




# The Concept of *Imago Dei* as a Symbol of Religious Inclusion and Human Dignity

Wojciech Szcerba

**ABSTRACT** This article aims to examine how the concept of *Imago Dei* can serve as a symbol for the broadly understood idea of religious inclusion and human dignity. The article explores the concept of *Imago Dei* primarily from a protological perspective, analyzing its usage in biblical writings, theological tradition and modern philosophy. The substantial, relational and functional—which three usages of the concept can be found in the inclusive theology of Gregory of Nyssa—are analyzed in this article. Arguably, in the context of religious inclusion, the relational angle of *Imago Dei* seems to be the most important. Similarly contemporary Protestant theologian, Jürgen Moltmann states in his book, *God in the Creation*, that the “relational” concept of *Imago Dei* underscores the fundamental dignity of every person. In his book, *God for Secular Society*, Moltmann states that properly understood human rights should include democratic relationships between people, cooperation between societies, concern for the environment in which people live, and responsibility for future generations. From these perspectives, the concept of *Imago Dei* can be utilized as a symbol indicating the dignity of every person and human community, but also a symbol against any types of racism, nationalism or xenophobia.

**KEYWORDS** apokatastasis; dignity; Gregory of Nyssa; Habermas, Jürgen; human being; image of God; *Imago Dei*; inclusion; Moltmann, Jürgen

✉ Wojciech Szcerba, Evangelical School of Theology, Wrocław, Von Hügel Institute, St Edmund's College, University of Cambridge, ul. św. Jadwigi 12, 51-253 Wrocław, Poland  w.szcerba@ewst.edu.pl  0000-0002-4265-506X

©  FORUM PHILOSOPHICUM 25 (2020) no. 1, 13–36  
ISSN 1426-1898 E-ISSN 2353-7043

SUBM. 20 December 2019 Acc. 6 April 2020  
DOI:10.35765/forphil.2020.2501.2

The ideas and arguments presented in this article are part of a broader future publication by the author exploring the theology of migration. The aim is to indicate how the concept of *Imago Dei* can serve as a symbol of religious inclusion and fundamental human dignity. The research evaluated and analyzed includes both the philosophical and theological concept of *Imago Dei*. This article then applies this research to explain how the concept of *Imago Dei* can be used to cross doctrinal, denominational, and ideological borders. I am convinced that, in this contemporary, globalized world, a world in which various races, convictions, beliefs, and religions are mingled on a regular basis, an intercultural dialogue is imperative: a dialogue that leads to the mutual understanding and acceptance of the other human being, regardless of his or her world view or cultural background. While I believe this dialogue is necessary for human relations as a whole, I am convinced that it is necessary especially the context of the so-called migration crisis, an oft-debated topic for which viable solutions have not yet been presented or applied.

Migration is not a new phenomenon and the twentieth-first century is not the first to experience migration. However, migration has increased dramatically in recent years and the various political conflicts, demographics of the developing countries, and the effects of climate change, indicate that the migration trend will continue to move in an upward direction. The upward trend in migration is evidenced by the 2018 Global Trends report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). According to the UNHCR, there were 70.8 million forcefully displaced people in 2018, which is unprecedented, and reflects a 2.3 million increase in the total number of globally forcefully displaced people compared with 2017 (UNHCR 2019). The number of forcefully displaced individuals in 2018 is almost double the total number in 2012 (UNHCR 2018). The number of 70.8 million forcefully displaced individuals includes at least 25.9 million refugees *sensu stricto*, 3.5 million asylum-seekers, and 41.3 million internally displaced people. Among the 25.9 million refugees, approximately half are children under 18 and a significant number of the children are unaccompanied, without parents or close family members. The figure of almost 71 million forced displaced individuals means that one out of every 113th person in the world is somehow relocated or displaced. Taking into consideration other types of migration, such as economic migrations, the total number of displacements—according to the International Organization for Migration—grows to 244 million individuals (IOM 2016). According to this statistic, every 30th person in the world is somehow a migrant. In consequence, the twenty-first century world becomes in *globo* much

more dynamic from an ethnic and cultural perspective than it was during previous centuries and in past societies. This increase in diversity and the dynamic nature of our societies creates various positive possibilities, such as faster growth in developing countries. However, it also generates various threats and challenges concerning issues such as the coexistence of people of various cultures, ethnic affiliations, and different worldviews regarding social and national contexts. Migrants, frequently representing various nationalities, cultures or religions, are treated as second class citizens without much chance for an easy inculturation in their new living contexts. Refugee camps in Turkey, Greece, Italy, the southern parts of the United States and the case of Ukrainian migrants in Central-Eastern Europe may serve as good examples of the situation.<sup>1</sup>

#### ASSUMPTIONS, DEFINITIONS AND METHODOLOGY

The major question posed in this article refers to the potential application of the protological concept of *Imago Dei*. In what way and to what extent may the concept serve as a symbol of the universal dignity of the human being, crossing any and all ethnic, cultural or religious boundaries? How should the concept be translated into the practical acceptance of another person, both in a religious and secular context? How far should the adoption of the theological truth of the image of God result in religious inclusion understood not only as ecumenical activity, but also as an interreligious reality or, even more broadly, as the social attitude of accepting people of various confessional and religious origins as equal? How far can the concept of *Imago Dei* serve as a platform for affirming the acceptance of a pan-human, interrelated community, which expresses its concern for the welfare of its particular members in concrete ways?

