MacDonald, *The Ecclesiology of Yves Congar: Foundational Themes* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), p. 265.

³¹ Yves Congar, *Divided Christendom* (Frome and London: Butler and Tanner Ltd, 1939), pp. 24–38.

³² Yves Congar, *Diversity and Communion* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1985), pp. 23–33.

and autonomy, and 'Conciliarity' which brings down this sense of hierarchy and establishes a sense of community. Conciliarity, or Synodality, simply refers to the authority of a Christian community over ecumenical councils and synodal government. For these terms to be understood correctly, they have to be dealt with in their historical context. Congar referred to Orthodox theology as a good example of this, in contrast to the Gregorian Reform of the eleventh century³³.

IV. JOHN ZIZIOULAS'S COMMUNION ECCLESIOLOGY

For John Zizioulas, there is more to the Church than just an institution. Essentially, the Church is a way of existing, a mode of existence³⁴. It is important to understand that even in its institutional dimension, the mystery of the Church is deeply rooted in the being of man, in the being of the world, and in God Himself. Zizioulas tends to unify doctrinal theology with ecclesiology because he considers the Church a picture of God (iconological ontology). He also considers the person a mode of being (*τρόπος υπάρξεως*). Cappadocian ontology underwent a revolution when it asserted, for the first time in Christian theology, that a person is not secondary to an essence, but is rather its hypostasis; and that a hypostasis is relational in its very essence—it is basically a person (*πρόσωπο*)³⁵. The connection between hypostasis and person is now complete when freedom is coupled with love (relationship), which together identify with the Father. Thus, the Trinity is not static as it includes loving relationships (communion of persons). Zizioulas, later, distinguishes between the Immanent and the Economic Trinity, viz. how God is eternally and how he reveals himself³⁶. According to Zizioulas, the divine hypostases' relationship (*κοινωνία*) and distinctiveness (*διάκριση*) are ineffable and beyond our understanding. Karl Rahner, on the contrary, identifies the economic Trinity with the immanent one. The axiom proposed by Rahner, that 'the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity', is completely agreeable to Congar, though it is difficult to accept without further assurance³⁷. Due to its uncreated quality, energy brings history and creation into close contact with God's very being; yet, as a distinct being from God's essence, energy allows God's immanence to be both

³³ Timothy I. MacDonald, *The Ecclesiology of Yves Congar: Foundational Themes* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), p. 240.

³⁴ Paul McPartlan, 'John Zizioulas', *The Oxford Handbook of Ecclesiology*, ed. by Paul Avis, 2018, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199645831.013.5>> [Accessed 18 January 2022] p. 484.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 469.

³⁶ John D. Zizioulas and Paul McPartlan, *Communion and Otherness* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), p. 201.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

incomprehensible and truly beyond time and space. In Trinitology, for Zizioulas, the issue behind the Filioque is whether the ultimate ontological category is the person or the substance. By Yves Congar's clarification, the Western interpretation of the Filioque, based on Augustine's Trinitarian theology, does not necessarily reject that the Father is the only cause of divine existence³⁸.

For Zizioulas, two sources are considered by the Orthodox when discussing the Church. First, there is the divine Eucharist, the common experience of all Christians. Second, there is the asceticism of the church and the experience of Christian life³⁹. Unlike in Western Theology, the issue of mission does not play an equal role. Worship is the key to identifying the Church as a body. In the center of Christian worship, the Eucharist is the only explicit expression of faith. During late antiquity, the holy communion was seen as a way of maintaining this struggle against the passions. Asceticism was incorporated into the eucharistic theology of the church by Saint Maximus the Confessor, according to Zizioulas, thus bridging the two sources that form the Church's account. In essence, the Eucharist embodies the identity of the Church. Generally, for Maximus and Zizioulas, the truth of the ecclesiology is the transformation and presentation in Christ of the whole world and relationships. In order to facilitate the Eucharistic transformation of the world, the purification process from sin and corruption should not be viewed as devaluing or rejecting the material and bodily creation. This is contrary to Plato, who believed that everyone's identity lies in their original idea, while the material form is an incomplete manifestation of this idea. The Alexandrian theologians, however, introduced the same realm of timeless ideas in the Church's identity through the Logos of God⁴⁰. Thus, for the Alexandrians, by participating in this original universal Logos, the Church is true to its identity. According to them, the initial perfection of the Church can be seen in the 'logos' of the entire world. All the separate logoi of the universe will again be united within the one Logos of God who existed before creation. In this regard, the eucharistic gathering and unity of the Church does not contribute significantly, according to Zizioulas, to the one eternal Logos that unites all things. This Alexandrian ecclesiology leads to an individualism that makes us believe we are not a part of the community of the Church.

The Church, for Zizioulas, is also a foretaste of the eschatological meeting of Christ in the world⁴¹. Pentecost and the resurrection of Christ make the wor-

³⁸ Ibid., p. 197.

