

REV. WŁODZIMIERZ WOŁYNYEC

## CHRISTUS TOTUS – DIFFERENT WAYS OF INTERPRETATION

**A b s t r a c t.** The christological title *Christus totus* seldom appears in modern theology. It seems that the reason for this stems from the lack of precise understanding and interpretation of the very title. Therefore, the article: “*Christus totus* – different ways of interpretation” is an attempt at the presentation of theological wealth hidden behind it. From ecclesiological aspect, *Christus totus* expresses the unity of Christ – the Head and Body of the Church. Without covering over the identity of the Divine Person, Jesus Christ must be eternally and inextricably perceived with the Church, which takes over and borrows from its Divine Head new subjectivity. *Christus totus*, in the anthropological perspective, is a paradigm of the new man. On the one hand, He is the new Adam, a social, corporate being, yet on the other hand, He is a Personality characterized by His total openness to others. Jesus Christ is a man who does not exist for Himself but for others, opening wide the boundaries of His existence. From the cosmic perspective *Christus totus* is finally cosmic Christ, because He remains in the relation of cause and effect of the entire creation. However, Christ does not fade away in the Universe in any pantheistic sense, but remains in it, being present as the incarnated Son of the Father, performing real transformation of the Universe into New Heaven and New Earth.

**Key words:** *Christus totus*, the Church, the Head and the Body, social person, Adam, cosmic Christ.

The term “*Christus totus*” was expressively used for the first time in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (July 29, 1943) by Pope Pius XII, who, writing of the Church, concludes with the following statement: “Christ We mean, the Head and the Body, the whole Christ.”<sup>1</sup> The Latin phrase contains the word “*totus*,” which means not only “whole,” but also “integrated, complete.” “*Christus totus*” thus means “whole, integrated and complete Christ.” How to understand this? Can Christ be un-whole, unintegrated, incomplete, and,

---

WŁODZIMIERZ WOŁYNYEC – Catholic priest, full professor, rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław, where he is also head of the first chair of theology, contact: [wladimir@pwt.wroc.pl](mailto:wladimir@pwt.wroc.pl)

<sup>1</sup> “*Christum dicimus Caput et Corpus, Christum totum*”: Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, ed. Peter Hünermann (Freiburg im Br–Basel–Rom–Wien: Herder, 1999), henceforth abbreviated DH, no. 3813.

as a result, can He be split up? It is worth mentioning here that the Apostle Paul, having in mind divisions among Christians in Corinth, posed the question: “Has Christ been split up?” [1 Cor 1:13]. His answer is clear: Jesus Christ is not split up and cannot be split up in Himself. The problem, however, is that our understanding of Him is often imperfect and, alas, we may be the ones who create divisions in Christ or of Christ, which in turn leads to Christological mistakes.

Who then is *Christus totus* and what is the meaning of this term in theology? It seems that this term is little understood and, consequently, slightly forgotten. Meanwhile, in my opinion, it is crucial in order to properly understand the Person of the Saviour. Therefore, it cannot be omitted and refused in the contemporary Christology. The goal of the article is to elucidate the meaning of this term, given by Pius XII, as well as to deepen its understanding in the contemporary theology, bearing in mind the context of Christological heresies.

## 1. ECCLESIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

The first way of understanding of the term *Christus totus* may be called ecclesiological. It consists in explaining this title with reference to Jesus Christ and the Church. “Christ find[s] His fulfillment in the Church,” writes Pius XII in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, recalling St Thomas Aquinas’s comment on Eph 1:22-23: “And he put all things beneath his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.” According to Thomas, the Church is Christ’s fullness, insofar as all Christ’s virtues may be realised in the members of the Church, as much as the faculties of the soul are realised in the members of the body, because the body is created for the sake of the soul, and not the other way round. And in the same manner the Church has been founded for the sake of Christ.<sup>2</sup> It means that the Church does not exist without Christ, and, conversely, Christ does not exist without the Church. If we separate Christ from the Church, we make Him “incomplete, un-whole, unintegrated.” *Christus totus*, however, is the Christ who is inseparably connected with the Church, which is the fullness of Christ. The Church is the

