

# THE PROTESTANT QUEST FOR A MEANING OF THE EUCHARIST:

## A Comparative Theological Analysis of the Theology of the Eucharist in Lutheran, Anglican and Russian Baptist Traditions

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### Introduction

**I**t is common knowledge that we contemporary Christians often focus our thinking on the fact that the Church (or, rather, Churches) has to live and serve in the context of a politically, philosophically and religiously pluralist society. But we should also remember that it is not only the *church* that finds itself in a multireligious context, but also human *society* that finds itself in ‘multichurchal’ or ‘multiecclesial’ Christianity. By this weird term I simply mean a *diversity*—both theological and practical—which is one of the already-typical characteristics of Christianity. Diversity can have a positive effect if it is in the context of unity between these churches and congregations, or a negative one if the diversity is accompanied by reticence and theological inhospitality. Therefore, it is important to study the theological diversity of Christianity and learn to maintain a certain level of unity or, at least, mutual hospitality.

I have approached my research with these fundamental presuppositions; that theological hospitality is impossible without theological comprehension of various viewpoints, and that this comprehension, in its turn, cannot happen without preparatory theological investigation. This paper attempts to produce such an investigation in the instance of the doctrine of the Eucharist, with special attention to Christ’s presence in it. The three key questions I ask in my “Eucharistic Quest” are:

- What *is* the Eucharist; a “sacrament” or an “ordination”, a supernatural and multifunctional means



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of grace or simply a reminder about Christ's passions? What is the definition and "function" of this rite?

- What actually *happens* in the Eucharist; activation of people's memory, performance of symbolic or even mystic rite, magic change, or something else?
- What is the *relation* between Christ and the bread and the wine of the Eucharist? Is he present, absent, or somehow connected? Is it his "self-actualization", a "magical" or "spiritual" transfer assisted by the Holy Spirit, or a recollection of Jesus by human memory?

The aim of this research is, thus, to ascertain what the meaning and "mechanism" of the Eucharist in the three Protestant traditions (Lutheran, Anglican and Russian/Ukrainian Baptist) actually is. Understanding of this issue may help to discover a common ground (as well as the key differences) between them. Thus, it will bring them in closer proximity to one another in the ecumenical enterprise; that is, in our common search for unity in Christian love and truth.

However, before I "dive into" the particularities and idiosyncrasies of these Protestant theologies of the Eucharist, I must explain my choices. Why have I chosen *these* particular three traditions for this research? The answer is complex, due to the fact that my choice was determined by multiple reasons. Two of them are theological by nature and one is purely personal and subjective.

Firstly, there is no single Protestant Eucharistic theology, whereas there are various Protestant Eucharistic theologies. The cause being that the "theological children and grandchildren" of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Cranmer have never agreed and still disagree concerning the nature of the Eucharist; especially about the relation between Christ (and his real body) and the material elements of bread and wine used in the ritual. Anglican, Lutheran and (Russian) Baptist teachings particularly demonstrate a whole number of *dissimilarities* in their theory and practice of the Eucharist and therefore provide informative and remarkable material for such research.

Secondly, these three traditions, quite interestingly, have some important *similarities* which again reinforce the decision to connect them in the given investigation.

Finally, my choice was additionally influenced by my own Christian experience. For some time I was a member of a Russian-speaking, Ukrainian Baptist church and an English-speaking Anglican community in Belgium. I also have many friends—my fellow Christians—in Lutheran and, of course, Evangelical-Baptist and Anglican circles. This has provided me with a personal motivation and some of the privileges of an eye-witness observer for analyzing these three Protestant theological traditions.

Having defined the general scope of the research, a few words should be said concerning the method that will be employed here. The three aforementioned confessional approaches to the theology of the Eucharist will be examined according to the 'dogmatic' approach.

The three aforementioned confessional approaches to the theology of the Eucharist will be examined according to the ‘dogmatic’ approach. Mainly, I will consider the official doctrinal documents of the three Protestant denominations in order to deduce their authorized and formally approved teaching about the Lord’s Supper (e.g. Lutheran *Formula of Concord*, Anglican *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* and the *Book of Common Prayer*, and Baptist *Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists (of the U.S.S.R.)*, *Doctrinal statement of 1985* or several contemporary statements of faith). This is to help to insure that my observations and conclusions will be founded on adequate and sufficiently representative theological material. As a necessary step, I will also consult some key theologians who are determinative or influential to the three Protestant traditions. Among them I would name Martin Luther, Thomas Cranmer, Richard Hooker, A.M. Bychkov, A.V. Karyev, S.V. Sannikov and others. Taking them into consideration should help the nuance and contextualization of the article when talking about Lutheran, Baptist or Anglican theologies.

Besides, it should be remembered that not all nuances of a denomination’s belief are explicitly expressed in their official documents and books of their leading theologians. But, nevertheless, knowledge of the official ‘documental’ theology and the theological position of the authoritative thinkers of a given tradition is sufficient for a formulation of the most crucial theological trends and dominant ideas with regards to a chosen theological topic. Hence, I have decided to employ this methodology for my comparative theological investigation.

## 1. TWO PREAMBLES

### 1.1. Biblical preamble

The roots of the Christian rite of the Eucharist must be traced back to a particular event in the life of Jesus Christ and his disciples: the Paschal (or pre-Paschal, since the precise and historically proven day and details of the supper are uncertain)<sup>[1]</sup> meal which became their last dinner together before Jesus’ execution. As St. Matthew tells the story (Matt. 26:26-28),<sup>[2]</sup>

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, «Take, eat; this is my body.» Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, «Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins» (NRSV).

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<sup>[1]</sup> See Jean-Yves Lacoste (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Christian theology*, vol. 1: A-F., transl. from French (New York: Routledge, 2005), s.v. “Eucharist: A. Biblical Theology”, and Bernard L. Marthaler (execut. ed.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., vol. 5: Ead-Fre (Detroit: Gale, 2003), s.v. “Eucharist in Contemporary Catholic Tradition.”

<sup>[2]</sup> *The New Revised Standard Version Bible (NRSV)* (Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, 1989).

The parallel accounts of the institution of the Eucharist are easily found in the synoptic Gospels (Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:14-20) and Pauline Epistle to Corinthians (1 Cor. 11:23-26) whereas John records, “The words of Jesus in the synagogue of Capernaum that *prepare* for the institution...”<sup>[3]</sup> (John 6:35, 51, 53-56). Yet, all the accounts, in fact, tell one and the same story about Jesus breaking the bread and sharing the wine, accompanied by his prayer and ‘words of institution’, i.e. (a) imperatives, telling the disciples to continue performing the same sacred act regularly and without ceasing in the future, and (b) ‘explanatory notes’, describing what this act means. On the basis of all these—and some other—biblical texts the theologians traditionally build up their Eucharistic doctrines.

