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In the Midst of the Rhythms of the Earth: Rediscovering Humanity, Community, and the Church

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Abstract: This article focuses on the need to reconnect with the Earth, not in an abstract sense, but in a real one, to lay the foundations that will allow us to achieve a deep understanding of the position that man occupies in the cosmos and, consequently, bring to light what really defines the human community. Likewise, it seeks to demonstrate, through the interpretation of texts by Hildegard of Bingen, Wendell Berry, and Maximus the Confessor, that it is not possible, without falling into error, to conceive humanity, the community, and the Church as separate realities from the Earth and the rest of Creation. I also maintain that only from a paradigm rooted in the Earth, with an agrarian and nonindustrial mentality, it is possible to rediscover the cosmic character of the Church in the connection between the cosmic and liturgical cycles.

Keywords: earth; humanity; community; church; agrarian; cosmic liturgy

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1. Introduction

Concern for the Earth has gained special relevance in recent times in religious and theological literature, growing exponentially the volume of studies that conceive the reflection on this concept as a task of capital importance and urgency. However, it is unfortunately common for these essays to treat their object of study *in abstracto*; on the one hand, thematizing the Earth on a planetary scale, and, on the other, proposing, from an academic context, a kind of "social awareness" that points to a series of political actions based on the opinions of scientists and experts. The problem with this approach is that it is usually put into practice based on a supposed and illusory idea of man as belonging to an order other than the created cosmos or, at least, separated from it.

In the following pages I will seek to demonstrate the need to understand man not as a subject absent from Creation but as a being that, shot through with all the cosmic forces and by the nourishing action of God, occupies the very centre of Creation. With the purpose of reaching an understanding of the human being, the community, and the Church, not *in abstracto*, but in its indissoluble nexus with the Earth, I propose to analyse this phenomenon from the interpretation of certain texts by authors who, although distant in time, nevertheless share some essential points that allow us to overcome the excessively abstract modern mentality. These authors, mainly Hildegard of Bingen, Tolkien, Maximus the Confessor and Wendell Berry, reveal complementary aspects of a worldview that conceives man as the centre of a cosmos that, far from being autonomous or indifferent to God, contains within it the presence of the Creator. Taking into consideration that this relationship between man and the land always develops within a community, this leads me to discuss, drawing precisely on Wendell Berry, some proposals of the ideal community that have been conceived in recent years, such as those of Giorgio Agamben, Vaclav Havel, and Rod Dreher.

One of the most interesting concepts of Edmund Husserl, father of phenomenology, is that of the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*), which he introduces in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Husserl 1970, pp. 108–9). This concept, however, has a

richness whose implications Husserl himself could not glimpse. He certainly points out that, despite the apparent peripheral character that the Copernican revolution assigns to man, he cannot understand the world if it is not from his "here-now-I"—thus overcoming the universal vision of the Stoics—which is the *origo* as the starting point of the sense of the lifeworld. However, the sphere of consciousness continues to set abstract limits that ignore the necessity of the Earth, not as an accidental addition, but as a metaphysical constitution of the human being. The mentioned authors Hildegard, Tolkien, Berry, and Maximus the Confessor shed light precisely on these implications since they go beyond the limits of the sphere of consciousness and, overcoming the abstract vision, focus their reflection on the concrete and external of being in the world and show that the lifeworld must be understood through the necessary relationship with the concrete land.

In the first part, I will diagnose the current cultural context, which is characterized by the lack of solidity and definition of things. In the second part, I will examine the central position of man in the cosmos, starting from the anthropology of Hildegard of Bingen. In the third part, I will develop a concept of community from the mentioned anthropological conception of Hildegard and contrast it with some contemporary theories of the community. Finally, in the fourth part, based on a text by Maximus the Confessor, I will return to medieval philosophy to shed light on the nexus that unites the Church with the Earth, understanding Creation as an immense cosmic liturgy.

