

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE EXEGETICAL PARADIGM OF MARTIN LUTHER

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1. Historical and Social Causes of the Reformation

The German researcher, Hermann Zasse, in his monograph "*Was heisst lutherisch*,"¹, describes "epic and heroic," "cultural and historical," and "national" concepts of the Reformation. In this work he declares that if one wants to understand the meaning and specific character of the Evangelical Reformation he, first of all, must interpret it as an episode of church history.

"This great event of church history – the Reformation – began in a very quiet way, with theological *discovery in the field of biblical interpretation* [italics mine]. It was the discovery of what the apostle Paul meant by the phrase 'the righteousness of God' (Rm 1:17)"².

Consequently, the Reformation finds its place among other historical church events as a phenomenon of a historical and confessional character. Such understanding of the Reformation may be found in the works of Luther: "... we lived as badly as Catholics. Yet we fight not for (a righteous) life, but for doctrine"³.

However, in order to understand historical and social causes one should not forget what was the basis of the Reformation itself. Much depended on Luther's revision of the biblical interpretation methods that predominated in the medieval church. Hermann Zasse defined the revision as "theological discovery in the field of biblical interpretation." However,

¹ Russian translation "Here we stand", Saint Petersburg, 1994.

² Ibid., 83.

³ Kuhn, Luther, sa vie et son oeuvre.

er, in order to cause such a many-sided process as the Evangelical Reformation became, this “theological discovery” had to be of a social kind.

In our further study of the social and historical causes of the Reformation, we shall consider the following topics:

- Growth of national religiosity and Catholic reaction to it
- Development of norms of intellectual pluralism, interpreted in relation to the crisis of the scholastic worldview
- Development of book printing in medieval society

It is important to point out that none of these factors can be considered as the basic cause of social reformation without the others, but when they are studied together it helps to realize their social basis.

In our study we shall try to prove that in the basis of reformation lie those changes which took part in the medieval exegetical paradigm. English Reformation researcher Christopher Hill, while studying the roots of revolutionary movements in England, came to an interesting conclusion. He observed that in spite of the low educational level among laymen and clerics, “The Bible was considered the main authority in all intellectual spheres of life; it was not a only ‘religious book’ in the narrow terms of our modern understanding of the word *religion*”⁴. Possibly, medieval society understood the Bible this way, not only because of religious reasons, but also because of the wide content of the Bi-

ble – “...there are not many ideas, which can not find their support in the biblical texts”⁵. Nevertheless, the Bible may have monosemantic meaning only in a stable society that is able to provide authoritative and authoritarian control over biblical interpretation. Some people think that medieval society was very secularized because of its lack of education and philological knowledge. According to this point of view, the Bible was not clear and accessible for society. However, modern scientists do not prove it. Bernar Gene says that “monastic reform, school life development, enthusiasm, conjured up by the wars in Palestine during the Crusades, promoted the development of biblical studies. If in monasteries they preferred to study biblical moral system, in school people began to pay more attention to biblical literal meaning.”⁶. At the same time, one should not idealize the level of biblical knowledge that laymen had in medieval society. Though they lived in a world penetrated by the biblical analogies that were present in Catholic liturgical rituals, pilgrimages, medieval art, and ideology, in many cases the medieval parish was involved in biblical paradigm very spontaneously. In this case we might agree with Joseph Lortz, who says that the medieval world was extraordinary unity that was achieved because the main social principles of medieval times –

⁴ Hill, *English Bible and revolution XVII*. M. 1998, p. 21.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bernar Gene. *History and historical culture of Medieval West*. M. 2002, p. 35.

universalism, objectivism, and clericalism were used against particularism⁷.

Within framework of this medieval biblical a certain attention was paid to legalization of state and clerical principals. Consequently, many Catholics associated biblical content (its doctrinal content) confessional practice of church institutions. Perhaps, this principle determined borders of the medieval church. Canonical unity was preserved only when Bible and church were united. In case if Bible and church were contradictory to one another, this structural unity broke up – simple examples: Albigensian hierarchy and reformation movements of late Middle Ages.