## 1.2. Historical-theological preamble

From the very beginning of the Church Era in history (1<sup>st</sup> A.D.) the Eucharist was considered to be the core rite and the climax of every meeting of the Christian community, and this understanding of the role and value of the Eucharist did not change greatly afterwards. But the situation was totally different with understanding of the nature of the Eucharist. Before the time of the European Reformations there were already several interpretations of the Eucharist available and accessible:

- *transmutation theory*—i.e. a sort of the real change theory in rich rhetoric form—presented by Ambrose of Milan;<sup>[4]</sup>
- *spiritual realism* with some elements of *subjectivism* created by Augustine of Hippo as a response to the transmutation hypothesis of Ambrose;<sup>[5]</sup>
- *extreme (anti-realistic) symbolism* exemplified by Berengarius of Tours which stated that in the Supper something spiritual (i.e. “heavenly Christ”) is *added* to the bread and wine<sup>[6]</sup> which are nothing more than *signs* of this spiritual reality.<sup>[7]</sup> Christ is thus present only conceptually (*intellectuale*),<sup>[8]</sup> whereas the Eucharist has purely symbolic nature;

<sup>[3]</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church: with modifications from the editio typica* (New York: An Image Book, 1995), 372; italics mine.

<sup>[4]</sup> John R. Willis, ed. *The Teachings of the Church Fathers* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 402; M.J. Rouet de Journel, ed., *Enchiridion patristicum: loci ss. patrum, doctorum scriptorium ecclesiasticorum, editio 23* (Barcelona: Herder, 1965), 479, 491, 492; Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 184.

<sup>[5]</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 511; Adolph Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. V (New York: Dover Publications, 1961), 156; Lohse, *A Short History*, 137-138; Rouet de Journel, *Enchiridion patristicum*, 522, 529-530, 539, 593; Willis, *The Teachings*, 405; Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, 184.

<sup>[6]</sup> Bernhard Lohse, *A Short History of Christian Doctrine*, transl. from German (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 145-146.

<sup>[7]</sup> John Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy: an historical and philosophical introduction* (London: Routledge, 2007 (Reprint: 2009)), 118-119.

<sup>[8]</sup> David Knowles, *The Middle Ages 604-1350*, in Cunliffe-Jones, Hubert (ed.), *A History of Christian Doctrine* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1978), 246.

- *transubstantiation theory* as elaborated by Thomas Aquinas: during the Eucharist the *miraculosa conversio* occurs: without any annihilation the true body of Christ “*incipiat esse per conversionem substantiae panis in ipsum*” where ‘conversion’ stands for an immediate and supernatural *transformation/change/turn-over* of the substances of bread and wine into the substance of Christ’s body (*Summa theologiae* IIIa, q.75, 4),<sup>[9]</sup> although the accidents (i.e. the qualities or properties which are sense-perceived) of the bread and wine – e.g. size, smell, appearance, taste, etc – remain the same (*Summa theologiae* IIIa, q.75, 5).<sup>[10]</sup> This view was developed in the context of fully formulated doctrine of the sacraments as means of grace whereby God’s grace—substance-like one—was infused into a believer;
- *impanation and annihilation theories* promulgated by John Duns Scotus: the former says that the substance of bread and wine remains the same but the substance Christ’s body really “comes down into it” and, consequently, the two coexist (hence the terms *impanatio* and *consubstantiatio*) whereas the latter speaks about the preceding destruction of the substance of bread and wine and succeeding replacement of it by the substance of the *corpus Christi* (hence the *annihilatio*).<sup>[11]</sup>

The Reformers and their followers apparently did not have to create any brand new Eucharistic theology, but they had much Eucharistic thought behind them to work with. They started building on that foundation, and the fruits of their labors will be presented in next chapters.

## 2. THE THREE “THEOLOGICAL AMBLES”<sup>[12]</sup>

As the reader passes on from the preamble section of this article to the ‘amble’ section, it is necessary to say that for my analysis of the Eucharistic doctrines of the three chosen denominations I will use a certain ‘scheme’ in order to get a concise and more-or-less systematic picture of the teaching. As one remembers from the introduction, there are three key categories that are essential to my theological analysis of the Lutheran, Anglican and (Russian) Baptist theological views on the Holy Communion:

- 1) Eucharist at first sight: definition and approach to it.
- 2) Eucharist as a meaningful action: the nature and function of it.
- 3) Eucharist and Christ: nature of their relation;

<sup>[9]</sup> William Barden (transl. and ed.), *The Eucharistic Presence*, vol. 58 (3a. 73-78) of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae: Latin text and English translation, Introduction, Notes, Appendices and Glossaries* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1965), 70-73.

<sup>[10]</sup> Barden (transl. and ed.), *The Eucharistic Presence*, 76-77.

<sup>[11]</sup> Bengt Hagglund. *History of Theology*, transl. by Gene J. Lund. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 194.

<sup>[12]</sup> ‘Amble’ sounds quite alien to a theological context, but I use this term as a synonym of the English noun ‘walk’ and, by logical deducibility, ‘way’, because (i) esthetically it fits in after the *preamble* and (ii) its meaning is derived from Latin *ambulo, ambulare* which means to walk or to go, which is close to what I mean by ‘theological ambles’ – ‘walks/ways of the Eucharistic theology in time and space in the context of the three Protestant traditions’.

After looking (so far as it is possible) for these three aspects of the doctrine in official teaching of the three churches, a short summary of ideas and their minimal assessment will be offered.

## 2.1. The Lutheran Way: the *via gratiae*

The Lutheran theological tradition has quite specific understanding of the sacrament of the altar. It is neither Roman Catholic nor ‘fully reformed’.<sup>[13]</sup> The heirs of a German Doctor of Theology, Martin Luther, prefer the middle way. As the Reformers and those Reformed by the great Reformers of the sixteenth century, they protest against the Catholic ‘mistakes’ and heresies.<sup>[14]</sup> But as the Lutherans or Luther’s and Melanchthon’s theological followers they also protest against the ‘extremes’ of “the Enthusiasts and the Swiss.”<sup>[15]</sup> In the end their theological position did not become widely accepted outside the Lutheran tradition, partly due to this “*via media* approach”. This way—*via Lutherana*—was, and still is, one of the most interesting byproducts of the Protestant Reformations of the sixteenth century.

Neither Luther nor his followers ever denied that “the sacrament of the altar” (one of the traditional Lutheran terms)<sup>[16]</sup> is the means of grace, but here *gratia Dei* is not a substance that is ‘poured out’ or ‘infused’ by God into a believer, as was traditional to say in medieval times. It is rather “the gospel” itself, in the sense that “in the sacrament or gospel [there is] the word which presents, offers, distributes and gives to me that forgiveness which was won on the cross.”<sup>[17]</sup> The Eucharist should be thus understood as a kind of ‘divine vehicle’ used to transfer heavenly salvation to people and is therefore correctly identified as “the outward means through which the Holy Spirit enables faith and through which God’s justification is given and received by this faith.”<sup>[18]</sup> Hence, the sacrament of the altar’s four ‘centers’, telling something about the nature and function of the sacrament:

- triune God in general and Jesus Christ in particular who is the main agent and the main ‘contents’,<sup>[19]</sup>
- communication of grace and forgiveness which is God’s action,<sup>[20]</sup>

<sup>[13]</sup> John Dillenberger, “An introduction to Martin Luther,” in *Selections from His Writings*, by Martin Luther (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), xxv, xxxii.