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Ad Ephesios*, c I, lectio 8, no. 71: “Dicitur quod ecclesia est plenitudo eius, scilicet Christi, id est, ut omnia, quae virtute sunt in Christo, quasi quodam modo in membris ipsius ecclesiae impleantur, dum scilicet omnes sensus spirituales, et dona.”

fullness of Christ in both active – because it constitutes everything that, as it were, completes Christ’s being as His Body – and passive sense – as it is the Body of Christ that is filled with all goods by Christ the Head.<sup>3</sup>

Consequently, as the Word of God states that the Father “gave [Our Lord Jesus Christ] as head over all things to the church” [Eph 1:22], the whole and complete Christ must always be the unity of the Head and Body. Such an understanding of Christ ensures an organic and sacramental view of the Church as a reality that transcends social reality. The term *Christus totus*, therefore, serves the contemporary ecclesiology that stresses the insufficiency of mere social approach to the Church as a community of people, since the Church is simultaneously a community of people and the Body of Christ.<sup>4</sup>

Within this interpretative way, Christ is also called the social Christ. “Jesus is also social, as Czesław Bartnik writes, as much as the first Adam was social.”<sup>5</sup> This claim is based on a patristic theology of Adam as a corporative person. Bartnik speaks of the process of socialisation of Jesus of Nazareth, along the lines of the principle *incarnatio continua et crescens*. Accordingly, Christ “re-becomes Someone collective and universal – Jesus the Community, Church, Commonwealth, social Body, Christ’s Society.”<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, this does not imply that Christ consequently loses His identity and personal individuality. What is meant here is that from the moment of Conception, He has not been alone and isolated in the world of man, but he has lived in a constant communion with the members of His mystical Body. Through the Church he is united with all mankind that in God’s plan has not ceased to constitute one living organism, one Adam.<sup>7</sup>

The main reason for a new, ecclesial existence of the incarnate Son of God is His divine and Trinitarian personality. Jesus Christ exists in a communion with the members of the Body-Church, because as a divine being He is not only a substantiality, but also a relation. According to Ratzinger, if we wish to comprehend the essence of the Divine Persons, we have to grasp more than the substance, but also the relation. In his opinion, the essence of the personhood in the Trinity is then being-pure-relation, and, as a result,

---

<sup>3</sup> S. Cipriani, *Le lettere di Paolo* (Assisi: Cittadella, 1991), 552.

<sup>4</sup> The issue has been profoundly analysed in a work on the ecclesiology of Yves Congar: Mariusz Jagielski, *L’Église dans le temps* (Paris: Cerf-Alpha, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Czesław S. Bartnik, *Dogmatyka*, vol. 1 (Lublin: KUL 2000), 799.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, *Lud i Dom Boży w nauce św. Augustyna o Kościele*, vol. 1 of “Opera omnia” (Lublin: KUL, 2014), 607.

being-the most-absolute-unity.<sup>8</sup> By the same token, it has to be said that one of the Trinity, even after becoming human, still remains Himself, i.e. being-relation. His Trinitarian life, His being-relation is oriented toward the Father and Spirit, whereas after the Incarnation, His being-relation is also (and additionally) oriented toward the creation in a new way. Therefore, as the incarnate Son, He unites Himself with every man and, upon the foundation of these relations, He is building His Body-Church.

This way of understanding the Person of Jesus Christ may give rise to a theological problem. Namely, if *Christus totus* is the social Christ, ever connected to His Body-Church, can we claim that the Church *is* the incarnate Christ? It may seem that such an understanding is suggested by Pius XII, who in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* calls the Church “*alter persona Christi*” (“another Christ”).<sup>9</sup> In the contemporary theology, we might also come across such names for the Church as “social personality” and “collective subject.”<sup>10</sup> What we need to note is that the understanding of another person of Christ, or generally speaking of the Church as a “*persona*,” may be drawing on the Ancient Nestorianism, which opted for the existence of double nature in Christ. If the notion of the Church as another Christ is to be sustained (*altera persona Christi*), it has to be affirmed that in Christ there are two subjects represented by the images of a head and body. The former subject is Christ shown in the image of a head, and the latter – Church in the image of a body. Nevertheless, the Biblical image of the Church as the Head and Body indicates the inseparable unity between Jesus Christ and the Church, yet in a single subject of the incarnate Son. Hence, it is theologically correct to state that the Church is not another person of Christ, but, as the Body of Christ and People of God, exists in the Person of Jesus Christ. The divine identity of Christ extends over all the members of the Church that create one Body. The Church receives identity in Christ. The identity of the Church is Christ’s identity. *Christus totus* is then the only subject of both the Head and Body; it is *una sola persona*. On top of that, it is still the Divine Person who, entering human history, making and experiencing particular human ties, endows those ties with a perfect and universal nature. Receiving identity in Christ makes the Church enrooted in the supernatural reality of the Divine