Basic change of paradigm included total revision of the identity between church and Bible within the structure of relations between church and society. In the framework of the medieval model church played the role of the social institution, which had got strict administrative hierarchy and supported feudal relations, but theology of reformation sees the unity of Bible and church as concord between church confession and doctrinal content of the Bible. Medieval model of the administrative system, based on strict canonic rules, slowly gives away. So reformation determined the emphasis made on dogma, and exegesis became theological instrument.

Gerhard Ebeling says that exegetical question has got central place in the entire theology of Luther, including his sermons, theological works and translation of Holy Scriptures.

Bengt Hagglund, in his book “History of theology”, also pays attention to the connection between exegesis and theology in works of Luther⁹.

Some catholic researchers also say that Bible took central place in all works of Luther. According to the opinion of Nossol, theological concepts of Luther has got extraordinary “mystery of word”, which is not limited only by one famous principle *verbum et sacramentum*¹⁰. Joseph Lortz also accepts the fact to some extent when he says that Luther came to new conclusions as *scientific exegete*¹¹.

The question about the role of the Bible, which we touched on before, should be examined as a part of the general question related to the social religiosity at the eve of reformation. While studying the religious level in pre-reformation Germany, Dr. Muller came to conclusion that most of objective criteria showed solid rise of national religiosity. At the beginning of 16th century were held too many private liturgies, new religious brotherhoods appeared, programs of church building construction prospered etc¹². “Because of this national interest to religion made people criticize official churches in those

⁷ Lorz. History of church 1999, p. 438.

⁹ Bengt Hagglund. History of Theology, p. 220.

¹⁰ Nossol Ecumenical perspective of theological concept of Martin Luther // Ways to christian unity, p. 54.

¹¹ Lortz. History of church. 2000, v.2, p. 128.

¹² Moeller Piety in Germany around 1500 // The Reformation in Medieval perspective. Chicago, 1971, p. 50.

fields, which, as it was supposed, it did not succeed at all. This critic, considered in old studies as a factor of religious decline, on the contrary shows religious rise. It is interesting to point out that this rise of piety is mostly related to laymen: clergymen of those days did not show any spiritual renewal. Grounds for anticlericalism appeared at that time. Priests were taken as exploiters of new religious interests. They were thought to give no contribution to religious development". Rise of national religiosity promoted level of educational requirements for parish priests. Most of priests of pre-reformation period did not have any university degree, and were uneducated and "had rather dim idea about doctrinal system of church"¹³. If people wanted to be ordained they often did not have to pass any special exams. On the contrary, "if someone turned out to competent in ritual question and understood structure of church year, he was considered as capable to be ordained"¹⁴. Data of Episcopal visitations of those times show us that many priest were not educated enough to read liturgical texts. Low educational level of clergymen of those times corresponds to social status¹⁵. In those cases when exam was held, it consisted of very profane forms: "The exam was ridiculous one. Candidate declined Latin nouns, conjugated verb in in-

dicative form, said its main tenses, sung a little and that is it. Law was not only imperfect, but it was neglected. Candidate, who feared to be examined by his bishop, might be examined by the other one, in another diocese, province, or even by some of bishops *in paribus*. If scrupulous head of diocese refused to exam a candidate, latter sent complaints to Rome"¹⁶. Rise of anticlerical movement in Germany was also promoted by policy of pope, who cared for Italy more than others.

Doctrinal pluralism in the medieval society should be perceived as another important methodological reason of reformation. Growth of universities and schools led to intellectual variety – by the beginning of 16th century in Europe appeared nine schools, which had different interpretation of fundamental confessional concepts¹⁷. Church noblemen turned out to be unable to act in conditions of intellectual pluralism. As a result – "None really known, what doctrine church had on certain points"¹⁸.

The other basic reason, which made possible development of doctrinal pluralism, was crisis of the scholastic concept of knowledge. In this study, the term "scholastics" will mean medieval modus of philosophy and theology organization, which emphasized rational identification of religious faith. Scholastic method, which was closely related to norms of Via Thomas

¹³ Rast. Historical development of pastoral education, p. 144.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ A.E. McGrath Theological concepts of Reformation. Odessa, 1994, p. 44.

¹⁶ Lysher French society of Philip-August times. 1999, p. 49.