Through diachronic study, I refer first of all to the Bible and especially to the Old Testament, which serves as the source material for Christians, but also—simplifying the problem—as the doctrinal basis for Jewish and Muslim convictions. I then analyze the concept of the image of God in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa, one of the most important early Church Fathers, who was the first Christian thinker after Origen to render Christian concepts and beliefs (such as in his *Oratio catechetica magna*) both systematically and synthetically in the form of a coherent thought system. As a theologian, Gregory of Nyssa contributed significantly to the acceptance of Trinitarian concepts in the Eastern, Greek-speaking Church, both in

1. The problem of migration from a theological perspective is analyzed e.g. by such authors as Daniel G. Groody (2008), Gemma T. Cruz (2010), Ellaine Padilla (2014).

his writings (e.g. *On Not Three Gods*), and his crucial participation in the Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.). In his theology, Gregory of Nyssa is thoroughly inclusivist. He not only defends the concept of the salvation of all people, regardless of their origin or religious convictions, but *de facto* espouses the idea of the salvation of all rational creatures, including fallen angels and Satan. Finally, Gregory treats the concept of *Imago Dei* broadly in its ontological, relational and functional sense. He also indicates how the concept should shape the *vertical* relationship: human being—God, and its *horizontal* application: human being—human being (Szczërba 2008).

Finally, I refer to the thought of Jürgen Moltmann, one of the most eminent Protestant theologians of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Moltmann develops the concept of *Imago Dei* in reference to the thought of the Cappadocian Fathers (Gregory of Nyssa, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzen), and treats the concept as the theological framework of *Heilsgeschichte: Imago Dei—Imago Christi—Gloria Dei* (Robinson 2011, 38–41). Moltmann, similarly to Gregory of Nyssa, represents an inclusivist theological perspective and interprets the culmination of history, Gloria Dei, in terms of the hope for universal salvation—*apocatastasis ton panton*. He also translates the final hope into contemporary inclusivism, which should be demonstrated in honoring other people and caring for the earth which has been entrusted to human beings.

In this article, I mainly refer to theology from the Christian perspective; however, more in philosophical than religious categories. According to the perspective outlined by Aristotle in his treatise *Metaphysics* (hereinafter abbreviated as *Met.*) philosophical theology is defined as the first philosophy which seeks fundamental causes (Gr. *aitia*) and principles (Gr. *archai*) (*Met.*, XI.1064a33–b1) of the whole reality, and calls the first—in the order of being—principle God-*Theos* (*Met.*, XII. 1072b24–26, 28–30; 1073a3–5). Theology, according to Aristotle, seeks first to define the essence of reality with its subsequent attributes (*Met.*, VI. 1026a31–32). Secondly, in the descending-*diairetic* dialectic, it interprets the reality as a whole from the perspective of identified causes and principles. In this sense, philosophical theology strives to state the core of being, which determines the phenomenal reality in its macro and micro perspective. Successively, from the standpoint of the defined core of being, theology renders the diverse reality, which is given to human beings and is perceived by human beings (Komorowski 2013, 3–25).

By accepting a philosophical understanding of theology, I assume a certain distance from *revelation*, fundamental for theology as understood in religious terms and objectified, for example in such sacred books as the

Bible or the Quran. I also allow myself for ecumenical, or even broader, interreligious understanding of theology, especially with reference to the contexts which have shaped contemporary European culture. Thus, in my understanding and reference to theology, I am referring to the broadly understood biblical tradition, especially in its Christian, Jewish and Islamic provenance, and also to Greek philosophical thought (Solomon et al. 2005, 147–80).

Jürgen Moltmann's theological analysis employs a similar methodology, and the perspectives presented in his book *God in Creation* were an important inspiration for this article and a basis for my consideration of the concept of *Imago Dei* as a symbol of religious inclusion and human dignity (Moltmann 1985).

My analysis presumes that theology, in its ecclesiastical or ecclesiastical-political dimension, naturally tends to be exclusivist. This exclusivism is often based on the assumption that a particular religion, denomination or community is the faithful, or sometimes the only faithful, depositary of the metaphysical truth revealed to human beings in a particular way (*Dominus Iesus* IV, 17). Through exclusivist lenses, this *ecclesia* then grants itself the right to judge and influence the social order in which it exists and operates. In the hands of ecclesiastical and ecclesiastical-political institutions, theology—understood as the reflection of the revelation and, from the perspective of revelation, as the interpretation of the entire realm—naturally becomes a tool initiating and/or strengthening the social divisions between “us” and “them,” according to the practically accepted formula *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* (Sullivan 2002, 1–14). Thus, the community of the *already saved* is naturally contrasted with the community *outside of salvation*, the faithful “under the grace” compared with the unfaithful “outside of grace,” “children of God” with the “children of the world,” those chosen to salvation with those chosen to condemnation, the Church of Christ with the pseudo-church, the City of God with the Earthly City. In the course of history, particular dogmas, doctrines, concepts and theological structures frequently served and still serve to strengthen the divisions between the chosen ones and the ones “of the world,” orthodox and heterodox, sons of the Church and apostates (1 Jn 4:1–5). This type of strategy is argued as a natural way to build and strengthen the identity of the communities of faith, in which orthodoxy clearly defines unbreachable borders and inner conditions of the true faith (see: Kelly 1978; Pietras 2000, 131–343). Moreover, it is not unusual for ecclesiastical and political institutions of power to use a particularly rendered theological orthodoxy to justify their existence in certain cultural contexts by translating theological doctrines

into socio-political structures and—at times—authoritarian ways of executing their power (Arato 2016, 269–99). Extreme examples of situations when theology becomes a tool of political or ecclesiastical-political ideologies (Gulczyński 2007, 172–84) include persecutions of pagans at the twilight of antiquity (Athanasiasiadi 1993), medieval crusades, inquisitions, religious wars, theological justification of slavery (Torbett 2006), fascism (Steigmann-Gall 2003), Apartheid (Manavhela 2012), sexism (Peek et al. 1991), antisemitism (Gager 1983, 113–271), anti-Islamic (Smith 2007; Sharp 2012, 191–233), and anti-Christian movements (Royal 2006). Paradigmatic of the use of theological orthodoxy as described above are the utterances of Thomas Aquinas, justifying—following Jerome of Stridon—the capital punishment for the heresiarchs in *Summa Theologiae* (ST II-II, q. 11.3) or the harsh criticism of Martin Luther towards the Anabaptists (Luther 1956, 39–72). I will note that these are not the sole examples.