---

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 187.

<sup>9</sup> DH, no. 3806, 3813.

<sup>10</sup> Czesław S. Bartnik, *Kościół Jezusa Chrystusa* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Włocławskiej Księgarni Archidiecezjalnej, 1982), 323; Czesław S. Bartnik, *Dogmatyka*, vol. 2, (Lublin: KUL, 2003), 128.

*Logos*. That is why, Yves Congar does not hesitate to say that the Church is Christ who dwells in the world and saves it through our faith.<sup>11</sup>

The fact that the Church does not have its own distinct identity (and personality), but it gets and, as it were, borrows identity and personality of the incarnate Word, entails profound theological consequences. They are described, for instance, in the Letter to the Galatians, in which the Apostle writes that the baptised have clothed themselves with Christ, “so that there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” [Gal 3:27-28]. Jerome, explaining these words, resorts to the image of fire that makes various kinds of metal fuse. At the same time, he states that in the same vain the fire of the Holy Spirit removes all the differences and divisions of those who are clothed in Christ<sup>12</sup>; while John Chrysostom speaks of an identical presence or shape that characterise those who are clothed in Christ. It is Christ’s presence and shape and His form. Whoever used to be a Jew, pagan, slave, woman or man, after uniting with Jesus Christ, takes on a new form, not the one of an angel or archangel, but Lord of all things Himself. In this way, whoever is clothed in Christ bears his resemblance and is like Him.<sup>13</sup> The Apostle stresses that the ones clothed in Christ do not turn to one thing or mass, but become, so to say, one person. This is indicated by the phrase “all one in Christ Jesus,” which utilises the Latin preposition *eis* (“in”) instead of the neuter preposition *en* that is synonymous, but used only with reference to objects, not people.<sup>14</sup> The baptised and united with Christ are given new identity, precisely Christ’s identity [cf. Gal 3:28: “*eis en Christo Iesou*”]. Thereby, Christ is in all, as the Apostle states: “Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all” [Col 3:11; cf. Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 23:13].

In fact, such an understanding of the reception of a new identity of the Church in the Divine identity of the incarnate Word is found in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, specifically in the part where Pius XII accounts for the spiritual maternity of Mary. In his view, Son of God united Himself with all the members of His mystical Body, already in the Mother of God’s womb

<sup>11</sup> Yves Congar, *Une Conclusion théologique à l’Enquête sur les raisons actuelles de l’incroyance, dans VI*, 37 (1935); after: M. Jagielski, *L’Église dans le temps*, 213.

<sup>12</sup> Girolamo, “Commento all’epistola ai Galati 2,3,27-28,” in *La Bibbia commentata dai Padri. Nuovo Testamento 8*, ed. Thomas C. Oden (Roma: Città Nuova, 2005), henceforth abbreviated BCPNT, no. 73

<sup>13</sup> Crisostomo, *Commento alla lettera ai Galati 3,28*, BCPNT, no. 8, 73.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Cipriani, *Le lettere di Paolo*, 374.

during Incarnation.<sup>15</sup> Hence, Mary conceived and gave birth not only to the Head, but also to the Body, i.e. to the whole, complete Christ. It is due to add that Pius XII makes reference to his predecessor, St Pius X, who in the encyclical *Ad diem illum* (1904) wrote about Mary in this way: “[She is] the Mother of Christ. Then she is our Mother also. ... [Christ] had a spiritual and mystical body, the society, namely, of those who believe in Christ.”<sup>16</sup> And again, recalling Eph 5:30: “[We] are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, have issued from the womb of Mary like a body united to its head.”<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, the incarnate Son of God comes into relations with all men. The one historically conditioned event of Jesus of Nazareth happens once and for all and is of the prominence of an act performed for all.<sup>18</sup> From the moment of His incarnation, Jesus Christ has forever existed in union with Church without mixing or dividing, as the whole, integrated and complete Christ.