<sup>[14]</sup> Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 188-189.

<sup>[15]</sup> Paul Athaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 375.

<sup>[16]</sup> Cf. Luther’s Small Catechism in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 90.

<sup>[17]</sup> W A 18, 204 f., quoted in Paul Athaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 380.

<sup>[18]</sup> Gunter Gassman and Scott Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 83, quoted in David W. Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality* (IVP Academic, 2006), 50.

<sup>[19]</sup> Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 89.

<sup>[20]</sup> Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 287, 289.

- powerful and efficient Word of God,<sup>[21]</sup> and
- human faith which is both a requirement and a benefit/fruit of the sacrament.<sup>[22]</sup>

But these ‘centers’ and their meaning(s) should be explicated and explained in more detail. First of all, Lutheranism denies a “sacrificial” nature of the Lord’s Supper whereby *the church* repeats or enacts Jesus’ sacrifice in order to receive God’s forgiveness and substitutes it with the “testamental” understanding of the Eucharist: the Supper is Christ’s “testament” that implied death of the testator and promised certain “heritage” for heirs.<sup>[23]</sup> This logic enabled Martin Luther to conclude that “the mass... is simply a promise” of salvation<sup>[24]</sup> and, consequently, something that God guarantees and fulfills *himself* while people are to passively—albeit with faith—receive.<sup>[25]</sup>

Secondly, although the sacrament of the Lord’s Table is the action of the entire Godhead—Father the Creator who provides the material elements and gives his Son for people’s salvation, Son of God, the Redeemer who sacrifices himself for us, and the Holy Spirit who actively participates in spiritual healing and justifying people here and now<sup>[26]</sup>—the Lutheran idea of the Eucharist is very Christocentric. The consecration of the host is done primarily by Christ’s power,<sup>[27]</sup> in the context of his testament,<sup>[28]</sup> while according to Luther’s own definition of the Lord’s Supper in his catechism and sermons, the Eucharist itself “is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine given unto us Christians.”<sup>[29]</sup> The belief in real presence of Christ in the Eucharist became one of the hallmarks of

<sup>[21]</sup> Duane W.H. Arnold and C. George Fry, *The Way, the Truth and the Life: an introduction to Lutheran Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1982), 135.

<sup>[22]</sup> Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 236, 283, etc.

<sup>[23]</sup> “The mass or sacrament is Christ’s testament which he bequeathed to be distributed after his death, among those who believed on Him.” Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 272-273. Also Gerhard O. Forde, *The Preached God: proclamation in Word and Sacrament*, ed. Mark C. Mattes and Steven D. Paulson (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 147-148.

<sup>[24]</sup> Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 277-278.

<sup>[25]</sup> Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms: forming the faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 138; Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 285ff.

<sup>[26]</sup> Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 89.

<sup>[27]</sup> The Formula of Concord, Art. VII, III, in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 138.

<sup>[28]</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, *The Preached God: proclamation in Word and Sacrament*, ed. Mark C. Mattes and Steven D. Paulson (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 150.

<sup>[29]</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther’s Small Catechism* in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 90; cf. Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 234-235.

Lutheranism<sup>[30]</sup> and is explicitly expressed in their classic confessional documents.<sup>[31]</sup> This Lutheran eucharistic realism is based upon (a) the ‘biblical hermeneutics of the “natural” sense’ whereby the interpreter “should let the words retain their natural force, just as they read, and give no other interpretation unless a clear article of faith compels otherwise,”<sup>[32]</sup> and (b) Christological doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* (intercommunication of the attributes) transformed into the *unio sacramentalis* (sacramental union) especially for the eucharistic theology.

According to the former (a), the words of institution in Matthew 26:26-28 and parallel passages require neither sophisticated explanation (like Erasmus’ and Zwingli’s humanist attempts to ‘spiritualize’ the text) nor necessary reinterpretation in light of some other New Testament verses (e.g. John 6:35, 51, 53f) and, apparently, read—and are to be interpreted in the same way—“this *is* my body,” and “this *is* my blood.” For Dr. Luther and his ‘disciples’ this is enough to believe *that* “[t]he whole Christ” is “truly, really, essentially and substantially present” under the appearance of ordinary bread and wine,<sup>[33]</sup> with clear confidence in non-necessity to try to understand *how* it happens though.<sup>[34]</sup>

According to the latter (b), since Jesus Christ is thoroughly God and man with two natures joined and collaborating without mixture or division, even his physical body can—or even should—enjoy some supernatural qualities as the logic of the *communicatio idiomatum* requires.<sup>[35]</sup> Then, his physical body, as well as spiritual one, can (1) exist in more than one (circumscriptive or localized) mode and (2) be present everywhere (this is the doctrine of the *ubiquitas* or omnipresence of Christ’s body),<sup>[36]</sup> but as he defined in his Word he

[30] Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism: the theological movement and its confessional writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 85.

[31] For example, the Augsburg Confession states, that the “body and blood of Christ are truly present [under the form of bread and wine]...” and the Formula concordi? – “in the Lord’s Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present.” In Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 13 and 137.

[32] Martin Luther, W A 26, 403; LW 37, 270, quoted in Paul Athaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 386; Martin Luther, *The Adoration of the Sacrament in Eric Lund, ed., Documents from the History of Lutheranism, 1517–1750* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 51.

[33] Gunter Gassman and Scott Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 120, quoted in David W. Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality* (IVP Academic, 2006), 54; cf. The Formula of Concord, Art. VII, Affirmative, II, in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 137-138.

[34] Paul Athaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 386-391.

[35] Donald K. McKim, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (Cambridge: University Press, 2003), 110.

[36] Martin Luther, Confession concerning Christ’s Supper, in Eric Lund, ed., *Documents from the History of Lutheranism, 1517-1750* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 54-55; The



(3) is specifically present “*both* spiritually and bodily”<sup>[37]</sup> “*in, with, and under* the consecrated bread and wine.”<sup>[38]</sup> The last phrase highlights the idea that (a) Christ shows himself not only in spiritual manner but is also “received” and “taken” orally, i.e. physically—“after a spiritual and heavenly manner” though—but (b) the fullness of “reality” of both corporeal elements of bread and wine and Christ’s flesh after consecration remain thoroughly unchanged.<sup>[39]</sup> It means that there is no real transformation or metamorphosis in the Eucharist: Christ’s body and the elements of bread and wine *coexist* with each other without being turned into each other.