Contemporary ecumenical and interreligious dialogue has been developing for more than 100 years, at least in the area often referred to as the “Western World” (Beek 2006; Kasper 2005). The existence and operation of World Council of Churches<sup>2</sup> or the Lausanne Movement<sup>3</sup> can serve as obvious examples. This ecumenical and interreligious dialogue has resulted in considerably positive outcomes. However, there are still challenges and barriers to this dialogue as a result of the doctrinal differences between confessions, the complicated and at times bloody history, and the particular policies of ecclesiastical and ecclesiastical-political institutions, with this last example appearing the most difficult barrier to overcome (Kobia 2005; Kasper 2003).

However, with philosophical theology understood as a thought system which strives to read and interpret the realm, it is possible to point to a number of concepts, which at least potentially break the above-mentioned exclusivism and can lead into more inclusivist or even universalist interpretation of reality. In the soteriological sense, universal scope includes the concept of *apocatastasis*, which indicates that all human beings will be saved in the end (Szczërba 2011). It states that, ultimately, all the ways for human beings lead to the “Paradise,” and the end of the history will symbolically repeat its beginning, the situation before the fall of creation. Understood this way, soteriology crosses all possible borders and divisions. It refers to the final, common fate of all the human beings and in

2. [www.oikoumene.org/en](http://www.oikoumene.org/en)

3. [www.lausanne.org](http://www.lausanne.org)

this way—naturally—influences the earthly reality of human beings as a prologue of eschatology.

With reference to theological protology, the beginning of human *Heilsgeschichte*, the concept of the image of God—*Imago Dei*—arguably has inclusivistic potential, pointing directly to the idea that every human being is an image of God in the earthly reality. All people are created in the image or rather as the image of God, which determines the identity and dignity of a person. This article focuses on this concept in its protological sense and its possible social implications.

#### THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE BIBLE

The concept of the image of God is introduced in the opening chapters of the Hebrew Bible<sup>4</sup>. According to the first description of creation, belonging to the priestly tradition (P), God concludes the work of *creatio* on the sixth day by creating human beings, male and female. According to the Bible, human beings are the only creatures created by God in/as the image (Heb. *selem*, Gr. *eikon*) and likeness (Heb. *demut*, Gr. *homoiosis*) of God. The primary task of humans is to rule over the earthly reality, just as God rules over the whole of reality. The author of the first chapter of Genesis (26–7) points out:

Then God said: “Let us make humankind (Heb. *adam*) in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created humankind (Heb. *adam*) in his image, in the image of God he created them (Heb. *him*); male and female he created them.<sup>5</sup>

4. For the sake of the article, I am only sketching here the biblical concept of the image of God, restricting the discussion to biblical protology. I am also following here the source theory J, E, D, P and the canonical criticism of the Bible. (See e.g. Baden 2012, 13–34, 45–149, 69–93, 246–51).

5. This and other English translations of the Bible come from NRSV. BHS (Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia) states:

26 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדִמְיוֹתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־  
הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: 27 וַיְבָרֵא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרֵאשִׁיתָם:

Septuagint: “(26) καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς Ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα (selem) ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν (demut), καὶ ἀρχέτωσαν τῶν ἰχθύων τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ τῶν πετεινῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῶν κτηνῶν καὶ πάσης τῆς γῆς καὶ πάντων τῶν ἔρπετων τῶν ἐρπόντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. (27) καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, κατ’ εἰκόνα θεοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτόν, ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς.”

In addition to the above account, there is a second description of creation belonging to the older Yahwistic (J) tradition. According to this version, contained in the second chapter of Genesis (8–25), man is created as the first human and is entrusted by God with the task of caring for Eden and the lower creatures placed in the garden (8–20). In this narration the female is subsequently formed out of the rib of the male and her role is defined as a helper and partner of the man (21–5).

The first and the second account of creation clearly—with the usage of simple exegesis—indicate that the human being is the crown of God’s work of *creatio*. He<sup>6</sup> is God’s representative in the garden of Eden, and his status is incomparably higher than the status of other earthly creatures. As such he is supposed to rule over animals, manage the garden and cultivate the earth, with which he has been entrusted. In the first chapters of Genesis, the human is rendered in gender categories. As male and female he is created in/as the image and likeness of God. As male and female he is able to fulfill the task ascribed to him by God. The superior role of human beings in the earthly creation seems to reflect the superior role of God over the entire reality. According to the first chapters of the Hebrew Bible, the human is the highest representative and primary agent of God over the Earth (Clines 1968).

The aspect of likeness<sup>7</sup> (Heb. *demut*, Gr. *homoiosis*) continues in the fifth chapter of Genesis (5:1–2), which analyzes the issue in a collective, *pan*-human sense. It points to the generations which are derived from Adam, and indicates that they bear on the likeness of God. The status of the image/likeness of the first human is thus transposed in the Biblical narration to the whole of humankind.

Similarly, the universal dimension of the image of God (Heb. *selem Elohim*) is underscored in the ninth chapter of Genesis (Creach 2013, 34–47; Middleton 2004; Wilson 2017), which concludes the story of the Flood. The ninth chapter of Genesis refers to specific laws and regulations which God gives to the people who survived the flood, thus creating fundamental principles of the renewed human society. This covenant between God and human being becomes a symbolic “new creation” of the whole human race. The image of God in this context constitutes the basis for the solidary coexistence of people without violence and with peaceful relationships between human beings, and God. On the other hand, *selem Elohim* is treated as the basis for retribution in the event of the breaking of the covenant, especially in the case of murdering a person created in the image of God. “Whoever

6. I use “he” in a general sense—human being—throughout this article.

7. I treat likeness and image as synonyms.

sheds the blood of a human,” writes the author of the book, “by a human shall that person’s blood be shed; for in his own image God made human-kind” (Gen 9:6). Thus, God transfers the right so far reserved only for *Him*, to human beings as *his* representatives on the earth, in the social order.