¹⁷ McGrath The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation. Oxford, 1987, p. 12-15.

¹⁸ Ibid.

and Via Scoti, broke into many schools – Schola Augustiniana moderna, Via Gregorii, Via Marsiliana and others. By the way relation between these schools remains unclear.

In comparison with humanism, whose influence was substantial both in universities and beyond their walls, scholastic method had rather limited impact in medieval society. By the beginning of 16th century there was a decline of authority of scholastic methods. Students left scholastic institutes for those ones where educational program was based on humanistic principles. However in different countries this process developed differently. For example in Switzerland scholastic lost its positions very quickly, but in Germany it remained authoritative for longer period of time. University of Erfurt, where Luther studied at the beginning of 16th century, continued to remain scholastic stronghold. It allows us to presuppose that theological program of Luther is a reaction to scholastic methods¹⁹. It is also important to underline the fact, that scholastic method was also related to activity of different monastic orders. For instance, Dominicans kept to theology of Thomas and Franciscans followed school of Duns Scotus. Since Luther was, both Augustinian monk, and University professor, he was involved in problems of scholastic discussions.

¹⁹ McGrath, p. 93.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 27.

Invention of book printing made possible preparation of better biblical editions and works of early patristic fathers. At the same time one could get rid of those mistakes, which were inevitable when rewriting the text. It promoted scientific textological studies.

In 1506 was published 11th volume of Saint Augustan. In 1516 Erasmus had his first critical work on texts of New Testament published. In this book he corrected many mistakes of Latin “Vulgate” by Greek text. Gordon Rapp says: “New document, new texts, however “raw” they were, however careless their editors were, led to consecrated biblical studies... Some say, that in far Cambridge and Oxford young people looked for these scientific biblical instruments in spite of danger. They founded religious and theological reformation”²⁰. In the context of the study one should say, that book printing became the most important factor of the birth of protestant hermeneutics because it created special conditions not only for methods, but also textological material studies.

Crisis of 16th century was determined by objective factors of the social progress.

2. Historical reasons of exegesis of Martin Luther

Both Luther and other reformers based their exegetical studies on well-known methods of literal exegesis, which are socially and historically related to works of early church writers. By the begin-

ning of 16th century traditions of literal exegesis, founded in the late ancient period of church history, were modified in works of medieval authors. In this study we shall try to trace history of development of the methods. Literal method, related to works of Antioch school, made influence on exegesis of Augustine, Jerome, and in Medieval Ages was developed by Sen-Victor' school. Before literal exegesis became on of confessional principles of reformation, it had gone through very long period of development, consequently was accepted by people very easily, like something well known.

According to theology of reformed church, Bible should be not only proclaimed but also interpreted in a correct way. Correct interpretation, for Luther, should be based on literal meaning of the analyzed text, on which a Christian has to rely. Allegorical understanding, because of its vague character can not be used for protection and strengthening of faith²¹.

Following the principle, Luther rejected extreme conclusions of Origen²² and Jerome, since he realized that their allegorical meth-

ods led to destruction of spiritual meaning of the Bible. Discussion about limits of allegorical exegesis was not completed in patristic period of church history. It was begun as confrontation between exegetical schools of Antioch and Alexandria and continued in medieval exegesis – in polemic speeches of Luther, one may see its features.

Luther and other reformers of his time were influenced by medieval exegesis, consisting of basic models of patristic traditions. It was vivid because of desire to interpret Holy Scriptures mainly within the framework traditional christological method. Some scientists even suppose that traditions of Antioch school continued to develop in this case²³.

Among famous theologians of Antioch were Theodor of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus and John Chrysostom. Theology of Chrysostom influenced development of Western theology through Latin translations of his works²⁴; in period of reformation opponents of Luther also used authority of Chrysostom²⁵. They did it in order to criticize exegetical concepts of Luther, and this shows how much

²¹ Luther's works, AE ("The American Edition") vol. 9 p. 24.