Here Luther’s and Lutheran theologies demonstrate their dependency upon late medieval nominalism and also particularly John Wycliff’s and Pierre D’Ailly influence,<sup>[40]</sup> although some Lutherans prefer to keep away from or even shun from the labels of ‘consubstantiation’ or ‘impanation’<sup>[41]</sup> (for these terms as well as concepts belonged to the post-Scotian nominalist tradition of medieval Eucharistic theology).<sup>[42]</sup> Nevertheless, here their opinion falls well into the consubstantiation theory, and, in general, in the Lutheran tradition it is not only *something* that is conveyed through the elements, but also *someone*, that is Christ himself who comes to his faithful, is present among them and brings with himself their forgiveness and spiritual refreshment.<sup>[43]</sup>

Thirdly, this spiritual nourishment (or proclamation and ‘distribution’ of God’s forgiveness) is the heart of the Eucharistic act: the “main point” is God’s salvific Word that brings about spiritual renewal. As the father of Lutheranism points out, the mass is “meant for nourishing and strengthening the personal faith of the individual,”<sup>[44]</sup> because Christ’s sacrificed body and blood are not simply present; rather, they are, as the Bible says, “given and shed for you, for the remission of sins” where the emphasis is on this

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Formula of Concord, Art. VII, V, in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 138-139.

<sup>[37]</sup> Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism: the theological movement and its confessional writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 79.

<sup>[38]</sup> Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 91.

<sup>[39]</sup> Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 265; Ronald Michener, “Protestant Theological Systems: Lutheran Theology” (lecture, Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Leuven, Belgium, October 8, 2010).

<sup>[40]</sup> Luther explicitly admits that: see Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 265.

<sup>[41]</sup> E.g. Duane W.H. Arnold and C. George Fry, *The Way, the Truth and the Life: an introduction to Lutheran Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1982), 148-149.

<sup>[42]</sup> See Hagglund, *History of Theology*, 194

<sup>[43]</sup> Duane W.H. Arnold and C. George Fry, *The Way, the Truth and the Life: an introduction to Lutheran Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1982), 134-135; Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms: forming the faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 133; Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 286.

<sup>[44]</sup> Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 286.

“for you.”<sup>[45]</sup> This blood was shed once but is still effective for people’s souls as to be used “against sin, death, and all evils.”<sup>[46]</sup> There are usually three main ‘benefits’ for participants in the Eucharist: “forgiveness of sins, life [everlasting], and salvation.”<sup>[47]</sup> But the salvation comes not through people’s acceptance of Christ’s flesh; moreover, even the *praesentia realis* is totally dependent on the Word.

It is “[o]n the basis of Scripture (the inscripturated Word) [that] Jesus (the incarnated Word) is preached as Lord and Savior (the inculcated Word)” and saves people.<sup>[48]</sup> These are the three aspects of the Lutheran concept of the Word. To put it simpler, God’s main instrument in touching people’s hearts and justifying them is his powerful Word which is either preached and heard in invisible form or administered in visible form of sacraments. As Martin Luther explains that, “...in every promise, God presents two things to us, a word and a sign, in order that we may understand the word to be a testament, and the sign a sacrament. In the mass, the word of Christ is the testament, the bread and wine are the sacrament.”<sup>[49]</sup> Therefore, it is correct to speak about the Word as the audible sacrament (*sacramentum audibile*) and the sacrament – as the visible Word (*verbum visibile*),<sup>[50]</sup> but the latter is only an addition.

The key doctrine for Lutherans is justification by grace through faith alone whereby God proclaims the person justified and, thus, by his powerful Word changes status of and recreates the person.<sup>[51]</sup> Then the “basic position is that since the spoken word of the gospel unconditionally grants what God has to give, there can be no rival institutions of grace; if the sacraments justify, this blessing must be worked by the word.”<sup>[52]</sup> Therefore, it is the Word of God as Christ’s promise written in the books of the New Testament and as Father’s *vox viva* that grants the real presence and real justification through the sacrament. But in order to fully receive divine blessings, a person must believe, otherwise his participation in the Lord’s Supper will be ineffective.<sup>[53]</sup>

<sup>[45]</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther’s Small Catechism* in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 92; Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism: the theological movement and its confessional writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 75.

<sup>[46]</sup> Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms: forming the faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 135.

<sup>[47]</sup> Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms: forming the faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 136.

<sup>[48]</sup> Duane W.H. Arnold and C. George Fry, *The Way, the Truth and the Life: an introduction to Lutheran Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1982), 135.

<sup>[49]</sup> Martin Luther, *Selections from His Writings*, edited and with an introduction by John Dillenberger (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), 279.

<sup>[50]</sup> Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 188.

<sup>[51]</sup> David W. Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality* (IVP Academic, 2006), 48.

<sup>[52]</sup> Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism: the theological movement and its confessional writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 80.

<sup>[53]</sup> The Formula of Concord, Art. VII. VII-IX, in Philip Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with translations*, vol. III of *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical*

Summing it up, one should conclude that in Lutheranism the Eucharist is primarily God's act through Jesus Christ by which he promises and, at the same time, fulfills his promise of forgiveness, makes himself present to his church and by his word spiritually nourishes and sanctifies his people. But by doing this God in Jesus Christ even shows himself in, with and under the elements of bread and wine both expecting and strengthening human faith in him. These are the aspects of the Lutheran Gospel of Grace in the Eucharist.

## 2.2. The Anglican Way: the *via communionis*

Comparing to Lutheranism, Anglicanism suffers or, rather, enjoys the lack of both (a) crystal clear and strong "confessional identity,"<sup>[54]</sup> and (b) definite and binding authoritative set of doctrine, i.e. 'Anglican theology', for neither *The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* nor the *Book of Common Prayer* are considered to be theologically obligatory for all the faithful Anglicans.<sup>[55]</sup> As a consequence, it is somewhat problematic to speak about *the* doctrine of the Eucharist in the Church of England when such a doctrine (in a fully developed form) is *de jure* absent.<sup>[56]</sup> But it is possible to speak about the Eucharist in Anglican *tradition* where the term "tradition" stands for purely Anglican *ethos* or *spirit* that finds and expresses itself in the liturgy.<sup>[57]</sup> It is exactly worship that is considered to be formative for Anglican theology according to the old principle *lex orandi est lex credenda*, re-interpreted 'anglicanly' as "let the rule of prayer determine the rule of belief."<sup>[58]</sup> Thus, if one wants to get acquainted with the *theologia anglicana*, one has to dive into their liturgy and compare it with some theological expressions that this Church offers.

In the case of the Lord's Supper, Anglican 'teaching' is really rich, let alone ambiguous: it was heavily influenced by Lutheran, Zwinglian and 'Bucerian' Eucharistic theology via Thomas Cranmer<sup>[59]</sup> and by more broadly Reformed one via Richard Hooker,<sup>[60]</sup> but not without partial influence of the medieval scholastic tradition (e.g. of the idea that sacraments *efficiunt quod figurant*).<sup>[61]</sup> As a result, the Anglican view of the Eucharist is quite mixed in itself.

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*Notes*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. revised and enlarged (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), 140-141; David W. Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality* (IVP Academic, 2006), 55.

<sup>[54]</sup> Hans J. Hillebrand, *The Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, vol. 1 "A-C" (New York: Routledge, 2004), s.v. "Anglicanism."

<sup>[55]</sup> Andrew Burnham, *Heaven and Earth in Little Space: the re-enchantment of liturgy* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2010), 2-3.

<sup>[56]</sup> Raymond Chapman, *Means of Grace, Hope of Glory: five hundred years of Anglican thought* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2005), 72.

<sup>[57]</sup> Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, 134.

<sup>[58]</sup> Burnham, *Heaven and Earth in Little Space*, 4; Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, 129.