³⁹ John D. Zizioulas and Douglas H. Knight, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), p. 121.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 122.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 127.

ship of the Church and God present in the future. The Church's center is not the wounds and the passion of Christ in an altruistic sense, but the Cross transformation from eschaton itself. For Zizioulas, the reason people go to church is to grasp a sense of this indefinable future, which no other institution can adequately provide. In typological terms, this ecclesiology gives us a glimpse of eschatological reality. In regard to this, the Holy Spirit liberates the Son from history because the incarnated Son bore the consequences of humankind's fall. As Zizioulas demonstrates, death has been an integral part of our historical existence. Consequently, the identity of the Church is not determined by its created history, but by the eschaton. We cannot simply look at the Church as it is now, but must look for it as it will be. Its identity is revealed to us in earthen vessels⁴². The Church is a mystery. A mystery is a revelation, and no complete definition can be given of the Church. The identity of the Church must be developed by considering the sacraments and mysteries that make the Church present throughout history. Sacraments represent truth arriving from the end times so the Church can experience it. As a result, the Eucharist serves as a revelation of the kingdom of God, and, therefore, it is also the revelation of ultimate reality. In Western ecclesiology however, christomonism holds that the Church began at creation, or perhaps with the incarnation, and that it will end with the return of Christ, making the Church an intermediate step⁴³.

A phenomenon that appeared in the Eastern theology and that occupied Zizioulas, is spiritomonism at the expense of Christology. It is the extension of the meta-historicism of the East that leads to this misconception and the absence of a proper Christology-Pneumatology synthesis. Christ is the mediator between the Created and the Uncreated, thus formatting the body of Christ, which includes history as part of the Created. However, by allowing pneumatology to be a foundational aspect of Christology, we can see how Christ encompasses us all and how Christ is the community, in which we are linked through the Spirit as an incorporation. For Zizioulas, pneumatology refers to a preoccupation with saints, while Christology refers to the main body of the Church in history. The Holy Spirit is beyond history, not against it⁴⁴. It is the cause of making Christ the Last Adam. The Sacraments also are like images of history combined with the end of times.

Even though Zizioulas mostly uses the biblical image of the Body of Christ, he refers to the People of God regarding the origin of the Church, which he

⁴² Ibid., p. 137.

⁴³ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), p. 127.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 130.

traces, in this case, to the election of Abraham. However, Zizioulas also mentions Origen and Clement, who developed the concept of the preexistence of the Church before the creation of the world, contrary to scripture. Like Congar, Zizioulas highlights the importance of the local church in the Ecclesiology and uses the definition of catholicity introduced by St. Ignatius. Zizioulas, also refers to the significance of Conciliarity and extensively investigates the role of the bishop in the community and the Eucharist⁴⁵. Relating Conciliarity and Papal Primacy, Zizioulas believes that the notion of the imperium, as a symbol of unity, could stand in the Orthodox theology with the right presuppositions⁴⁶. Zizioulas maintains that the problem of authority can be solved with the proper Pneumatology as the pyramidal notions (also referenced by Congar) will disappear as the one and the many co-exist equally, by implying a primacy of confession and not power. Thus, the notion of institution will be degraded.

V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to show the divergences and convergences of two different models of communion ecclesiology, those of Zizioulas and Congar. The analysis was started by investigating the meaning of ecclesiology through the years, before introducing all the possible models of ecclesiology as posed by Avery Dulles. After depicting some of the basic characteristic and weakness of each model, I continued to the second part of my analysis by introducing Congar and Zizioulas and their chosen models of Ecclesiology.

Congar introduced an ecclesiological model that dealt with Pneumatology, Conciliarity, Collegiality, Christology, and Ecumenical Theology all at once, with respect to patristic and biblical references. His analysis was mostly concerned with biblical images of the Church, while also making use of patristic exegesis with the influences of some contemporary Orthodox Theologians and Möhler. Lastly, even though Congar referred to Trinitology regarding the Church, he mainly focused on the ecumenical extension of his ecclesiology and on the relation of mystery and history.

Zizioulas similarly introduced a model that dealt with Christology, Pneumatology, Conciliarity, Trinitology and Reception. His analysis was mostly patristic, referring to Maximus the Confessor when it came to Communion and

⁴⁵ See John D. Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop During the First Three Centuries* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001).

⁴⁶ Dennis Michael Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), p. 16.

Asceticism and to Ignatius when it came to the role of the Bishop and Catholicity. His references to the biblical images did exist but not at the same extent as Congar's. Zizioulas was primarily influenced by Georges Florovsky and Nicholas Afanasiev, along with contemporary Roman Catholic theologians, thus he pays attention to History and Eschatology, and links Trinitology and the social model of the Trinity to the communion or eucharistic ecclesiology. Because of his view that the doctrine of the Church, and thus ecclesiology, is a lived experience, he did not focus his ecclesiology on ecumenism but tries to give a systematic exposition in order to get his ecclesiology across. Both authors, however, have significantly helped in bridging the schism between the two Churches by acknowledging mistakes, advising from the opposite denomination, and developing a patristic communion ecclesiology.

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