In this way, the Hebrew Bible introduces the concept of the image-likeness of God and ascribes it to the human being, who is the crown of God’s creation, representative of God in the order of being, caretaker of the earthly reality, and the executor of God’s regulations among creation, including other people. It is important to notice that the Bible utilizes the concept of the image-likeness in universal categories, relating it to every person, regardless of gender or descent. Human being is created as male and female, and generations derived from Adam equally bear the image-likeness, which is the basis for stating the equal dignity of every person according to the first chapters of the Bible (Clines 1968, 56–84; Kamionkowski n.d.).

The Hebrew Bible successively elaborates the concept of the image of God in the collective-national categories, where the nation of Israel—in developing biblical *Heilsgeschichte*—becomes symbolically the first-born son of God, bearing his God’s image and the glory of God for the whole world (Clines 1968, 85–101). The New Testament continues the application of the concept assuming the image of God in human beings and, on this basis, constructs its theology and anthropology (Clines 1968, 101–3; Childs 1984)<sup>8</sup>. It refers to the concept of image mainly in Christological categories, stating that Christ is the perfect image of God (e.g. Col 1:15; 2 Cor 4:4), an example of “glorified humanity.” *En Christo*, from the perspective of the accomplished work of salvation, removes any gender, social or cultural discrimination (Ga 3:25–29). Simultaneously, the concept is present in the midst of the anthropological viewpoint, according to which—at least in the Pauline epistles—the male is understood as the primary image and glory of God, whereas the female is perceived as the glory of the male (1 Cor 11:7). This differentiation leads to various roles and social-ecclesiastical functions, which in the teaching of the *apostle of the pagans* defines the various prerogatives of males and females in growing Christian communities of *Imperium Romanum* (1 Tm 3:1–13). Nevertheless, *en Christo*, the status of all people is equal, and the conclusion of the history will result, in Pauline teaching, in the total subjugation of reality to God, so at the end “God will be all in all” (1 Cor 15:28).

8. I am interpreting the New Testament canonically (e.g. Childs 1984).

THE THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON *IMAGO DEI*. GREGORY OF NYSSA

The Bible introduces the concept of the image-likeness of God. However, the discussion referring to the broader, theological meaning of the concept started—in the Christian context—with the beginning of the new era and continues to the present. In general, it is possible to highlight three main understandings of the theory of *Imago Dei* derived from biblical teachings over the centuries: substantial-ontological, relational, and functional (Middleton 2005, 17–30; Peterson 2016, 23–52).

According to the substantial view on *Imago Dei*, which dominated in early Christian thought, the image of God is understood in ontological categories and is seen in terms of the physical, psychical, or spiritual sphere of existence of the human being. In this perspective, the emphasis is placed on the essential (*ousia*) likeness-analogy between God and human, which may be perceived in various aspects of the human being's life. So, the image of God may be represented, for example, in the physical, straight posture of people, the rational soul, the free will, the human *per se* or even humankind as a whole.

In the relational perspective of *Imago Dei*, the emphasis is placed on the social nature of people, which reflects the relational, trinitarian—according to Christian orthodoxy—nature of God. Following this viewpoint, Karl Barth teaches that the capability of establishing and maintaining deep, complicated and multidimensional relationships by people mirrors the nature of God and constitutes the essence of the image of God in human beings. Physical, psychical and spiritual relationships, along with a sexual dimension, constitute the foundation of humanity in the earthly realm and epitomize the image of the perfect community of Trinity on the level of the created beings (Robinson 2011, 29–32).

The functional understanding of the image of God predominates in contemporary biblical studies, which strives to explain biblical concepts in a generic way without imposing dogmatic formulas, outer thought systems, or external hermeneutical models on the Bible. According to the functional perspective of the image of God, the human being plays an analogous role in the earthly reality to that of God in the metaphysical sphere. Just as God rules over the whole universe, so the human is situated in a time-and-space reality to rule the earth and earthly creatures and thus represents the Creator on the earth, keeping the order of created beings according to God's will, and maintaining the society in the shape assumed by God. In this sense, the human being imitates the function of God on the earth with reference to other creatures and—in the social dimension—toward other people (Wilson 2017, 265nn; Garr 2003, 219nn).

The ideas of Gregory of Nyssa serve as an example of a multidimensional understanding of the image of God in substantial, relational and functional sense (Szczerba 2008, 230–70; Meredith 1989, 38–9). In *De hominis opificio* (hereinafter abbreviated as *de Hom.*) he constructs—similarly to other Christian thinkers<sup>9</sup>—the concept of *Imago Dei* mainly on the basis of the narration of Genesis (1:26): “Let us make humankind (Heb. *adam*) in our image, according to our likeness.” (*de Hom.* 16, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graeca* (hereinafter *PG* 44, 180B–181A). The Earlier theologians like Irenaeus of Lyon, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen differentiate between the image (*eikon*) and likeness (*homoiosis*). They refer the “image” to the way of creating the human being and the *likeness* to the potential holiness, which is to be actualized in the process of sanctification of a person. In contrast, Gregory of Nyssa understands these two concepts to be synonymous. *Homoiotēs theou* refers, according to him, not only to the eschatological aim-*telos* of human beings, but *de facto* it constitutes their essence. It also determines the foundation and principle of the whole process of sanctification, *theosis*, the imitation of God (*de Hom.* 5; *PG* 44, 137B; Ladner 1993, 276).

Gregory of Nyssa, when developing the concept of the image of God in human beings, focused primarily on the reasons for creating humankind. He is certain that, at the basis of *creatio*, lies the goodness of God, which leads the Creator to share his substance with the created beings. In this sense Nyssa reads the obscure—in the Septuagint translation—biblical phrase, *kata eikona*, generally, as a way of creating the human being, according to which he was brought into existence as the image of God, both in an individual and collective sense (Zachhuber 2000, 158). In other words, God in the act of *creatio* reflects in the human being his divine nature and enables the human being to partake in it as much as the imperfect being can mirror perfection and participate in it. Thus, according to this assertion, human beings, as the image of God, participate in all good and imitate God’s perfection in earthly, spatiotemporal reality. Consequently, the human being is the image of God in all aspects of his nature.