<sup>[59]</sup> Peter Newman Brooks, *Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556)*, in Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 243-244, 249-250.

<sup>[60]</sup> Daniel F. Eppley, *Richard Hooker (1554-1600)*, in Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 256.

<sup>[61]</sup> Oliver O'Donovan, *On the Thirty Nine Articles: a conversation with Tudor Christianity* (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1986), 129; Paul Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism: essentials of Anglican ecclesiology* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 89-90.

First of all, the Holy Communion (the preferred term in Anglicanism) has a twofold dimension: it is “both a commemorative and a sacramental rite,”<sup>[62]</sup> although one can rightly add the sacrificial element.<sup>[63]</sup> The *commemorative* part consists in collective recollection and continuation of “a perpetual memory of [Jesus’] precious death” on the cross,<sup>[64]</sup> so that the Eucharist becomes the “memorial of Christ’s sacrifice for sin.”<sup>[65]</sup> But this commemoration takes place not because people’s active imagination, but because there is “the sacramental identification of the Eucharist with the one full and sufficient sacrifice of Christ.”<sup>[66]</sup> This means that in the Supper the event on Calvary is represented and people should really “see” it.<sup>[67]</sup> But this is *not* an aforementioned sacrificial element: the actual *sacrifice* of the Eucharist is a people’s response<sup>[68]</sup>—closely connected to Christ’s own death—expressed in sincere worship and self-giving to God (the “sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving”) during the celebration of the Communion.<sup>[69]</sup>

Besides these, the *sacramental* part of the rite is constituted by the generic nature of the sacraments (they are “effectual signs of grace and God’s good will towards us”)<sup>[70]</sup> and specific virtue of the Sacrament of the Altar (it is “a partaking of the Body... and... the Blood of Christ”).<sup>[71]</sup> The “inward and spiritual grace”<sup>[72]</sup> as a necessary “food” for souls is given to people in order to assure them of God’s love and assistance.<sup>[73]</sup> Thus, for Anglicans the Eucharist *is* the means of God’s grace,<sup>[74]</sup> or ‘signs which really act and effect’.

But, of course, this is meant to work “in a non-mechanistic sense,”<sup>[75]</sup> being utterly dependent on God himself who—as it is in Lutheranism—is the performer of the rite. It is the Holy Spirit who becomes, in Hooker’s terms, “the necessary inward cause” of grace;<sup>[76]</sup> it is God who, in the *Book of Common Prayer*’s words, “feeds” the believers with his Son’s body and blood and “meets” his people in the Eucharist;<sup>[77]</sup> and, finally, it is Jesus Christ who “gives himself”<sup>[78]</sup> to his followers being present either in the “whole sacra-

[62] Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, 141.

[63] Hillebrand, *The Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, s.v. “Anglicanism.”

[64] *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), 240; cf. *The Anglican Catechism* in Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds*, 521.

[65] Brooks, *Thomas Cranmer*, 246; Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 255-256.

[66] Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 95.

[67] Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 92.

[68] John Wilkinson, *The Supper and the Eucharist: a layman’s guide to Anglican Revision* (London: MacMillan, 1965), 102.

[69] *Common Worship*, 243; cf. Brooks, *Thomas Cranmer*, 246.

[70] *The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England*, XXV, in Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds*, 502.

[71] *The Thirty-Nine Articles*, XXVIII, 503.

[72] Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, 141.

[73] *Common Worship*: 226.

[74] Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 95.

[75] O’Donovan, *On the Thirty Nine Articles*, 129.

[76] Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 91.

[77] *Common Worship*, 182.

[78] O’Donovan, *On the Thirty Nine Articles*, 126.

mental action” (Cranmer),<sup>[79]</sup> or “in the worthy receiver of the sacrament” (Hooker),<sup>[80]</sup> or “in consecrated bread and wine” (later Anglican theologians and the majority of Anglicans nowadays).<sup>[81]</sup> Although the belief in *praesentia Christi realis* is not an official teaching, this doctrine is obviously ‘hidden’ in another fully authorized dogma: that of the believers’ mystical union with and participation in Jesus Christ himself.<sup>[82]</sup> But, as it should be obvious from the quotations used, the Anglican tradition actually allows for different theological opinions and plurality of interpretation.

The key thing for the Anglicans has always been not an interest in Christ’s presence or absence *per se*, but, rather, the idea of *cummunio* with God through Christ: through the connection with spiritually (i.e. *really* but *in spiritual, supernatural manner*)<sup>[83]</sup> present Christ the believer is cleansed, filled with grace and refreshed in his heart.<sup>[84]</sup> Thus, the Anglican ‘doctrine’ of the Eucharist combines in itself several seemingly irreconcilable elements (those of a memorial, a non-propitiatory Eucharistic sacrifice and belief in Christ’s presence) and puts them into the context of God’s gracious attitude toward humans and their liturgical response. As a result, non-dogmatic Anglicanism has a really theo-centric or even Christo-centric understanding of grace-giving sacrament of the Holy Communion where the idea of a real *communio*—between God and people, Christ and his followers/partakers, believers with each other—stands in the very heart of liturgical life.<sup>[85]</sup>

### 2.3. The Russian<sup>[86]</sup> Evangelical-Baptist Way: the *via signorum*

In spite of various difficulties, starting from its early years (the beginning of the twentieth century) the Evangelical Baptist Christians in Russia and—later—Soviet Union periodically issued some doctrinal documents and theological papers; and when the time of freedom came (late twentieth century) the Baptist and Evangelical Churches used that opportunity to rethink their theology. But, it should be mentioned, due to the fact, that Slavic Baptist movement experienced various kinds of influences from different churches and Christian traditions—i.e. the Eastern Orthodoxy as a background church

<sup>[79]</sup> Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 90.

<sup>[80]</sup> Eppley, *Richard Hooker*, 257.

<sup>[81]</sup> Chapman, *Means of Grace, Hope of Glory*, 72-73; cf. Hillebrand, *The Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, s.v. “Anglicanism.”

<sup>[82]</sup> *The Thirty-Nine Articles*, XXVIII, 503; Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 91, 95; cf. *Common Worship*, 240.

<sup>[83]</sup> *The Thirty-Nine Articles*, XXVIII, 503-504; *The Anglican Catechism* in Schaff, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds*, 521; Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 90; Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, 142.

<sup>[84]</sup> Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, 141-142; *The Anglican Catechism*, 522.

<sup>[85]</sup> Avis, *The Identity of Anglicanism*, 95-96; O’Donovan, *On the Thirty Nine Articles*, 128.

<sup>[86]</sup> By the term “Russian” I mean two things: (i) a relation to the Eastern Slavic culture, historically identified as “Russian,” which is a common heritage for Byelorussian, Russian and Ukrainian peoples and (ii) primarily—but not exclusively—Russian-speaking socio-religious groups. Thus, “Russian” here should not be associated with any nationalistic ideas or political entities (such as Russian Federation).

culture, the German Pietism, the British Plymouth Brethren, European Baptists, Mennonites, and several Baptist Societies<sup>[87]</sup>—the theological terms and themes (even in the case of the Eucharistic doctrine alone)<sup>[88]</sup> are rather diverse.