2. The Postmodern Philosophical and Cultural Context

In (post)modern philosophy, expressions abound that refer to the mutable character of all things, to the weakness of being, and this takes the form of a rejection of what is solid, of firmness, of the Earth. Thus, Marshall Berman analyses social and economic modernization stating, in *All That is Solid Melts into Air*, that "to be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and at the same time that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (Berman 1983, p. 15). The Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, for his part, developed the concept of "liquid modernity" as a state of nomadism that characterizes the late modern world, in which man is a tourist who changes places, spouses, jobs, etc., and there is no room for commitment, stability, and roots. As he puts it in *Liquid Times*, this "liquid modernity" is "a condition in which social forms (structures that limit individual choices, institutions that guard repetitions of routines, patterns of acceptable behaviour) can no longer (and are not expected) to keep their shape for long, because they decompose and melt faster than the time it takes to cast them, and once they are cast for them to set." (Bauman 2008, p. 1).

In the first place, the result of this situation is the appearance of a mass of so-called "citizens of the world" who are everywhere and at the same time do not inhabit any place, who anchor their activity in an "abstract" world while, due to the inconstancy of their lives, do not know the land locally. For this mass, all land is foreign. Secondly, things "disappear", giving way to the flow of information that appeals to emotion, which generates a perception of time as a succession of ephemeral presents that rush to nowhere. Time ignores things, ignores space, and denatures itself. Thirdly, the disappearance of things, which one can no longer delay, goes hand in hand with a systemic rejection of the definition of things, which become mere "fluids" that reject all "solid" meaning. This phenomenon is still paradoxical since it supposes the exercise of violence: the denial of being, which is no longer received as a gift, in favour of the will, to whose designs one must submit.

Unlike the solid Earth, the liquid is, by definition, adaptable to any container. The natural fluidity of things entails their *availability*. For this to have been possible, man has had to stop understanding himself as a being integrated into the cosmos, situated in the middle and shot through with all natural forces, to place himself in opposition to the world, which he considers to be substantially different. Thus Descartes, paradigm of modernity, hypostatizes the subject, removes it from the world, and converts it into a different and independent substance; man is mainly *res cogitans*, compared to the mere extension of

which the world consists. Man becomes, therefore, a stranger in a strange land, who is capable of imagining himself "without a body and without a world or a place in which he was, (. . .) as a substance whose essence or nature is to think, and that, in order to exist, it does not need any place nor does it depend on any material thing" (Descartes 1987, pp. 32–33).[1] In this sense, it can be affirmed that if time belongs to the inner realm and not to external space, late modern man does not live on Earth but in "history". Modern philosophy founds an anthropology that abstracts the subject and dispenses with the land, which remains subject to a will to dominate that redefines the concept of property and which is ultimately subject to the criteria of availability and transparency.

3. *Nullo Modo Separari Valet*: Rediscovering the Central Position of Man in the Cosmos

The vitality of Hildegard of Bingen stands out in contrast to this absent subject. In her *Liber Divinorum Operum*, in the vision of the wheel of the universe, she explores the notion of the cosmic egg of *Scivias*. Hildegard draws man in the centre of the wheel, as a crucible that contains the elements and all the cosmic forces. Hildegardian anthropology is, therefore, not only radically opposed to the Cartesian type, in which human reason is hypostatized and situated in front of the cosmos and outside of it, but it also constitutes, for this very reason, a *real* alternative to the modern paradigm[2]. This central position of man in the cosmos is presented in a precise way in the vision of the cosmic egg when Hildegard affirms that:

> The man, imbued with deep understanding, who dwells in the midst of the forces of divine Creation, made of the mud of the earth with great glory and so united to the energies of Creation, that he cannot separate himself from them (*nullo modo separari valet*); because the elements of the world, founded to serve man, render vassalage to him, and he is seated in the midst of them, governing them by divine design (Hildegardis Bingensis 1978, p. 48).[3]

And decades later, she would write on the wheel of the universe:

> And again I heard a voice from heaven saying to me: "God, who for the glory of his name arranged the world with the elements, consolidated it with the winds, illuminated it by intertwining it with the stars, completed it with the rest of the creatures, and placed man in it, surrounding it with all these things and fortifying it with the greatest strength, so that they assist him in all things and help him in his works, so that he works with them; because man without them cannot live nor subsist (*quia homo absque illis nec vivere, nec etiam subsistere potest*)." (Hildegardis Bingensis 1855, p. 755B).[4]