God is in His own nature all that which our mind can conceive of good;—rather, transcending all good that we can conceive or comprehend. He creates man for no other reason than that He is good ... the perfect form of goodness is here to be seen by His both bringing man into being from nothing, and

9. See Clement of Alexandria’s *Stromata* (*Strom.* V, 14 (94,5)), Origen’s *De principiis* (*De princ.* III 6,1) or *Contra Celsum* (*Cels.* IV, 30), Irenaeus’s *Adversus haereses* (*Adv. Haereses* V. 6. 1), and Basil the Great’s *Contra Eunomium* (*cont. Eunomium* III. 2).

fully supplying him with all good gifts ... if the Deity is the fulness of good, and this is His image, then the image finds its resemblance to the Archetype in being filled with all good.<sup>10</sup>

In his interpretation of the concept of the image of God in human beings, Nyssa points to a number of virtues, features, and qualities which characterize various aspects of the likeness of human beings to God (Przyszychowska 2006, 15). In the treatise *De hominis opificio*<sup>11</sup> he refers to human physiology, spiritual features, rationality and moral qualities, which—according to Nyssa—portray human being as a complex image of God’s majesty in earthly reality. “Artificer made our nature as it were a formation fit for the exercise of royalty, preparing it at once by superior advantages of soul, and by the very form of the body, to be such as to be adapted for royalty” (*de Hom.* 4, PG 44, 136B, NPNF, 612). However, convinced that God is ultimately unknowable (*apophatic theology*), Gregory of Nyssa stresses that analogously to the Creator, the image of God is also covered with some kind of mystery. “Since the nature of our mind, which is the likeness of the Creator evades our knowledge, it has an accurate resemblance to the superior nature, figuring by its own unknowableness the incomprehensible Nature” (*de Hom.* 11, PG 44, 156B, NPNF, 623).

Analyzing the concept of the image of God in human beings, Nyssa first refers to human physiology. In his understanding, such physical features as speech, sight or hearing reflect God’s power in the earthly reality given to the human being. Similarly, an upright posture differentiates people from other creatures. It is a clear sign of human dominion over the world of animals and a symbol of royal dignity of people. An erect person can easily turn his eyes to heaven and contemplate a higher reality. Hands with opposable thumbs help in gathering nourishment, in working and in defense, and are also important in the process of communication. Gesticulation, writing, or even freeing the mouth from the necessity of getting food, show the importance of prehensile hands. Thanks to them, a construction of face is possible—in contrast with an animal’s muzzle—which predisposes humans to development of speech (*de Hom.* 8, PG 44, 144B).

10. *de Hom.* 16.10, PG 44, 184A; English translation comes from the collection of works translated in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (hereinafter NPNF), 635. When referring or quoting Gregory of Nyssa, I first refer to his very work with the standard division to chapters and verses, then I refer to the critical edition of his work (PG or *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*—GNO), and at last—when using English translation—I refer to the translation in NPNF.

11. See also: *De anima et resurrectione* (hereinafter abbreviated as *De an.*) PG 46, 160A–C; in *De beatitudinibus*, homilia III, GNO 7/2, 105; *Oratio Catechetica* (hereinafter abbreviated as *Or. cat.*) 5n PG 45, 24C–D; *de Hom.* 16, PG 44, 184B.

Nevertheless, the image of God in human being is not restricted to his physical structure alone. The moral qualities, immanently present—according to Gregory—in humans, also indicate their special position in the act or process of creation (e.g. *de Hom.* 5, PG 44, 137C). Virtues, on the one hand, point to the perfection which is inscribed in the consciousness of human beings as the aim of his strivings. On the other hand, virtues constitute natural features of the soul and as such are important aspects of the image of God in human structures. Virtues somehow exemplify the perfection of a transcendent God in spatiotemporal humanity taking such forms as moral purity, freedom from sensual lusts, spiritual happiness, goodness, and most of all, love.

As then painters transfer human forms to their pictures by the means of certain colors, laying on their copy the proper and corresponding tints, so that the beauty of the original may be accurately transferred to the likeness, so I would have you understand that our Maker also, painting the portrait to resemble His own beauty, by the addition of virtues, as it were with colors, shows in us His own sovereignty. (*de Hom.* 5, PG 44, 137A, *NPNF*, 613)

Additionally, when explaining the concept of the image of God in human being, Gregory of Nyssa pinpoints its spiritual and intellectual aspect, which is especially exemplified in the free-willed soul. *Psyche tou anthropolou* created in the image of God is independent and free, reflecting with these faculties the superior power and absolute freedom of God<sup>12</sup>. “The soul immediately shows its royal and exalted character, far removed as it is from the lowliness of private station, in that it owns no lord, and is self-governed, swayed autocratically by its own will; for to whom else does this belong than to a king?” (*de Hom.* 4, PG 44, 136B–C, *NPNF*, 613. See *de Hom.* 7, PG 44, 140D). Freedom, which Nyssa stresses so strongly when considering the image of God, is inevitably connected with the intellectual nature of the soul. After all, the basis of the self-determination of a human being lies in the rationality of his nature participating in the perfect rationality of God. “Mind and reason, we cannot strictly say that He gave, but that He imparted them, adding to the image the proper adornment of His own nature” (*de Hom.* 9, PG 44, 149B, *NPNF*, 620). Human being, having an intellectual soul, reflects God in the most perfect way in spatiotemporal

12. See also: (*De an.* PG 46, 101C–104A; *de Hom.* 16, PG 44, 184B; *Or. cat.* 5, PG 45, 24C–D; *Or. cat.* 50, PG 45, 76D–77A; *In Ecclesiastem* (hereinafter abbreviated as *In Eccl.*) 4, PG 44, 664C–665D; Gregorios 1980, 140; Szczerba 2008, 215–307).