For example, some confessions of faith and systematic theologies define the Eucharist quite traditionally for the Baptists as “God’s ordinances” or commandments,<sup>[89]</sup> but sometimes one can find even the word ‘sacrament’.<sup>[90]</sup> Nevertheless, the concepts standing behind these not always clear and unequivocal terms are lucid and quite established. In particular, the core meanings of the Eucharist are those of *remembrance* and *proclamation* of Christ’s death.<sup>[91]</sup> This is, in fact, a traditional Baptist belief, as the *Second London*, or simply the *Baptist, Confession of Faith* denotes: “The Supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by Him... for the perpetual remembrance, and showing forth of the sacrifice of Himself in His death” (§30.1).<sup>[92]</sup> As Sergei Sannikov comments, this “Baptist anamnesis” is, in fact, a recollection of and a meditation on the whole of salvation history and, especially, Christ’s life, death

<sup>[87]</sup> G. Keith Parker, *Baptists in Europe: history and confessions of faith* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1982), 149-152.

<sup>[88]</sup> For a presentation of the typical western Baptist approach to the doctrine of the Eucharist see 30. *The Lord’s Supper*, in *The Baptist Confession of Faith (1689), with slight revisions by C. H. Spurgeon*, <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/bcof.htm#part30> (accessed June 29, 2012).

<sup>[89]</sup> I.S. Prokhanov, *Вероучение евангельских христиан* (Черкассы: Смирна, 2002), [*The Doctrines of Evangelical Christians* (Cherkassy: Smirna, 2002)], 30; A.M. Vyckov, and A.I. Mitskevich, *Догматика [Dogmatics]*, <http://www.church.kiev.ua/Library/htm/00213.htm> (accessed January 21, 2011); Russian Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Вероучение (1985 г.) [Doctrinal statement, 1985]*, <http://www.baptist.org.ru/go/verouchenie> (accessed January 21, 2011); The All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Statement of Faith*, [http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3](http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3) (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[90]</sup> *Исповедание веры Одесской богословской семинарии [Confession of Faith of the Odessa Theological Seminary]*, <http://odessasem.com/seminary/creed.html> (accessed January 21, 2011). Yet this does not mean that the Baptists think about these ordinances as some means of grace. Not at all: they openly reject any salvific function of the Baptism or the Eucharist. See M.V. Ivanov, *Вероучение ЕХБ [The Doctrinal Statement of the Evangelical Christians Baptists]*, <http://www.baptist.org.ru/articles/theology/57> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[91]</sup> The All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Statement of Faith*, [http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3](http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3) (accessed January 21, 2011); Russian Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Вероучение (1985 г.) [Doctrinal statement, 1985]*, <http://www.baptist.org.ru/go/verouchenie> (accessed January 21, 2011); Sergei Sannikov, *Наше credo: основные доктринальные положения Одесской Богословской Семинарии 1993 года [Our Credo: basic doctrinal statements of the Odessa Theological Seminary]*, <http://sannikov.info/articles/83-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=5> (accessed January 21, 2011); Ivan Kargel, *Вероучение Евангельских христиан-баптистов (1913 г.)* (Оцифрованная А.Синичкиным версия) [*The Doctrines of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (1913)*, digital version by A. Sinichkin], VII.2, <http://library.e-aaa.info/> (accessed June 29, 2012); A.V. Karyev, *Доктрины Библии [The Doctrines of the Bible]*, [http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/05f/Karev\\_AV\\_doktriny\\_Biblii.pdf](http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/05f/Karev_AV_doktriny_Biblii.pdf) (accessed January 21, 2011); *Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists* (of the U.S.S.R.) in G. Keith Parker, *Baptists in Europe: history and confessions of faith* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1982), 157.

<sup>[92]</sup> 30. *The Lord’s Supper*, in *The Baptist Confession of Faith (1689), with slight revisions by C. H. Spurgeon*, <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/bcof.htm#part30> (accessed June 29, 2012).

and resurrection.<sup>[93]</sup> Thus, this act of ‘remembering’ and ‘proclaiming’ should be understood not in imaginative or emotional sense, but in confessional, testimonial one.<sup>[94]</sup> Hence, the act of (seemingly) subjective recollection and the act of (seemingly) objective proclamation become one and the same act: they are inseparable, both being essential for a correct understanding of the nature of this Christian ordinance.

Another important aspect of the Eucharist is communion: the believers become united to Jesus Christ and each other.<sup>[95]</sup> But as for the specifics of nature of this communion, here several views or opinions are present in the Slavic Baptist tradition: either the Lord’s Supper unites people (“communion is... the union of believers”),<sup>[96]</sup> or strengthens the already-existent union,<sup>[97]</sup> or even simply “expresses”, i.e. testifies to, it<sup>[98]</sup> or “signifies” it.<sup>[99]</sup> But the ‘deeper’ moment of this communion is the Christians’ fellowship with *Christ* himself. For example, Ivan Kargel states, that if the Eucharist is “accepted with the living faith, it makes us participants of the fellowship... with Him [the Lord Jesus].”<sup>[100]</sup>

Moreover, Russian Baptists are not reluctant to admit that in the Eucharist there *is* indeed partaking of Christ’s blood and body<sup>[101]</sup> but this fellowship is of “spiritual character” requiring proper spiritual or “mystic” understanding.<sup>[102]</sup>

<sup>[93]</sup> Sergei Sannikov, *Вечеря Господня: истоки, сущность, условия действительности и практика* [*The Lord’s Supper: origin, essence, conditions for efficacy, and practice*], <http://sannikov.info/articles/77-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=7> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[94]</sup> Sannikov, *Вечеря Господня* [*The Lord’s Supper*], <http://sannikov.info/articles/77-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=6> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[95]</sup> *Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists*, 157; Russian Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Вероучение* [*Doctrinal statement*], <http://www.baptist.org.ru/go/verouchenie> (accessed January 21, 2011); Kargel, *Вероучение Евангельских христиан-баптистов (1913 г.)* [*The Doctrines of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (1913)*], VII.2, <http://library.e-aaa.info/> (accessed June 29, 2012); Sannikov, *Наше кредо* [*Our Credo*], <http://sannikov.info/articles/83-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=5> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[96]</sup> The All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Statement of Faith*, [http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3](http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3) (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[97]</sup> M. V. Ivanov, *Основы систематического богословия* [*The Basics of Systematic Theology*], <http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/0a0/Ivanov-osnovy-systematicheskogo-bogosloviya.pdf> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[98]</sup> Russian Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Вероучение* ) [*Doctrinal statement*], <http://www.baptist.org.ru/go/verouchenie> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[99]</sup> I.S. Prokhanov, *Вероучение евангельских христиан*, [*The Doctrines of Evangelical Christians*], 31.

<sup>[100]</sup> Kargel, *Вероучение Евангельских христиан-баптистов (1913 г.)* [*The Doctrines of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (1913)*], VII.2, <http://library.e-aaa.info/> (accessed June 29, 2012).