²² In spite of the fact that Origen is considered one of the founders of Alexandrian exegetical school, there evidences to consider him who systemize old church principles of allegorical exegesis than a founder of allegorical exegesis. Archbishop Hillarion writes "Though allegorical interpretation dominated in early church there is positive information that they often interpreted the history of creation of the world applying to Christ and – Church. Agnastasy Sinait tells that early exegetes – Papy, Climent, Panten, Ammony – interpreted the entire six days creation applying to

Christ and Church. Socrate Scholast tells about Origen, – In 9th volume of interpretation of Genesis, he proves that Adam is Christ, and Eve is Church. Hillarion "Scathes from history of church dogma, 1997, p. 104.

²³ Gerald Bray. Biblical Interpretation. Past & Present, p. 167.

²⁴ Indirect information that Chrysostom was famous in medieval West may be found in thesis of Brilliantov "Influence of eastern theology on western one in works of John Scot Erigena, 1998. Brilliantov says that in De divisione nature Erigena recites Chrysostom several times as exegete.

²⁵ D.V.N. Bagchi Luther's Earliest Opponents, p. 48.

works of Chrysostom valued in the West.

Theoretical basis of Antioch exegesis was formed as opposition to extreme conclusions of Alexandrine school. Allegorical school of Alexandria uses biblical text as material for arbitrary guesses, interpretation of Antioch has got serious approach to historical studies, and is closer to early Christian typology²⁶.

Followers of Antioch school tried to find correct definition for original meaning of Holy Scripture. Obviously it determined preferences which Antioch exegetes give to literal meaning of text. They used to say that such literal content preserves original meaning of Holy Scriptures (“author meaning”, the one which was originally put by sacred Author), including metaphors and other modules of imaginary speech of poetry²⁷.

Such interpretation of gentile myths was known already in the ancient world, in which it was worked out by philosophical schools. Allegorical methods of interpretation dominated in works of most authors of the first two centuries²⁸, at the same time an important feature of Christian allegory is faith in the fulfillment of prophecies of Old Testament²⁹.

In the context of our study, allegory is faith manifestation, which is to some extent dogmatic interpretation of Scriptures³⁰. If one wishes to understand both early and medieval allegorical exegesis correctly he needs to remember about connection between allegory and mystical symbolism and be able to distinguish them. Connection of allegory and symbol is determined by specific of mystical language. However there may be a difference between them *because allegory may explain symbols*³¹. This character of allegory was in the basis of allegorical exegesis of early church – since exegesis was used to interpret biblical symbols of spiritual life, text depended on its symbols, which needed to be interpreted. As a result symbolic meaning was seen in every part, sentence and even word in the Bible³².

Rejecting allegorical exegesis, followers of school of Antioch, did not limit exegesis by formal literal interpretation of Holy Scripture. For example Diodore, kept to the special principle of biblical interpretation, according to which the entire story should be understood realistically, because it does belong to what it is told about.

According to his position biblical interpretation must be clear interpretation of realities of Scrip-

²⁶ K. Froehlich. Biblical Interpretation in early Church. P. 20. “Alexandrian allegorism it is claimed, regarded the text of the Bible as a mere springboard for uncontrolled speculation while the Antiochene interpretation took the historical substance seriously and thus was closer to early Christian typology.”

²⁷ Beryl Smalley. The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, p. 14.

²⁸ Archbishop Hillarion “Sketches from history of Church dogma”, 1912, reprint, 1997, p. 77.

²⁹ Kittel Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol.1, p. 260.

³⁰ C.W. Macleod Allegory and Mysticism in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, p. 364-365.

³¹ Ibid., p. 365.

³² J.N.D. Kelly. Early Christian Doctrines p. 76.

ture³³. At the same time one should tell allegory from “meditation”.

What is correlation between allegorical and meditative models? Meditative understanding, like allegorical one, allows us to see higher level of meaning, which is above literal one. However meditative understanding does not ignore literal meaning of text but is rather based on it³⁴. Difference between allegory and meditation may be seen in basic principles of meditative exegesis. According to it exegete can not ignore literal content he must see real correlation between historical fact and its spiritual meaning, without confusing them³⁵.

Meditation in history itself, opens supreme content – historical realism is not denied by that, but is presupposed. Apostle Paul explained it this very way³⁶.