reality (*de Hom.* 5, PG 44, 137B). He is a free creature, determining *his* own fate, responsible for his own decisions. He is superior to other earthly creatures, just as God is the superior ruler of the entire reality (*Or. cat.* 5, PG 45, 24C–D). Free will is the most wonderful gift and the most perfect element of the image of God in the human being. Free will is a beautiful sign of the Creator’s love toward the human creatures.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of Gregory of Nyssa to the whole theological discussion concerning the *Imago Dei* concept lies in his conviction that the image of God should mainly be analyzed in general or collective categories. *Imago Dei* refers predominantly to humankind or humanity *en bloc* in a general and collective meaning and only then, secondarily, can it be referred to a human being in the individual sense. Thus, according to his understanding, derived from *medio-* and *neoplatonic* tradition, the first account of *creatio* from the book of Genesis (1:26–27), refers not so much to an individual person, but rather to human nature understood generally or collectively. Only the so-called second *creatio* (Gen 2:1–25) holds the individual character and should be treated as a prediction and prevention of the imminent fall of humanity (Gen 3; *de Hom.* 22, PG 44, 204D). However, just as with a reference to God, it is possible to speak first about the divine nature—*ousia tou theou*, which is then exemplified in the particular *hypostasis* of the Father, Son and the Spirit, so—according to Nyssa—humanity should be interpreted mainly in general terms as the human nature—*ousia tou anthropou*, which subsequently is exemplified in individual people. “For the image [of God] is not in part of our nature, nor is the grace in any one of the things found in that nature, but this power extends equally to all the race” (*de Hom.* 16, PG 44, 185D NPNF, 639). The creation of human nature according to the image leads to the conclusion that *ousia tou anthropou* in general reflects God and transfers this likeness into individuals, meaning—among others—that people are substantially identical and that they are organically interrelated as integral parts/aspects of the same human nature. Just like the relationships of divine *hypostasis* of the Father, Son and the Spirit are perfect in their nature, so the image of God in the human nature is reflected—or practically speaking, should be reflected—in the harmonious coexistence of individual people. Moreover, since *ousia tou anthropou*, the constitutive *principium* of humankind, is understood by Nyssa as the image of God, then the human race *en bloc* is collectively named—one human being (Zachhuber 2000, 158). Just as the term God predominantly refers to the divine nature which is expressed in the Trinity, so to the term “human being” refers mainly to human nature, which is exemplified in particular and interrelated individuals. This way, the image

of God, according to Nyssa, should be understood not only in the vertical dimension: God—human, but also horizontally, referring to interhuman relationships. From this perspective, Gregory of Nyssa defends the universal scope of salvation of humanity. He claims that the moment in which God becomes man through the act of incarnation, i.e. when divinity encounters humanity, it results in the deification-*theosis* of the whole human nature, and consequently—in eschatological terms—in deification of all individuals as the *ousia tou anthropou* integral parts (Szczerba 2008, 319–23). From this perspective, Gregory of Nyssa also stresses the moral and social responsibility of people. He strongly reacts against any abuses and exploitations of other people, especially those who are underprivileged: slaves, poor or sick (e.g. *In Eccl.* 4, PG 44, 664C–665D). *De facto*, all people are integral parts of human nature, which was brought to existence by God in the first act of *creatio*. Thus, strictly speaking, all people are equal, ontologically interconnected and all are part of the same body—*ousia tou anthropou*—in the same sense. Additionally, God’s salvific love towards human beings, both in the general sense—*ousia*, and in the particular sense—*anthropoi*, should translate into a responsible attitude of individuals toward other people, their *de facto* brothers and sisters, as an important aspect of the sanctification process on the way to eschatological salvation.

Thus, in a general sense, Gregory of Nyssa broadly interprets the concept of the image of God from three major perspectives, substantial—the human being is the image of God, functional—the human being represents God in earthly reality, and relational—the human being reflects divine, Trinitarian relationships. Nyssa applies the image of God first to humankind in a general, collective sense and then to human being in an individual sense. He also interprets the concept in the vertical dimension, of which reflection is the relationship of God with human; and also in a horizontal depiction, which is exemplified in interhuman relationships and social responsibility.

#### *IMAGO DEI* AS A SYMBOL OF RELIGIOUS INCLUSION. JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN

How can the above-described concept of *Imago Dei*, derived from the Bible and developed by such early Christian thinkers as Gregory of Nyssa, serve as a symbol of religious inclusion and human dignity in today’s world? The German theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, wrestles extensively with this question in his book *God in Creation*,<sup>13</sup> referring directly to the teaching of

13. In the context of religious inclusion in this article I confine myself to the thought of Jürgen Moltmann, and especially to his book *God in Creation*. I am using Polish and English translations of the monograph (Moltmann 1985).

the Cappadocian Fathers. Moltmann belonged to the group of important Protestant-Reformed theologians from the second half of the twentieth century who, along with Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich and Emil Brunner, were an important influence on the development of contemporary theology, especially in its pragmatic, social dimension. Moltmann is one of the first theologians of Protestant origin to deal with the problem of eco-theology, theology of work, theology of hope after the Holocaust, and political theology in a globalized world (Grenz and Olson 1992, 172–86). His theological perspective was largely shaped—and this is important in the context of the discussed issue—by his personal experience of the horrors of the Second World War in a prisoner of war camp, and his religious conversion there. Undoubtedly, these experiences caused Moltmann to interpret humanity not so much in the perspective of sin and depravation, so typical of the Protestant-reformed thought (see e.g. Michaud and Kim 1999), but rather through the perspective of theodicy in the light of the suffering and hardship, which human beings experience in their earthly pilgrimage. Additionally—it should be noted—when analyzing the concept of the image of God, Jürgen Moltmann refers and derives various ideas from the thoughts of the Fathers of Cappadocia: Gregory of Nyssa, Basil the Great, and especially Gregory of Nazianzen (Moltmann 1985, 234–44).