These two passages from Hildegard's work describe man and his position in the cosmos, underlining various aspects. In the first place, man is a rational being, "imbued with deep understanding", who possesses reason (*rationalitas*), discernment (*discretio*) and wisdom (*sapientia*), which explains the ontic pre-eminence of man over the rest of the created beings. Second, his place is the centre of the "sandy globe" (*arenosus globus*), dwelling in the midst of cosmic forces, represented in the winds and the elements of the world. The elements are key in the cosmic nature of the human being[5], beginning with the Earth (*terra*), whose "maternal" nature Hildegard gives an account of when she affirms that, in fact, "the earth is the carnal matter of men, and with its sap nourishes them as a mother nurses her children" (Hildegardis Bingensis 1978, p. 116)[6]. The elements also acquire a central relevance in Hildegard's healing practice due to their correspondence with the humours, according to the theory of Isidore of Seville. Thus, water corresponds to humidity, air to dryness, fire to hotness, and Earth to coldness. Hildegardian medicine is based on her anthropology since what is unknown cannot be healed and the human being is made up of the four elements that constitute the universe (Stoudt 2014, p. 272)[7]. On the other hand, man's dwelling in the centre of Creation not only implies that he is "nurtured" by the

elements but also places himself in the centre of a complicated network of wind lines that cross the globe from different origins, converging on the human person.

Man, who constitutes the very heart of Creation, therefore has a pre-eminence over the rest of the creatures. However, the dominion of man in the universe should not be understood as despotic and arbitrary since it is impossible for man to be conceived of as an entity separate from the world (*nullo modo separari valet*) and his existence depends on other creatures because "man without them cannot live nor subsist". His dominion, rather, is that of one who, from the centre of the universe, reigns *with* the creatures, as a guarantor of the balance of Creation. In this sense, Hildegard intuits a humanized nature, an ecosystem marked by the action of man, whose mission is to fulfil the "divine plan" and make order and beauty possible in Creation.

4. Rediscovering Community: Friendship, Closeness, and Necessity

Wendell Berry, though certainly in a different style, poses a very similar anthropological paradigm to that of Hildegard. In *The Unsettling of America*, he highlights man's interconnectedness with the Earth and he frames it in terms of codependency:

> We and our country create one another, depend on one another, are literally part of one another; that our land passes in and out of our bodies just as our bodies pass in and out of our land; that as we and our land are part of one another, so all who are living as neighbours here, human and plant and animal, are part of one another, and so cannot possibly flourish alone… (Berry 2015, p. 24).

The real connection between man and the Earth with all its creatures is manifested not only instantaneously but also in time with the development of interdependence and, therefore, of a real community. With the totalitarian evolution of modern societies in the last three years, voices have appeared—some with notoriety and philosophical authority—that claim the need for an alternative community. Thus, for example, they have turned to the Czechoslovakian politician Vaclav Havel's proposal for a parallel polis that could be a real alternative to the totalitarian state (Havel 1990, p. 85)[8]. The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, for his part, has been one of the voices that has most insisted on the need for a community in society. Influenced by the terminology of Ferdinand Tönnies (Tönnies 2001, p. 67), Agamben proposes a community based on friendship (*amicizia*) in a society where any man is seen as a potential enemy, and on closeness (*vicinanza*) in a society marked by the norm of "social distancing" (Agamben 2021). However, these two pillars seem insufficient by themselves to sustain a healthy community within a sick society. To friendship and closeness must be added the concept of *necessity*. More precisely, friendship and closeness would remain in the realm of abstraction—the mere social contract—if they are not suffused with necessity. In other words, the bonds of friendship and closeness acquire strength and effectiveness when they are bound by the cords of necessity.

Hannah Arendt, with her liberal tendency, conceives labour as the lowest on the list of concepts that make up man's *vita activa*: labour, work, action. The liberal prejudice leads Arendt to consider that man, while he labours, is not as such a man, but an animal (*animal laborans*), since, like animals, he is tied to natural necessity (Arendt 2018, p. 22[9]). However, it is in the labour that the source of a genuine community that does not despise otherness must be found. According to Wendell Berry, any attempt to create a real community based on a community of ideas is bound to fail (Berry 2002, p. 181). It could even be said that any attempt to create a community based on friendship and closeness is bound to fail. Friendship arises from necessity, and not the other way around, since the *real* nexus on which friendship is based depends, ultimately, on the inexorable ontological connection of both to the Earth. In this sense, only *necessity* is capable of truly connecting us and this necessity is a consequence of the undoubtedly real relationship between man and the Earth, as Hildegard brilliantly expressed. In other words, the agrarian mentality consists of the awareness that the ties that connect man to the land always precede any other relationship, as it is part of its ontological definition. Therefore, they are not arbitrary. Thus, it is the Earth that can push us closer together, to a closeness that is even unwanted, but forced by