The way Origen did not reject historical context for interpretation (though he underestimated it rather much³⁷); Exegetes of Antioch accepted over-literal understanding, meaning, which stands on a higher level than literal one. In order to define this mode they began to use term “meditation”, which Plato used before. Diodore wrote a monograph which was ded-

icated to differences between allegorical and meditative understanding of Scriptures. Unfortunately this work disappeared. There were many other attempts to study the theme among followers of school of Antioch. It is important to say that meditative interpretation of Holy Scripture did not have a character of universal exegetical principle, used for most of biblical texts. Followers of Antioch school used meditative interpretation, first of all to reveal spiritual content prophetic texts, whose meaning could not be included in formal framework of vocabulary and grammar, that is to say, was “motivated by genre”³⁸. Exegetes of Antioch tried to establish transcendent character of spiritual understanding of text in relation with literal, however they used typological interpretation very little³⁹.

Exegesis of Antioch had mostly polemical character; it appeared as protest against allegorical extreme methods. While studying works of John Chrysostom, Mien-dorph says that his exegesis does not have a lot of allegory, it contains simple and clear character and is full of typological interpretation⁴⁰. As we already said before,

³³ Florovsky. Eastern Fathers of 4th century, p. 219.

³⁴ Manlino Simonetti. Biblical Interpretation in the Early church. An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis. P. 67.

³⁵ J.N.D. Kelly. Early Christian Doctrines p. 76.

³⁶ Manlino Simonetti. Ibid.

³⁷ Compare: “Word is supposed to tell about connection in spiritual deeds, which were done and are expected to come. Where the word found that historical events may correspond these mysterious matters, there It used them

to hide deep meaning from mobs; where historical tail, written for higher mysteries did not correspond teaching of spiritual matters, there Scripture involved in the history those things, which did not exist in reality – partly impossible things, partly possible, but which did not happen” About Origins, VIII, 15 (“Philocaly”).

³⁸ Linguistic peculiarities of verbalization of prophetic revelation are meant in the case, ex. Symbolic languages of Revelation.

³⁹ Beryl Smalley. Op. cit., p. 14.

exegetes of Antioch were not reduced to extremity of formalism, when they tried to establish literal understanding of the text.

This fundamental principle of Antiochene exegesis implies that a priori not every passage of Holy Scripture has got christological meaning⁴¹. According to this exegesis typology should be motivated by text, i.e. only those passages of Holy Scripture, which were determined by idea about Messiah, are real typologies.

However it did not hinder exegetes of Antioch from interpreting Old Testament prophetically in light of Christology, since objective purpose of Old Testament was to prepare way for Messiah, by strengthening faith of people⁴².

Consequently exegetical meaning of typology is closely related to theological problem of correlation between Old and New Testament, "theology of expectation" of incarnation, on which righteous men of Old Testament built their faith. Typological exegesis takes historical background of Holy Scriptures as real events, in which God's plan of salvation is fulfilled.

By its nature the entire holy history is the story of actualization of the plan, which reached its climax in incarnation and foundation of Christian church⁴³. Typolo-

gy of O.T. is revealed as certain stages. These stages finally reveal ministry of Messiah.

In the end we should point out that though medieval theologians could not be familiar with most of works of Antioch exegetes, in medieval times they could learn at least basic exegetical principles of Antioch⁴⁴. All in all influence of different theological schools is rather vivid. Nevertheless one can not be sure how much different schools, including theology of Augustine, influenced exegetical methods of Martin Luther. We shall consider details related to it a little later, first of all our task is to study fundamental principles of exegetical method of Augustine.

There may be two foundations of exegetical method of Saint Augustine – exegetical rules of Ticonius and neo-platonic philosophy.

Saint Augustine accepted famous exegetical rules of Ticonius however he added his own theses to them.

What is the reason that influence of exegetical concepts of Augustine on theology of Luther turned out to be less effective, than influence of his theological (doctrinal) concepts? What is the reason of it?

As we think this reason is determined by attitude of Saint Au-

⁴⁰ Meindorf. Introduction to Patristic theology, p. 216.

⁴¹ Walter J. Burghardt. On Early Christian Exegesis, p. 85.