By accepting the perspective of the Cappadocian Fathers, Moltmann indicates that the image of God should not be interpreted as an anthropological concept, but a theological idea, which mainly interprets human beings as relational creatures, individually and collectively representing God in the world. Read from this angle, the concept of the image of God does not emphasize features differentiating human beings from the rest of creation, but rather accentuates the kinship between God and human and the responsibility of humankind for other creatures. According to Moltmann, the human being is brought into existence not so much in the image of God but rather is created “to be” the image of God in earthly existence (Moltmann 1985, 215). The German theologian reads the terminology of the first chapters of Genesis, especially the plural referring to God (*let's create*) and the singular assignment the name *adam* to male and female in Genesis 1 (Moltmann 1985, 216–25; 1981, 105) in these categories. This terminology resembles the usage of the concept in the other ancient cultures of the Middle East. However, although in the Egyptian or Akkadian contexts it was the ruler, pharaoh or the king who was created as the image of God on the earth for his people and the rest of the creation, in the Bible, this royal term of the image of God is ascribed to all people as God's representatives-ambassadors in the earthly realm. It is important

to notice that the concept of the image of God becomes universal in its scope already in the first pages of the Hebrew Bible. The human being reflects God both in the sense of ontological status, but also—or most of all—in terms of the responsibility, which is bestowed on him in the order of being. “The nature of human beings springs from their relationship to God. It is this relationship which gives human nature its definition—not some characteristic or other which sets human beings apart from other living things. The God who creates for himself his image on earth finds his correspondence in that image. So human likeness to God consists in the fact that human beings, for their part, correspond to God. The God who allows his glory to light up his image on earth and to shine forth from that image, is reflected in human beings as in a mirror” (Moltmann 1985, 220).

Looking at *Imago Dei* from this perspective, Moltmann opposes its usage in the course of history as a means of oppression to reflect only the perfection of humanity (1985, 234–40), in order to justify the abuse of other creatures by people, ruthless exploitation of the Earth, and domination of males over females or one race over another. The royal dimension of the image of God extends to all the people in the book of Genesis, indicating the kinship between God and humans, proving not so much the superiority of humans over other creatures, but rather human responsibility for the Earth and creation (Moltmann 1985, 221). Moreover, the image of God evaluated *diaretically* (descending) as a theological not anthropological concept, stresses—according to Moltmann—the relational dimension. God as Trinity constitutes a perfect community and as, such God, brings human being into existence as *Imago Dei*. The triune God *opens* to human being in the act of *creatio*, *epiphany*, incarnation of Logos, and the activity of the Spirit, continuing the mission of the Son (Moltmann 1985, 243; 1981, 94). The *open* Trinity, when creating human being as its image, *ex definitione* shapes him as a relational, communal being in (1) sexual categories: masculinity and femininity complementing the nature of humanity, (2) generational categories, which are symbolized by families consisting in parents and children, and (3) broader social categories, which are exemplified in communities, societies and humankind in general.

Similarly to the Cappadocian Fathers, Jürgen Moltmann understands the concept of the image of God comprehensively and holistically. With reference to protology, the prehistory of the human being, he connects *Imago Dei* mainly with the act of *creatio* and the fundamental status of humanity: being God’s representative and a relational creature. In developing the history of salvation, the image of God is interpreted more dynamically and its major feature becomes the assimilation of humankind to the

Creator, an example-aim of which is Christ, the symbol of deified humanity (Moltmann 1985, 226; Szczerba 2008, 275nn) and the means to achieve the aim of the whole process of sanctification-*theosis* of human being. From this perspective *Imago Dei* assumes the form of *Imago Christi* (Moltmann 1985, 225–8). Finally, the eschatological realization of *Imago Dei* focuses on the alvation of humankind, understood in a universal scope, according to the Pauline formula that “God will be all in all” (1 Cor 15:25). In this final depiction, *Imago Dei* evolves into *Gloria Dei*, and the horizons of the image of God and likeness to God overlap in the eschatological consummation of history (Moltmann 1985, 228). *Theosis*,

the eschatological becoming-one-with-God of human beings ... is inherent in the concept of “seeing,” for the seeing face to face and the seeing him as he is, transforms the seer into the One seen and allows him to participate in the divine life and beauty. Participation in the divine nature and conformity to God, flowering into perfect resemblance, are the marks of the promised glorification of human beings. The God-likeness that belongs to creation in the beginning becomes God-sonship and daughterhood in the messianic fellowship with the Son, and out of the two springs the transfiguration of human beings in the glory of the new creation. (Moltmann 1985, 229)

In this way, the German theologian draws closer to a very important theological concept of the universal scope of salvation, *apocatastasis ton panton*. He also shows that the concept of *Imago Dei* can be read as a framework of the whole *Heilsgeschichte* of humanity. It is important to notice that, just like Gregory of Nyssa, Moltmann understands the concept of the image of God both in a vertical dimension as a kinship-compatibility between the Creator and creation, and also in a horizontal sense as the fundamental principle for the solidarity and community of humankind, a common denominator of humanity *en bloc*.

#### THE UNIVERSAL DIMENSION OF THE CONCEPT OF *IMAGO DEI*

The interpretation of the concept *Imago Dei* developed by Gregory of Nyssa and broadened further by Jürgen Moltmann is of the utmost importance to the communal understanding of humanity and the concept of religious inclusion. It denotes real people in real life situations and serves as a fundamental symbol of human dignity. The concept of the image of God indicates the infinite significance of the human being both in the individual and collective sense. It shows, in a phenomenal perspective, that the divine attributes are an integral part of every human life, including human free

will, reason, memory, emotions, personality, ability to love, capability to build relationships with others, along with the need to be loved, the need for security or the need for self-determination (Groody 2009, 642–8).