circumstances. The work of the land—understood as Arendt's concept of "labour"—is the origin of a community of men who are closer to the ground than to the metaverse. For this reason, it is necessary to break with the industrial/digital mentality and recover an agrarian conception of human life, which inverts Arendt's triad and gives centrality to labour. This is not to say that all men must be farmers or peasants, but that they must all share an agrarian mentality. Just as in our industrial society, not all of us are dedicated to industry but we all share the industrial mentality, in the same way in the agrarian society not all are dedicated to agriculture and livestock but everyone shares the agrarian mentality. This makes it possible to build ties based on need. Wendell Berry himself writes a story, *Fidelity* (Berry 1993), in which members of the community share an agrarian mindset, including one of the protagonists, who is a lawyer. In short, we can try to create communities of users based on abstract interests but here the term "community" would be misused. Rather, they will form a "society"—for they are partners, not neighbours or friends—but there is no mutual local knowledge between its members.

Ecovillages are also in vogue, which try to build community on the basis of a common idea: a project of sustainability and social order that is generally very rigid. Rod Dreher's Benedict option, meanwhile, seeks the preservation of a parallel Christian community, largely separate from modern societies, with the goal of preserving certain traditional Christian values related to sex, marriage, and gender from the prevailing disordering ideology (Dreher 2017, pp. 122–43)[10]. Yet, no matter how honourable these intentions are, the real community will not arise from a community of values, ideas, or beliefs, but from real needs, tied to the land. The ties of necessity are not based on the community of ideas and it is precisely this circumstance that allows ties to be established between those who think differently but who need each other for material reasons. Nevertheless, it is not just that we are needy beings and, consequently, this need precedes the interpersonal connection in a community, but that this need, which unites man to the Earth and constitutes the origin of the relationship between people, reflects a metaphysical identity of the human being. Thus, if the *ideal* community bases membership on a voluntary adherence to the idea, the *real* community bases membership on the same vital human labour. A genuine community is rooted in being, not in will, and harbours otherness within itself. The community of ideas originates in the will and, rejecting any denial of the shared idea, runs the serious risk of becoming the realm of the homogenous. It is, in other terms, the difference between a metaphysics of being, which receives being in its *actuality* as a gift, and the metaphysics of will, which, "forgetting" being, emphasizes the *possible*. A community that claims to be based on sharing a certain sociopolitical discourse ends up marginalizing those who do not share such a discourse, while the ties of necessity would allow community between people who have different ways of conceiving the world.

5. Rediscovering the Church from the Ground

I would like to begin this fifth part, whose object is the rediscovery of the Church, with a testimony by C. S. Lewis about Tolkien that recounts one of his reflections on fairies:

> Tolkien once remarked to me that the feeling about home must have been quite different in the days when a family had fed on the produce of the same few miles of country for six generations, and that perhaps this was why they saw nymphs in the fountains and dryads in the woods—they were not mistaken for there was in a sense a real (not metaphorical) connection between them and the countryside. What had been earth and air and later corn, and later still bread, really was in them. We of course who live on a standardised international diet (you may have had Canadian flour, English meat, Scotch oatmeal, African oranges, & Australian wine to day) are really artificial beings and have no connection (save in sentiment) with any place on earth. We are synthetic men, uprooted. The strength of the hills is not ours[11] (CS Lewis 2000, p. 909) .

According to Tolkien, it is necessary to remain in the place for generations, in order to reach a deep knowledge rooted not only in hearing and sight but also, and especially, in smell, touch, and taste. It is about a "real connection", not "poetic" or "ideal"—although the *real* is properly poetic. Only the passage of generations can allow man to see the beings associated with the place since experience has been forging a "knowledge of what to expect to see". For this real connection to take place, however, it is necessary that the man be a local; that is, that he not only be in the place but be from the place. A man who is telecommuting is in a place without being in that place since his activity is connected to an abstract world and is detached from his local bodily situation. Labour, as a relationship of necessity between man and the Earth, places man in the midst of the rhythms of the Earth, the alternation of day and night, the lunar cycles, the succession of the seasons, the planting and harvesting periods, etc. Man, therefore, is inserted in the context of the life of the Earth, in its breathing, and in its heartbeat.