⁴² Ibid. "In Old Testament Christ is presented as an exclusion. Though he is expected everywhere thanks to prophecies even if they do not

tell about him directly. Their objective task is to prepare his coming and strengthen faith in people. For Antiochene school all books of Old Testament – prophetic".

⁴³ J.N.D. Kelly. Op.cit., p. 71.

⁴⁴ Beryl Smalley. Op.cit., p.19.

gustine to allegorical interpretation of Holy Scripture. Though Augustine never ignored analyzing of literal meaning, he thought it was very important to reveal allegory of Holy Scripture. At the same time he admitted those allegories, which did not exist in text. Martin Luther considered such an approach as violence against meaning of Bible.

Probably that is the main reason for which influence of Augustine exegetical method was so much limited in works of Luther. However Luther continued to use many exegetical conclusions of Augustine, especially in exegetical lectures on epistles of Apostle Paul, first of all for criticizing works of Saint Jerome.

Jerome was undoubtedly an outstanding Christian author of his time. Biblical comments, composed by him, reflect real progress of exegetical idea in comparison with former exegesis of church fathers and show deep knowledge of grammar, church history and archeology. In spite of it exegesis of Jerome has got its own inner contradictions. First, this fundamental contradiction between theory and practice of exegesis⁴⁵. Besides that, attitude of Jerome to allegorical methods is contradictory itself. Allegorical interpretations of Jerome were influenced by theology of Origen. However level of this influence should not

be overestimated because it covered mostly theoretical determination of methodology than interpretations.

Modern scientists think that contradictions of the exegetical works of Jerome because of variety of sources, which are basic for exegetical paradigm of Augustine⁴⁶.

Establishing literal understanding, Jerome very often preferred allegorical one in his works. According to Dr. Bernard Ramm, in his exegesis Jerome developed different principles, which were influenced by literal school. However in reality he was typical follower of allegorical school in every single way, including New Testament interpretation⁴⁷.

In Middle Ages concept of literal exegesis was developed by theologians of Sen-Victor' abbey, Hugo, Richard and Andrew Сен Викторский.

Dr. Smalley underlines special feature of exegetes of Sen-Victor', which, to some extent, draws them closer to school of Antioch. Hugo, for example, acted like John Chrysostom – he extracted in Scripture spiritual and moral meaning out of literal one⁴⁸. It allows us to place some parallels between spiritual interpretations of Hugo and meditative exegesis of school of Antioch.

⁴⁵ Bertrand de Margerie, S.J. An Introduction to the History of Exegesis. P. 132 "In theory, Jerome borrowed, or rather received from Origen, whom he had translated, the idea of Scripture three levels of meaning. More often than

not, in practice, Jerome consecrated on the literal and spiritual meanings".

⁴⁶ William G. Rusch. The Later Latin Fathers, p. 80.

⁴⁷ Bernard Ramm. Op. cit, p. 34.

⁴⁸ Beryl Smalley. Op.cit., p.100.

3. Philosophical reasons of Reformation

Speaking about theology of Luther one should not forget that though Luther was follower of ideas of Occam, he used principles of nominal logic⁴⁹.

Occam was a follower of nominalism. Dr. Hagglund says that “In philosophy followers of Occam were interested in question of limits of theology, especially – question about correlation between theology and philosophy”⁵⁰.

Occam made great contribution in development of medieval logic, which he understood as discipline of signs. According to Occam there is no independent substance; any substance, which ever exists, is only *where* and *when* that is why quantity and quality do not exist as independent reality. In reality according to Occam there is no independent relation but relation between definite things, i.e. definite relations⁵¹. Occam criticized mixture between elements of discourse and objective ones.

Occam come to opinion that terms have qualities determined by syntagma, i.e. place or proposition. So the same term may have different meaning in different proposition (sentences). Such conclusions determined opportunity for “clear” study of terms, as if there were no

reality behind them. This made separation between semantic and syntaxes.

After rejecting scholastic concept of universals, Occam created famous “razor rule”. According to this rule preference is given to simple explanation. Bertran Russell formulated the rule: “if something may be interpreted without hypothetical concepts, there is no need to look for it”⁵². Later Luther used this concept for exegesis of Holy Scripture.