## 2. ANTHROPOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

Although the second interpretative way of comprehending the term *Christus totus* is closely connected to ecclesiology, it may be also called anthropological, since this term will now be understood in regard to a different aspect, namely – the whole, complete Christ is the new Man. This view is partly related the shift made by Bonheoffer from the question “Who is Christ in Himself?” to “Who is He for us today?”<sup>19</sup> Christ as Man is co-substantial with us; is one of us.

The attitude of anthropological interpretation of *Christus totus* is to be found in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*. According to Pius XII, the mystical Head and Body jointly make up one man in whom heaven and earth unite.<sup>20</sup> This is the thought that dates back to the teaching of the Church

<sup>15</sup> DH, no. 3812.

<sup>16</sup> Pius X, *Ad diem illum*, no. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Bernard Sesboüé, *Poza Kościołem nie ma zbawienia. Historia formuły i problemy interpretacyjne* (Poznań: W drodze, 2007), 321.

<sup>19</sup> Alfons Nossol, “Tajemnica Jezusa Chrystusa w teologii protestanckiej,” in *Jezus Chrystus. Historia i Tajemnica*, ed. Wincenty Granat, Edward Kopeć (Lublin: TN KUL, 1988), 444-473, esp. 464.

<sup>20</sup> The Pope writes: „*Caput mysticum quod Christus est, et Ecclesia, quae hisce in terris veluti alter Christus eius personam gerit, unum novum hominem constituent, quo in salutifero crucis opere perpetuando caelum et terra iuguntur: Christum totum dicimus Caput et Corpus, Christum totum,*” DH, no. 3813.

Fathers about two Adams and new humanity [cf. Rom 5:12-25; 1 Cor 15:44-49]. By contrast, the foundations of this teaching, as Joseph Ratzinger noted, lie in the Hebrew realism of the “corporate person,” which is based on the fact that the original father, Adam, was perceived by the Fathers as a *corpus* of all man who are his descendants. As a result, the name “Adam” stands for the mankind that is not made up of a vast number of individuals, but constitutes, as it were, one human organism.<sup>21</sup> It is worth quoting Ratzinger’s explanation of the name “Adam” given by St Augustine as a commentary on Ps 96:10: “He will judge the nations with justice.” The word “nations” stands for Adam, for in Greek the four letters that the name Adam is spelled out with mean the four directions, i.e. the entire earth (*anatole* “east,” *dysis* “west,” *arktos* “north,” *mesembria* “south”). After the sin, Adam disintegrated into a number of particles and was scattered around the world.<sup>22</sup> Jesus Christ, another Adam, gathers in Himself the dispersed first Adam that lives on in individuals and nations. What is extraordinary is that Son of God Himself becomes a particle of creation in the human dimension so as to recollect the particles and make them into definite and full unity. Czesław Bartnik, in turn, notes that Jesus of Nazareth is the most significant particle of the universe and His salvific work is carried out on the basis of *pars pro toto*.<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, *Christus totus* is the new Man, new Adam, who unites all man. In him all people make up the unity. All divisions among people disappear, because Christ breaks down the wall that separates men [cf. Eph 2:14] and draws to Himself all the dispersed [cf. Jn 12:32]. The same thought is conveyed by the Apostle Paul in the Christological hymn about Christ who “made both one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity,” being “our peace” [Eph 2:14].