Until now, this essay has considered man and his position in the cosmos from a properly philosophical point of view. However, what has been said so far also has theological implications. A transition from the philosophical to the theological domain is necessary to connect anthropology with ecclesiology since that connection is not arbitrary nor illusory but it responds to reality. Thus, from a theological point of view, it can be said that the heartbeat of the Earth, in which man is inserted, is doxological since the Earth itself was sanctified by being bathed by the blood of Christ on Golgotha, becoming a figure of the Holy Grail (Bulgakov 1997, pp. 43–44)[12]. That is why the name of Jesus not only beats in the hearts of men, as the hesychasts said, but in the very heart of the Earth. By hearing and participating in this doxology, man discovers what Maximus the Confessor described in the *Mystagogia*, that as that "another church, which is not made by the hand of man, wisely revealed by this one, made by the hand of man, and whose sanctuary is the superior cosmos, constituted by the powers from above and, as a ship, this [cosmos] from here below, reserved for beings to whom sensible life corresponds by chance."[13] (Maximus the Confessor 2019, p. 56). Liturgy is not alien to the Earth but is intimately related to its rhythms, since, overcoming the polarities of being—which is the mission of man in the cosmos—in it the inhabited Earth is reconciled with paradise and the distances between heaven and Earth are bridged (Maximos the Confessor 2014, p. 103). This world, therefore, as Balthasar said, constitutes an immense cosmic liturgy (Balthasar 2003)[14], a liturgy that involves all beings in praise, so that what the psalmist proclaims is true: *Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei*: the heavens sing the glory of God.

6. Philosophical and Theological Implications

The idea of continuity between the different orders of reality has been latent throughout the entire essay, going through the transition between anthropology, cosmology, and ecclesiology. Beginning with the need to rethink the position of the human being in the cosmos, a look at the medieval thought of Hildegard of Bingen opens a path that allows diagnosing the problem of the Cartesian modern subject absent from the cosmos, returning man to his *real* position: the centre of the cosmos, shot through with all cosmic forces and accompanied by all creatures, from which it is not possible for him to be separated (*nullo modo separari valet*). Starting from this anthropological paradigm, it is also possible to rediscover the indissoluble nexus between the Earth and the community, conceiving this not in an *ideal* sense but in a *real* one; that is, based on necessity as a metaphysical identity of human beings.

The passage from the philosophical domain to the theological—or, more specifically, ecclesiological—also offers us a broader framework that profoundly enriches this understanding of the real locus of man. In this sense, we can suggest with Wendell Berry that a return to the Earth from the *real*—in agricultural terms, not industrial—leads to rethinking the touchstone on which a healthy human community that does not deny otherness is founded. But it can also be said, inspired by Maximus the Confessor and Bulgakov, that this return to the Earth could bring to light the relationship between created beings and

God, rediscovering that the entire Creation moves in a doxological song of universal praise, giving life to an immense cosmic liturgy.

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Notes

1 "Puis, examinant avec attention ce que j'étais, et voyant que je pouvais feindre que je n'avais aucun corps, et qu'il n'y avait aucun monde ni aucun lieu où je fusse; (. . .) je connus de là que j'étais une substance dont toute l'essence ou la nature n'est que de penser, et qui pour être n'a besoin d'aucun lieu ni ne dépend d'aucune chose matérielle."

2 Hildegard of Bingen, a doctor of the Church and a visionary from the 12th century, also offers a way of interpreting the world that goes beyond the usual limitations of phenomenological description, since she contemplates the world symbolically. That is to say, Hildegard notices that the essence of the thing refers beyond itself, placing itself in the sphere of the divine-human, in the *metaxu*, in the transition that goes from the ontological to the theological.