Occam kept to empirical concept of epistemology. “This meant that authority of sources became very important in theology. If one can not prove truthfulness of some doctrine, he is supposed to look for infallible grounds. Occam thought that decisions of pope and universal councils might be wrong and only Bible may be infallible”⁵⁴.

In theology he rejected synthesis of faith and knowledge. “Though followers of Occam were in opposition to entire specter of scholastic concept, they managed to strengthen scholastic tradition and completed dialectical revision of theological material”⁵⁵.

Logical principle of Occam determined direction of exegesis of Luther from object of faith to grammar. Luther spoke about transcendental character of biblical sources and consequently independence of

⁴⁹ Kolb. The Theology of Martin Luther. Lecture X “Luther’s Doctrine of Person of Christ”.

⁵⁰ Hagglund. Op.cit., p.197.

⁵¹ History of Philosophy. M. 1991, p.283.

⁵² Bertran Russell. History of Western Philosophy, p.442.

⁵⁴ Gonsales, History of Christianity from early church till reformation”. 2001, p.342.

⁵⁵ Ebeling, opt.cit. In its deep meaning the word “understanding” means not only intellectual understanding of the text, but also “entering” into it; it means that understanding comes from holy Scripture, but not from researcher; it means that understanding is, to come extent, passive process, and all active part is determined by the text itself.

its content⁵⁶. Crisis of late scholastics led to development of totally new cultural and philosophical concept of Christian humanism, which made influence on exegetical paradigm of Luther⁵⁷. Desire to renew spiritual and moral church life through studies of Bible and works of church fathers was the basic point in the program of Christian humanism⁵⁸.

Luther and his partners were, to some level, followers of French humanist, Lefevre d'Étaples (Faber). According to him Grace of God gives a person necessary impulse to understand the Bible⁵⁹. The influence of Faber on early exegetical works of Luther may be easily seen, especially in Wittenberg lectures on Psalms⁶⁰. In his comments Luther recites church fathers and Faber⁶¹.

However there were other factors which influenced exegesis of Luther. For example Luther used textological critical modus, which had been worked out by humanists.

Influence of humanistic paradigm is traced in critical study of exegetical structures of early fathers, made by Luther. He did not doubt scientific level of patristic fathers, but at the same time he had no desire to idealize their exe-

getical method, because he called others to pay attention to their mistakes. "Do you see how often mistakes were made in interpretation of Psalms and other texts by Saint Augustine, Hilarion, and all those, who tried to interpret on their own, without knowing old languages. Though they were correct in their speeches, they could not convey the original meaning of texts, which they tried to interpret"⁶².

According to Dr. Luther, church fathers did not teach anything bad, but since they did not know languages their interpretation was often dim, i.e. contained vague passages because of their inability to understand the meaning of texts⁶³.

According to Luther knowledge of biblical languages is necessary not only for exegesis but has got apologetically meaning. "*What else, except for mockery and laughter at Christians among our opponents, who know languages, may protection of faith, based on dim texts and wrongly understood sentences lead to?*" – asks Martin Luther in his pamphlet "To counselors of all German cities".

Luther also emphasized apologetic meaning of grammatically correct translations of Holy Scrip-

⁵⁶ Heinrich Fausel. "D. Martin Luther. Leben und Werk. P. II 1522 bis 1546. Erlagen 1983. P. 242.

⁵⁷ See – R.F. Surburg The Significance of Luther's Hermeneutics for the Protestant Reformation. Concordia Theological Monthly. Vol.24, April 1953, No.4, p. 244.

⁵⁸ John B. Payne. Erasmus's Influence on Zwingli and Bullinger in the Exegesis of Mathew 11:28-30 // Biblical Interpretation in the Era of Reformation, p.61.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ R.F. Surburg. The Significance of Luther's Hermeneutic for the Protestant Reformation. Concordia Theological Monthly. Vol. 24, April 1953, No. 4.

⁶¹ Kenneth Hagen. Omnis homo mendax: Luther an Psalm 116 // Biblical Interpretation in the Era of Reformation, p.87-88.

⁶² M. Luther. To Counselors of German cities, Collection, SPb. 1997, p. 174.