However, wherein lies this novelty of another Adam? What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the new Man? According to Joseph Ratzinger, what it comes down to is that He is the completely open being that reserves Himself nothing. As Son and Word, in both His divine and human existence, he transcends what we call substantiality. He is not only a substance, but also, and above all, as Ratzinger claims, pure relation, and as such is pure unity.<sup>24</sup> The power of attraction of another Adam, who is the whole Christ, lies in that His *I* is not his, but belongs to the Other, namely – the Father and every

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Ratzinger, *Lud i Dom Boży*, 605.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Bartnik, *Dogmatyka*, vol. 1, 798.

<sup>24</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 187.

human being. Ratzinger explains that in Christ what is most individual, i.e. the *I* itself, is at the same time the least individual, because our *I* is not ultimately from ourselves or for ourselves.<sup>25</sup> Acting on this clue, it may be claimed that *Christus totus* is a paradigm of the new man, or else – it is the man of future, exactly because He is Himself by departing Himself and living completely for others. Christ's existence is by no means a kind of alienated being, a merely individual one, but it is the completely open being that is relational and social. This way of being is symbolised by piercing of Jesus's side on the cross [Jn 19:34]. In Ratzinger's opinion, this is the moment when a shift takes place – from being an individual person to being a collective personality, i.e. Adam, from whose side a new humanity is being created. Agreeing to have his side pierced, Christ “agrees to have the walls of His existence broken down.”<sup>26</sup>

What needs to be added is that Jesus's earthly existence is being continued throughout the history of mankind and of each person, whenever people shift from an alienated and closed-down being to unity with Jesus Christ, and thereby to the unity with God and others.<sup>27</sup> Anthropological understanding of the term *Christus totus* points out to the fact that each person is himself to the fullest and is a complete (*totus*) man, only if he is incorporated in the wholeness and open to all, and, as a result, has a living and organic relation to Jesus Christ and remains in unity with Him. As Marian Rusecki rightly notes, the most perfect way of the existence of a human and non-human being is the existence in communion.<sup>28</sup> Since it is only Jesus Christ who exists in this way perfectly, we might say, quoting S. Bulgakov, that Christ is the only “all-man.”<sup>29</sup> In turn, only a person who has become like Jesus Christ in a perfect way and lives in a “Christological form,” has turned to a real and full man.<sup>30</sup> *Christus totus* in an anthropological dimension unveils the deepest truth about man and shows the essence of manhood. Christ, as the real Man, is never alone, nor closed down in His own *ego*, but is always open to others and remains in the community of persons.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 190.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 240-2.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Ratzinger, *Lud i Dom Boży*, 608. The author adds that man's participation in the unity of Christ takes place, first of all, in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

<sup>28</sup> Marian Rusecki, *Traktat o Objawieniu*, (Kraków: Dehon, 2007), 599.

<sup>29</sup> Waław Hryniewicz, “Tajemnica Chrystusa w teologii prawosławnej,” in *Jezus Chrystus. Historia i Tajemnica*, 415-444, esp. 441.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Evdokimov [*Orthodoxy* (New York New City Press, 2011)] speaks about the Christological form of Man through taking on two natures—created nature and uncreated grace.

### 3. COSMIC INTERPRETATION

The third interpretative way may be referred to as cosmic. Since the times of Teilhard de Chardin, *Christus totus* has been called the cosmic Christ, even though Christ and his work of salvation had been considered as such by the so-called “cosmologising Christologians” like Justin, Irenaeus of Lyon, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, Theodor of Mopsuestia, Gregory of Nazianzus, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Maxim the Confessor, John Scotus Eriugena, Nicholas of Cusa and P. de Berulle.<sup>31</sup>

And who is the cosmic Christ? For Teilhard de Chardin, He is the supernatural centre of the universe, the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the entire creation, attracting it to Himself with the power of the act of love.<sup>32</sup> According to his view, the world is not a reality that was created instantaneously, but a reality that undergoes a long and slow development and maturing up to the point of accepting Christ, who is Head of all creation [cf. Eph 1:10; Col 1:15;18]. Hence, the history of the world and mankind before Christ served as a preparatory time for the mystery of Incarnation.<sup>33</sup> Jesus Christ Himself played a decisive role in the preparation. As the eternal Word of God, the Second Divine Person, in an eternal relation to His humanity, he would prepare full union with human nature.<sup>34</sup>