3 "Qui manifeste ostendit in fortitudine creaturarum Dei hominem profundae considerationis de limo terrae mirabili modo multae gloriae factum degentem, et virtute earundem creaturarum ita obvolutum quod ab eis nullo modo separari valet; quia elementa mundi ad servitutem hominis creata ipsi famulatum exhibent, dum homo velut in medio eorum sedens ipsis divina dispositione praesidet, ut etiam per me inspiratus David dicit." (CCCM LXII, 48, 293–300).

4 "Et iterum audivi vocem de coelo mihi dicentem: Deus qui ad gloriam nominis sui mundum elementis compilavit, ventis confirmavit stellis innectens elucidavit, reliquis quoque creaturis replevoiit hominem in eo ómnibus his circumdans et muniens, maxima fortitudine ubique perfudit, quatenus ei in ómnibus assisterent, operibusque ipsius interessent, ita ut cum illis, operaretur, quia homo absque illis nec vivere, nec etiam subsistere potest, quemadmodum in praesenti visione tibi manifestatur." (PL 197, 755B).

5 Also: "God also created the elements of the world. They are in humankind, who lives with them they are called fire, air, water, and earth. These four basic elements are so closely connected and bound together that none can be separated from the others. Thus they hold so closely together that one can call them the basic building blocks of the cosmos." (CCCM XLIII, 2, 37).

6 "quoniam terram est carnalis materia hominis, nutriens eum suco suo sicut mater lactat filios suos".

7 Debra L. Stoudt affirms that "The interconnectedness of the universe—which is God's creation—with God himself manifests itself in the idea of *viriditas*, the divinely bestowed life-giving force, and in Hildegard's dual conception of the imbalance of humours: as physical illness and as spiritual alienation from God and his creation."

8 This is the case of Michael Martin, American philosopher and author of a sophiological trilogy: https://www.thecenterforsophiologicalstudies.com/post/the-parallel-polis-or-how-to-beat-the-technocracy (acessed on 31 August 2021). Havel, for his part, maintains in his essay *The Power of the Powerless* that "the point where living within the truth ceases to be a mere negation of living with a lie and becomes articulate in a particular way, is the point at which something is born that might be called the 'independent, spiritual, social, and political life of society."

9 Not only Arendt equates man "tied" to concrete material need with an animal. Jakob von Uexküll also maintains that only humans have a "world" (*Welt*) in an universal sense, while animals only reach the "environment" (*Umwelt*), limited and concrete (Uexküll, pp. 13–14). Starting from this liberal premise, the man who focused more in the concrete "environment" than in the abstract "world", would be closer to the animal than to the human. This theory, therefore, seems to ignore that the relationship with the concrete Earth is essential to a human being.

10 It is interesting to note the critique that Matyas Szalay makes of the Benedict option, since, faced with the cloistering of communities that reject a secular world dominated by the metaphysical paradigm of the free market, he proposes, based on real Benedictine communities, to participate in the economy of the world from the logic of poverty and love (Szalay 2019, pp. 37–39).

11 Letter to Arthur Greeves, 22 June 1930.

12 Regarding the identification of Creation with the Holy Grail, Sergius Bulgakov writes: "The whole world is the Holy Grail, for it has received into itself and contains Christ's precious blood and water. The whole world is the chalice of Christ's blood and water; the whole world partook of them in communion at the hour of Christ's death. And the whole world hides the blood and water within itself. A drop of Christ' blood dripped upon Adam's head redeemed Adam, but also all the blood and water of Christ that flowed forth into the world sanctified the world. The blood and water made the world a place of the presence of Christ power, prepared for the world for its future transfiguration, for the *meeting* with Christ come in glory . . . The world has become Christ, for it is the Holy Chalice, the Holy Grail."

[13] "ἄλλη πως ὑπάρχων ἀχειροποίητος Ἐκκλησία διὰ ταύτης τῆς χειροποίητου σοφῶς ὑποφαίνεται, καὶ ἱερατεῖον μὲν ὥσπερ ἔχων τὸν ἄνω κόσμον καὶ ταῖς ἄνω προσνενεμημένον δυνάμεσι, ναὸν δέ, τὸν κάτω καὶ τοῖς δι' αἰσθήσεως ζῆν λαχοῦσι προσκεχωρημένον."

[14] It is precisely in his monograph on Maximus the Confessor that Balthasar, starting from Mystagogy, uses the expression "cosmic liturgy" to describe the Maximian universe (Balthasar 2003).

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