<sup>[101]</sup> Karyev, *Доктрины Библии* [*The Doctrines of the Bible*], [http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/05f/Karev\\_AV\\_doktriny\\_Biblii.pdf](http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/05f/Karev_AV_doktriny_Biblii.pdf) (accessed January 21, 2011); Ivanov, *Основы систематического богословия* [*The Basics of Systematic Theology*], <http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/0a0/Ivanov-osnovy-systematicheskogo-bogosloviya.pdf> (accessed January 21, 2011). Cf. 30. *The Lord’s Supper*, in *The Baptist Confession of Faith (1689), with slight revisions by C. H. Spurgeon*, <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/bcof.htm#part30> (accessed June 29, 2012), §7.

<sup>[102]</sup> Sannikov, *Вечеря Господня* [*The Lord’s Supper*], <http://sannikov.info/articles/77-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=8> (accessed January 21, 2011).

Jesus Christ is invisibly present during the worship service “as the master of the meal,”<sup>[103]</sup> but, of course, not *in* the bread and the wine. Yet, such a belief is included in *some* Russian Baptist statements of faith or dogmatic theological handbooks, but is absent to the others.<sup>[104]</sup> Therefore, it is difficult to see this semi-mystical conviction (that there is a real spiritual communion with Christ in the Lord’s Supper) as an official Russian Baptist teaching, but it is impossible to deny that this trend in Slavic Evangelical thought does exist and has a number of exponents. More definite and unambiguous presentation of this doctrine seems problematic. But there could be found an even more interesting aspect of Russian Baptists’ doctrines.

The Russian Baptists strongly affirm that the bread and the wine of the eucharist are “visible signs” and “symbols” which only *signify* the real body and blood of the Lord<sup>[105]</sup> (this sounds really close to the Zwinglian theory of the sacrament).<sup>[106]</sup> Their function is to draw a believer’s attention and point out to real Christ, but—and this is remarkable—when one accepts the testimony of the Eucharistic elements he is really able to have a contact, a sort of spiritual meeting with Jesus.<sup>[107]</sup> As Ukrainian Baptist Confession reads, “[w]hile receiving these signs, the believer has spiritual communion with Him.”<sup>[108]</sup> Thus, Slavic Baptist movement does not adhere to pure and absolute symbolism and memorialism whereby the Eucharist is seen as but an act of recollection or symbolic action without any real aspect. On the contrary, the Supper is understood to be a place and moment of the encounter between the heavenly and the earthly, between the corporeal (humans, bread and wine) and the spiritual (Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit).<sup>[109]</sup> Thus, it is correct to see in the elements something more than simply *symbols* which reinvigorate people’s memories. They are the *signs*, i.e. *signifiers*, of certain reality: *signum*

<sup>[103]</sup> Sannikov, *Наше кредо* [Our Credo], <http://sannikov.info/articles/83-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=5> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[104]</sup> See the footnotes #99 and #100 and cf. Y.Y. Vins, Наши баптистские принципы (Харбин: Типо-Литография и Цинкография Л.М. Абрамовича, 1924) [Our Baptist Principles (Harbin: Туро-, Litho- and Zincography of L.M. Abramovich)], 28-29; I.S. Prokhanov, Вероучение евангельских христиан, [The Doctrines of Evangelical Christians], 31; Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists, 157; Russian Union of Evangelical Christians Baptists, Вероучение [Doctrinal statement], <http://www.baptist.org.ru/go/verouchenie> (accessed January 21, 2011); etc.

<sup>[105]</sup> Vyckov and Mitskevich, *Догматика* [Dogmatics], <http://www.church.kiev.ua/Librery/htm/00213.htm> (accessed January 21, 2011); The All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Statement of Faith*, [http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3](http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3) (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[106]</sup> See Roger F. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (Downers Grove, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 404-407.

<sup>[107]</sup> Ivanov, *Основы систематического богословия* [The Basics of Systematic Theology], <http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/0a0/Ivanov-osnovy-systematicheskogo-bogosloviya.pdf> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[108]</sup> The All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians Baptists, *Statement of Faith*, [http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3](http://ecbua.info/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=386&Itemid=139&lang=en&limitstart=3) (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[109]</sup> Sannikov, *Вечеря Господня* [The Lord’s Supper], <http://sannikov.info/articles/77-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=8> (accessed January 21, 2011).



has its *significatum* according to Augustine, and this understanding is very close to the Slavic Baptist Eucharistic theology: bread and wine signify, or point out to, Jesus, and therefore they provide for the spiritual meeting with real Christ.<sup>[110]</sup> The fruit of this meeting is spiritual nourishment<sup>[111]</sup> and deeper awareness of the person's union with Christ and the salvation achieved by him.<sup>[112]</sup> Such interpretation sounds different from purely memorialist Zwinglian explanation and remind about more Calvinistic—or rather, purely, Calvinian, i.e. Calvin's—approach to the Eucharistic theology.<sup>[113]</sup> But again, this view cannot be found in all official Russian Baptists' documents and, thus, remains another open question in Evangelical theology. Nevertheless, there is enough material to sum it up and draw a conclusion for this section.

In general, Russian and Ukrainian Baptists' teaching of the Eucharist is a Protestant view influenced by both the Eastern Orthodox and few European Protestant traditions. This mixture is obvious in the conjunctions of primarily rational concerns (the Lord's Supper is the memorial and proclamation) with the belief in mystical union with Christ and in an 'official symbolism' wed to the spiritual realism of Augustinian-Calvinian type (symbols are signs which connect one with spiritual reality). But in this theological blend a uniqueness of the Slavic Baptism should obviously be seen. Therefore, some uncertainties and not fully defined doctrines might be considered not as problems but as advantages and opportunities for a development.

### 3. A COMPARISON-LIKE CONCLUSION

It goes without saying, that each Protestant tradition of the Eucharistic thought has its idiosyncrasies (which might be regarded as pluses and minuses), and this is not hard to find them in comparison. But as these three Eucharistic theologies have their dissimilarities, so do they have some similarities, and it would be wise to name both in this "comparison-like" conclusion.

#### 3.1. Short analytical summary of the key idiosyncrasies and dissimilarities

For instance, *Lutheranism*—even nowadays—demonstrates faithfulness to, or partial recovery of, "the sacramental principle of the Gospel,"<sup>[114]</sup> which *combines the words of the Bible and grace-centered soteriology with the idea of sacraments, so that the Eucharist becomes indispensable part of the Gospel*

<sup>[110]</sup> Sannikov, *Вечеря Господня* [*The Lord's Supper*], <http://sannikov.info/articles/77-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=8> (accessed January 21, 2011); Sannikov, *Наше credo* [*Our Credo*], <http://sannikov.info/articles/83-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=5> (accessed January 21, 2011); cf. Ivanov, *Вероучение ЕХБ* [*The Doctrinal Statement of the Evangelical Christians Baptists*], <http://www.baptist.org.ru/articles/theology/57> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[111]</sup> *Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists*, 157.