Jesus Christ is therefore the “Fullness, Pleroma” [Eph 1:23] that converges in Himself not only the regenerated humanity, but also the entire cosmos.<sup>35</sup> Using Teilhard’s terms, He is the “Centre” that has existed since the beginning of the world creation, as well as the mysterious “Entirety,” or the “whole, complete Christ,” who in the eyes of the Father is seen as the final fruit of a long creative process.<sup>36</sup> *Christus totus* went through various stages of development and maturing up until the fullness of the resurrection. The decisive stage of the process is still the Incarnation, which Teilhard describes as *kenosis*. “In order to take over the human life, to dominate it with His own life, as Teilhard wrote, Christ not only had to confront His own life with the human life, but He also had to ingest it, taste it, savour it,

<sup>31</sup> Bartnik, *Dogmatyka*, vol. 1, 797.

<sup>32</sup> George A. Maloney, *The Cosmic Christ. From Paul to Teilhard* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1968), 197.

<sup>33</sup> Józef Kulisz, *Tajemnica Jezusa Chrystusa w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardina* (Warszawa: Bobolanum 1995), 10.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 14: Teilhard calls this work of Christ “*pré-action mystérieuse*.”

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Maloney, *The Cosmic Christ*, 29.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Kulisz, *Tajemnica Jezusa Chrystusa*, 13.

take control of it in Himself. We would not have grasped Christ's historical existence, we would have deformed and defile it, had we not realised that these had been massive struggles of the Principle of the supreme unity with multiplicity that was to have been united."<sup>37</sup> It is unknown, however, in what way Teilhard interpreted further process of this evolutionary development of Christ the Fullness, because the Incarnation and Passover of Christ seem to be to him the ultimate stages in the process in question. Speaking of the third nature of Christ, i.e. the "cosmic" one, we, so to say, suggest another incarnation, namely the incarnation of Christ into noosphere, and thereby in the entire cosmos.<sup>38</sup> Since the universe has been created by Jesus Christ and for Him [cf. Col 1:15-14], it is not only God's environment, but also a meeting place with Christ. De Chardin writes that the universe is not as much the epiphany as the "diaphony," that is – a place where Jesus Christ radiates and scans our material world.<sup>39</sup> Owing to the active presence of Jesus Christ in the universe, the process of "Christification" of the universe takes place, i.e. the universal transubstantiation upon the altar of the universe.<sup>40</sup> *Christus totus* is then not only Christ the Head, but also Christ of the cosmos. "Christ of the Universe, as Teilhard confesses, is the synthesis of Christ and the universe."<sup>41</sup> To him this understanding of Christ is an inevitable consequence and full elucidation of the Incarnation.<sup>42</sup>

Teilhard de Chardin's understanding of Christ has stood in for theological criticism. Some theologians do not hide that this interpretation runs the risk of pan-Christianism that thinks of the whole world, material as well, as the "body of Christ."<sup>43</sup> Were it the case, Jesus Christ would be deprived of His individuality, personality, and the created reality would be identified with the supernatural reality. *Christus totus*, as the cosmic Christ, cannot be reduced to a divine emanation that has been dispersed and works in the bosom of the matter.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, Teilhard is right when he stresses Christ's real

<sup>37</sup> Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Science et Christ*, vol. 9 of "Oeuvres" (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1955-1976), 90, after Kulisz, *Tajemnica Jezusa Chrystusa*, 22.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Marcin Karas, *Historiozofia Teilharda de Chardin wobec tradycyjnej myśli chrześcijańskiej*, (Kraków: Akademicka, 2012), 72-3.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Maloney, *The Cosmic Christ*, 215.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

<sup>41</sup> Teilhard de Chardin, "Jaka jest moja wiara," in *Zarys wszechświata personalistycznego* (Warszawa: PAX, 1985), 45, after: Karas, *Historiozofia Teilharda de Chardin*, 75.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Bartnik, *Kościół Jezusa Chrystusa*, 290.