⁶³ Ibid.

ture. “What made St. Jerome translate Psalms from old Hebrew again? Certainly mockery of Jews about contradictions in our texts and old Jewish texts. Because in our discussion we referred to our Psalm-book”⁶⁴.

In words of Luther when he praises usefulness of classical language knowledge, one may see influence of European renaissance.

Luther eagerly used philological achievements of humanists in his works. When he was working at epistles of Apostle Paul, he used Greek text of New Testament, prepared by Erasmus in 1519. He also used *De Rudimentis Hebraicis* – dictionary, prepared by another famous humanist, Reichlin. Luther thought it necessary to use these important achievements of humanists in his works⁶⁵.

We also need to underline one more aspect that was conducive for establishment of biblical humanism. Like any serious event of religious and cultural life, biblical humanism had its own prehistory – medieval movement, called *Devotio Moderna* “New devotion”.

This term, *Devotio Moderna*, was first used in about 1410 for Herard Grote, who influenced development of spiritual life in provinces of Netherlands and Germany. This movement was begun as an attempt to rebuild the ideal of apostolic church, which had to include sermon of love for God and neighbor. Followers of this move-

ment thought that church might be purified not through monastic organizations, but communities of believers of early church times. However this movement obtained monastic character later. *Devotio Moderna* led to difficult structure of mystical literature, which was something between academic and scholastic works of university professors and educational books for simple people. Congregations of *Devotio Moderna* “did not become centers of humanistic groups like Adur, which had existed at Cisterian court. Nevertheless, work of canonic men created spiritual atmosphere around monasteries, whose special feature was individual religiosity and respect for text. This atmosphere promoted initial education of both future humanists and reformers and anti-reformers”⁶⁶.

Sources of humanism come back to the beginning of 14th century. “Away with philosophy” and “Back to Gospel” – that is basic doctrine of Erasmus in his work “*Paraclesy*” (1516) and “*Ratio seu methodus perveniendi ad veram philosophiam*” (1518). Petrarch, long before, had proclaimed almost the same. What we call humanism of renaissance came to life because of brilliant talent of Erasmus. However medieval founders of *Devotio Moderna*, formed those principles which, their follower Erasmus, used for his own conclusions⁶⁷.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Surburg. *Op.cit.*, p. 244.

⁶⁶ Logutova, Sources and organizational forms

of “New chastity” // 61 m. 2000, p.253.

⁶⁷ Etien Gilson. Reason and Revelation in Middle Ages, p. 44.

The work of 14th century, "Theologia Deutsch", is penetrated by the same spirit. By the way Dr. Martin Luther rated this book rather high, giving it the third place among those books which teach a person to understand Christianity⁶⁸.

Though Luther used achievements of humanists, we should not exaggerate their influence on the reformer and his exegesis.

First of all Luther made division between allegorical and spiritual interpretation of Scriptures. This fact makes him closer to school of Antioch than exegesis of humanists.

"Luther recognized it as a fundamental mistake, that "spiritual" means "allegorical" and that, II Kor. 3:6 (the letter kills but the spirit gives life) was a justification for mystical scriptural exposition. "For the mystical is one thing and the spiritual another," The increased usage of the primary text accords with this: "First let us see the grammatical matters; they are the truly theological matters." And herein, too, agreement prevails in the research that, in spite of important formal similarities with humanistic exegetical principles, and in spite of his ap-

propriation of humanistic philology, Luther's hermeneutical position neither owes its beginning to humanistic influence nor is it finally congruent with humanistic hermeneutics".

Finally after our study we may make the following conclusions.

1. Exegetical system of Luther is a product of long historical development in church life. Exegetical principles of both early and medieval theologians influenced exegetical method of Luther.

2. On the other hand, exegetical system of Luther is motivated by logic of development of social and philosophical concepts. In this case it becomes a part of late medieval scholastic paradigm.

3. In his attempts to reform the church, Luther used methodological structures of Christian humanism.

4. So exegesis of Dr. Martin Luther is many-sided phenomena, which is synthesis of different methodological concepts, postulated in different historical periods.

All the historical and social concepts, which we enumerated influenced the entire exegetical system of Luther.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

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