<sup>[112]</sup> Ivanov, *Вероучение ЕХБ* [*The Doctrinal Statement of the Evangelical Christians Baptists*], <http://www.baptist.org.ru/articles/theology/57> (accessed January 21, 2011); Karyev, *Доктрины Библии* [*The Doctrines of the Bible*], [http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/05f/Karev\\_AV\\_doktriny\\_Biblii.pdf](http://www.mbchurch.ru/upload/iblock/05f/Karev_AV_doktriny_Biblii.pdf) (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[113]</sup> See Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology*, 412.

<sup>[114]</sup> Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology*, 87.

*itself*. It is not simply an additional ordinance, but “the embodiment of the Gospel”<sup>[115]</sup> in which God himself promises and fulfills his promise of forgiveness and blessing by means of the sacrament of the altar. This theocentric and even Trinitarian dimension of the Eucharist (where God the Father acts in and through the Son by active participation of the Holy Spirit) not only highlights the proximity of the Lutheran Eucharistic theology to some old liturgical forms and preceding theological tradition, but also brightly underline the most important Christian message: it is God who is in the center of everything; it is God who is involved in joys and tragedies of this world; and, finally, it is God who saves the world and justifies us. Yet, this Trinitarian approach to the Lord’s Supper sometimes may be dimmed by more Christocentric—and also typically Lutheran—understanding of justification. There is no necessity to see this as a problem, since theologically Christology implies Triadology.

But, at the same time, the depths of the sacramentalism—or the church’s and the person’s role in the sacrament—are somewhat obscure in Lutheran theology: the ideas of sacrifice or Church’s sacramental action (like those evident in Anglicanism) are totally eliminated. Even the real presence of Christ is seen as a result of activity of the all-powerful Gospel-Word and, thus, such interpretation is in danger of a “hyper-gospelization” of the Eucharist: the sacrament of the altar is based on, empowered by and associated with the Gospel and/or the Word only – it has neither role nor specific characteristics of its own. Hence, it might be seen as a “prisoner” of the Lutheran *via gratiae*.

At the same time, *Anglicanism* takes an effort to join “a broad spectrum of theological positions” so that the Eucharist looks like a fellowship with God via Jesus’ sacrifice by means of his presence somewhere and somehow (in or under or during the Supper) in the Eucharist which ends up in people’s own self-sacrifice. The Anglican way is very liturgical and synthetic in itself: several theological interpretative positions (concerning the doctrine of the Eucharist) are united around one center, and this center is worship. Thanksgiving (to God), adoration and participation in the Holy Communion are the essentials of this worship, and different (subjective) views on what the Eucharist is are somehow reconciled in the sacred liturgical act. It is God who is the center, it is Jesus who comes down to earth to be somehow present, and here are we who have to celebrate it (this summary would adequately characterize Lutheran theology of the Eucharist as well).

But the problem is that there is no *obligation* or even theological *necessity* to believe in *all this*. “The truth is that a man can use a liturgy and hold any doctrinal position he likes, so long as his liturgy does not explicitly deny it.”<sup>[116]</sup> In general, I see this doctrinal openness or theological apathy as, again, both negative and positive nuance of the Anglicanism: on the one hand, it allows for too many interpretations and, consequently, can lead to theological relativism; but, on the other hand, this ‘Anglican method’ (a) integrates

<sup>[115]</sup> Gritsch and Jenson, *Lutheranism*, 80.

<sup>[116]</sup> Wilkinson, *The Supper and the Eucharist*, 121.

and reconciles several different readings of the Eucharist—e.g. memorial aspect with sacrificial dimension and even Christ’s presence—and (b) gives the person freedom to choose and decide what to believe within certain, yet really broad, boundaries. The latter is, to my mind, a kind of postmodern ‘resurrection of a theological subject’ in Anglicanism, and this is a good point for both subtle theologizing and simple church-attending life. Nevertheless, the menacing shadow of relativism is not far and, hence, the situation with Anglican Eucharistic theology is ambiguous.

As for the *Slavic Baptist theological tradition*, here the obvious weakness (as well as wonderful opportunity for future theological projects) lies in the ambiguity of the official language and real theology: while the most confessions of faith and official documents explicitly speak about the memorial meal and the Eucharistic elements as signs and/or symbols, their theological interpretation by individual—and authoritative—theologians often implies real spiritual partaking of Christ’s body. It seems that for Russian Baptists western symbolism is too shallow, while the Orthodox realism—too unbiblical,<sup>[117]</sup> and so they try to construct something in between. It creates a very remarkable theological amalgam whereby a synthesis of several views is reached (quite like in Anglicanism). Unfortunately, this kind of theology of the Eucharist is logically shaky: a memorial even in the most deep anamnesis-thinking<sup>[118]</sup> does not require (or even does not allow for) the realism of a recalled thing. That is, partaking in or meeting with real Christ can barely happen thanks to the *signs* unless Russian Baptists elaborate the Orthodox theology of the *images*. But, positively thinking, conjugation of memorialism and spiritual realism should be a good ground for development of distinctively Slavic Baptist sacramentology in the future: partly-Orthodox belief in Christ’s presence and emphasis on acts of ‘*thinking-remembering-proclaiming*’ give the impression of being interesting theological mixture for further investigations.

### 3.2. Short analytical summary of the key commonalities and similarities

To my mind, the key similarities of the three theological traditions are (a) their Theocentricity and (b) presence of a certain inclination towards mysticism. By the former I mean that in all these approaches God’s saving activity is underlined, so that the specifically Christian dogma—that of the Trinity—comes to the fore: it is impossible to speak of and participate in the Eucharist without recalling the Father’s love, the Son’s sacrifice and the Spirit’s blessing activity. This Trinitarian aspect is expressed clearly in all three liturgical traditions, although in Baptist churches it might not always be the case.

<sup>[117]</sup> Sannikov, *Вечеря Господня*, <http://sannikov.info/articles/77-welcome-to-joomla.html?start=8> (accessed January 21, 2011).

<sup>[118]</sup> Anamnesis as more-or-less *real representation* of past event. See Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology*, 96.

The latter similarity, as I have noted, consists of mystical motives in the three Eucharistic theologies: in the Lutheran and Anglican traditions Jesus Christ is believed to be present really but incomprehensibly; the Baptists and the Anglicans maintain the importance of thanksgiving and sincere and spiritual worship of the Lord in the sacred act of the Lord's Supper; finally, all three traditions speak about the Eucharist as a mystical fellowship or communion with God and each member of the celebrating church. This fellowship is described in different terms but the crucial meaning remains: God the Savior and his saved people belong together, and their union is specifically and visibly expressed in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

\* \* \*

In the conclusion, it should be said that all the three traditions present well-grounded, spiritually deep and theologically rich theologies of the Eucharist. But these theologies also leave some room for a theological rethinking and reformulation in the future. The search for and re-appreciation of the different aspects of the Eucharistic theology—sacrifice, communion, receiving grace, etc—must lead us to a deeper understanding of this *mystery*. So, I would like to believe that the Lutheran *God-made grace-distributing Supper*, Baptist *mystic-like memorial* and Anglican *sacrifice-centered communion* can be somehow merged and well-integrated in the Eucharistic theology of the twenty-first century.

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