<sup>44</sup> Karas, *Historiozofia Teilharda de Chardin*, 153-4.

presence in the created world and possibility of discovering this presence in everyday life. The created world displays a more sacred dimension and approaches the original world that God intended and was created with His hands as good and beautiful. Citing Marian Rusecki, we may claim that “Jesus Christ is not outside the created reality. He is not found either above it, or, even worse, next to it, but He inscribed in it, though not pantheistically.”<sup>45</sup>

However, the cosmic Christ is, under Teilhard de Chardin’s theory, the Christ of the Gospel. This is not the case when it comes to the New Age, where He certainly is no longer the Jesus of Nazareth. The Pontifical Councils for Culture and Interreligious Dialogue make it clear in the document entitled, “Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life.” The authors explain that in the New Age the cosmic Christ is, above all, “a divine pattern” in every man wanting to set Himself free from the enslavement of the paradigms of the Christian era.<sup>46</sup> In this non-Christian movement, everyone may become the cosmic Christ, as long as they are in contact with their internal energy, or energies flowing from the universe.<sup>47</sup>

Leaving reflection on the New Age approach to the cosmic Christ aside, we need to emphasise Jesus Christ’s bond with the universe. *Christus totus* in a way encompasses the universe as well. The Word of God speaks about the Father’s eternal plan, in which the entire universe, material one included, returns to the original order and is handed over to the rule of Christ the Head “with his favor that he set forth in Him as a plan for the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth” [Eph 1:9-10]. The process of uniting everything in Christ entails, on the one hand, the participation in God’s Trinitarian life and, on the other, points out to the fact that the universe is fulfilled by the grace and glory of God.<sup>48</sup> An orthodox theologian N. Berdyaev is right in that since Christ’s entrance into the universe, all has changed – the universe keeps renewing, passing the path of crucifixion and resurrection.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Rusecki, *Traktat o Objawieniu*, 596.

<sup>46</sup> Pontifical Council for Culture and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, „Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life. A Christian Reflection on the ‘New Age,’” [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/interelg/documents/rc\\_pc\\_interelg\\_doc\\_20030203\\_new-age\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Karl Rahner, *Jesus Christus. Systematik der kirchl. Christologie*, LTK, vol. 5, 953-961, 956.

<sup>49</sup> Hryniewicz, *Tajemnica Chrystusa w teologii prawosławnej*, 415-444, esp. 427.

#### 4. FINAL THOUGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS

It seems that in our everyday reflection and manner of speaking about Jesus Christ, the academic theology included, we tend to lose sight of the essential unity of the Divine Person of the incarnate Son with the Church that was created by Him as His Body. Individualistic mentality in the culture of today favours the trend of separating the Head from the Body, and impedes the look upon the Person of the incarnate Son as the new Adam in whom all the members of the Body are present. Meanwhile, the Letter to the Ephesians encourages us to get to know our Lord Jesus Christ better, as His Father “gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way” [Eph 1:22-23]. Therefore, the title of *Christus totus* may express this mystery of the Church in a better way. Having baptism and the Eucharist in mind, we ought to speak of our incarnation into the whole, integrated and complete Christ, both the Head and Body. Being in Christ, along the lines of the Apostle Paul’s thought, signifies not only individual relationship with the Person of our Saviour, but also access into the net of personal relations with all that constitute His Body.

Jesus Christ as *totus* may be thought of as a corporative person. As opposed to Adam, who is also claimed to be a corporative person, Jesus Christ is the Divine Person, who lives in a human way after the Incarnation. What is most important, however, is that unlike the fallen Adam, *Christus totus* does not scatter, but unites the whole creation anew. Jesus Christ has the power of attraction of all creation and power of integration of each creature in Himself. What is more, Jesus Christ lends and grants His identity to those who are clothed in Christ.

The term *Christus totus* expresses peculiarity and uniqueness of Jesus Christ that consist in the fact that He is the fully open person in both the Divine Trinitarian life and in the created human world. Christ is *totus* in the sense that He is never alone. He does not exist for Himself. Since the moment of His conception, He is united with His mystical Body and through His human Body of the Virgin Mary, he is also united with the entire universe. The whole and complete Christ has always lived in unity with the members of His Body, in the communion of persons (*communio personarum*), as well as in the non-personal contact and bond with the whole creation. The Biblical heaven and earth (the cosmos) remain for Him the environment of His presence and life. In the anthropological perspective, *Christus totus* shows a new concept of man that exists in a completely open way. Remaining

whom he is, without losing identity, he opens himself up to others. Moreover, this openness is confirmed with His new identity, according to the Word of God: “Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” [Mt 11:39].

*Christus totus* is also the cosmic Christ, who remains in the relation of cause and effect with regard to the whole creation. Following the teaching of Fathers of the Church on the cosmic dimension of the redemptive work of Christ, the issue of the cosmic Christ should find its way to the contemporary Christology, as well as eschatology, indicating the destiny of salvation of the whole universe. It requires the reinterpretation of the Biblical passages that speak about the cosmic Christ implicitly. Among these texts, the one that s special attention is taken from 1 Cor 15:28: “God may be all in all.” The title of *Christus totus* may serve as an interpretative key to this text in its cosmic aspect.

#### BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Bartnik, Czesław S. *Kościół Jezusa Chrystusa*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Wrocławskiej Księgarni Archidiecezjalnej, 1982.
- Bartnik, Czesław S. *Dogmatyka katolicka*, vol. 1. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2000.
- Bartnik, Czesław S. *Dogmatyka katolicka*, vol. 2. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2003.
- Chardin, Pierre Teilhard de. *Oeuvres*, vol. 9: *Science et Christ*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1955-1976.
- Cipriani, Settimio. *Le lettere di Paolo*, Assisi: Cittadella, 1991.
- Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Translated by Heinrich Denzinger, edited by Peter Hünermann. Freiburg im Br.–Basel–Rom–Wien: Herder, 1999<sup>38</sup>.
- Evdokimov, Paul. *Orthodoxy*. New York New City Press, 2011. Translated by Jerzy Klinger. Warszawa: Pax, 1964.
- Jagielski, Mariusz. *L'Église dans le temps: Yves Congar: la quête d'un réalisme ecclésiologique*. Paris: Cerf-Alpha, 2015.
- Jezus Chrystus. Historia i Tajemnica*. Edited by Wincenty Granat; Edward Kopeć. Lublin: TN KUL, 1988.
- Karas, Marcin. *Historiozofia Teilharda de Chardin wobec tradycyjnej myśli chrześcijańskiej*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2012.
- Kulisz, Józef. *Tajemnica Jezusa Chrystusa w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Warszawa: Bobolanum, 1995.
- La Bibbia commentata dai Padri. Nuovo Testamento 8*. Edited by Thomas C. Oden, in italian edited by Carlo Dell'Osso; Angelo Di Bernardino. Roma: Città nuova, 2005.
- Maloney, George A. *The Cosmic Christ. From Paul to Teilhard*. London: Sheed and Ward, 1968. Translated by Tadeusz Mieszkowski. Warszawa: Pax, 1972.
- Rahner, Karl. *Jesus Christus. Systematik der kirchl. Christologie*. LTK<sup>1</sup>, vol. 5, 953-961.

Ratzinger, Joseph. *Introduction to Christianity*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004. Translated by Zofia Włodkova. Kraków: Znak, 1996.

Ratzinger, Joseph. *Opera omnia*, vol. 1: *Lud i Dom Boży w nauce św. Augustyna o Kościele*. Translated by Wiesław Szymona, edited by Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka, Wiesław Szymona, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2014.

Papieska Rada ds. Kultury i Dialogu Międzyreligijnego. *Jezus Chrystus Dawcą wody żywej. Chrześcijańska refleksja na temat New Age*. Watykan, 2003.

Rusecki, Marian. *Traktat o Objawieniu*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Księży Sercanów, 2007.

Sesboüé, Bernard. *Poza Kościołem nie ma zbawienia. Historia formuły i problemy interpretacyjne*. Translated by Agnieszka Kuryś. Poznań: W drodze, 2007.

The preparation of the English version of *Roczniki Teologiczne* (Annals of Theology) nos. 1 and 2 and its publication in electronic databases was financed under contract no. 723/P-DUN/2016 from the resources of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for the popularization of science.