The concept of *Imago Dei*, predominantly constructed on the basis of the first chapters of Genesis, demonstrates the importance of the human being as the image of God in the earthly reality. First, it indicates that every person is a mirror of God in this world. God manifests himself in the human being and through the human being, bestowing on him a special status and assigning him a special role. Secondly, the concept *Imago Dei* indicates the inter-relationships between people. The trinitarian dimension of the image of God especially stresses that the concept from the theological perspective is not so much individualistic in its character, but rather collective and relational. Theologically understood, humankind becomes *de facto*—when following and broadening Pauline vision of the church (e.g. Rom 12:4–5; 1 Cor 12:27)—a kind of interdependent organism. Thirdly, *Imago Dei* stresses the role and responsibility of people in the world, in the created order of being, in which humans, according to the Bible, are God’s representatives. Just as God creates and takes care of the entire realm so, analogously, the human being is the Creator’s ambassador in the earthly reality.

Seen from this perspective, *Imago Dei* not only describes the ontological status of a person, community, society or humankind *en bloc*, but it primarily challenges a person, society and humanity to effectively fulfill the role assigned to them in the order of creation, the *ordo creatio*. This aspect of duty, stemming naturally from the theological concept of the image of God, was stressed by Jürgen Moltmann in 1970, in his declaration of human rights written for the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (McCord and Miller 1977, 7n.; Moltmann 1975; 1976). In his address, based on the theology of hope, Moltmann sees humankind as being in the process of renewal of the primal image of God, of which the final effect will hopefully be the universal salvation of humanity. Interpreting the human community in this way, Moltmann indicates that human rights should also have a universal scope, so that all the people can function as God’s representatives or ambassadors in the world. The biblical account and the theological interpretation of the first chapters of the book of Genesis imply that all people are created as the image of God, not only—as in the other ancient cultures—rulers, kings or oligarchs. Developing this model, it should be accepted—according to the German theologian—that a proper depiction of human rights should assume, among others aspects: democratic relationships, regulating the exercise of power that some people have over the others, cooperation and community between societies, collaboration of people for the sake of the

environment, in which people live and, finally, responsibility for the future generations of human beings bearing the image of God in an equal way to the present generation.

Analogous principles in the context of the theology of migration have been applied by a Catholic theologian from the University of Notre Dame, Daniel Groody. In his interpretation of the concept, he indicates that “all people exemplify the first principle of *Imago Dei* in a symbolically vertical way and shape the all-human community, reflecting this principle in a horizontal dimension” (my own paraphrasis. Groody 2009, 645; 2008). In Groody’s understanding, the *Imago Dei* concept is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it indicates the organic and inalienable significance of a person. On the other hand, it opposes any social tendencies to oppression and abuse of the poor, the needy and the outcast. *Imago Dei* can serve as a symbol of resistance to any types of racism, nationalism or xenophobia. In a broader, social perspective, the concept of the image of God stresses that the economy should serve a person, not a person the economy. *De facto*, the moral condition of the economy of a society should be measured by considering how the most vulnerable and the poorest are doing in this society. Groody finds such inclusive implications of the concept of *Imago Dei* in the contemporary social teaching of the Roman-Catholic Church, beginning with the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of pope Leo XIII. For example, the Vatican II Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, stresses the fundamental theological truth that the dignity of human beings is rooted in the fact that every person is created in the image of God and that this principle determines particular implications concerning social responsibility.

Since all men possess a rational soul and are created in God’s likeness, since they have the same nature and origin, have been redeemed by Christ and enjoy the same divine calling and destiny, the basic equality of all must receive increasingly greater recognition.... with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God’s intent. For in truth it must still be regretted that fundamental personal rights are still not being universally honored.... Therefore, although rightful differences exist between men, the equal dignity of persons demands that a more humane and just condition of life be brought about. Human institutions, both private and public, must labor to minister to the dignity and purpose of man. At the same time let them put up a stubborn fight against any kind of slavery, whether social or political, and safeguard the basic rights of man under every political system. (*Gaudium et spes*, 29)

Thus understood, the concept of *Imago Dei*, depicting the fundamental, immanent dignity and significance of human beings, crosses the borders of denominations, religions and worldviews. It refers to every person individually, to all people in general, and to humankind *per se*. This universal aspect of the term is stressed by Jürgen Habermas in the text *Dialectics of Secularization*, when he notices that the Kantian notion of the equality of all human beings, can be traced to the biblical concept of the image of God and that, in the “process of translation, the intuition of particular religious group can be lifted out of the religious idiom, so that it can be recognized by all the people.” He writes specifically

one such translation that salvages the substance of the term is the translation of the concept of “man in the image of God” into that of the identical dignity of all men that deserves unconditional respect. This goes beyond the borders of one particular religious fellowship and makes the substance of biblical concepts accessible to a general public. (Habermas 2006, 45)

#### CONCLUSION

Theology in its ecclesiastical-political dimension may have the tendency to be exclusivist in its nature. This exclusivism is often based on the presumption that a particular religion or confession constitutes the faithful depositary of metaphysical truths revealed to human beings through a particular revelation (*Dominus Iesus* IV, 17). Such an exclusivism may result in a separation from the “fallen world,” aggressive evangelism or even hostility towards people of different religions and cultures.

Yet when approaching theology from a more philosophical angle, as a thought system interpreting reality, it is possible to highlight a number of concepts which can break such ecclesiastical exclusivism and lead to a more inclusivist interpretation of the realm. *Imago Dei* can be rendered as such a concept with high inclusivist potential. In its basic sense, it simply indicates that every human being is created in the image or as the image of God. This fundamental truth can serve as a platform for assuming and defending the equal dignity of all people, regardless of their ethnicity, gender or religious affiliation.

The concept of *Imago Dei* is introduced in the Bible in the so-called first creation narrative. Then, in theological thought, it is further developed by many thinkers and theologians. Among them, Gregory of Nyssa points to an ontological, relational and functional dimension of the concept. He indicates the vertical aspect of *Imago Dei*, which refers to the relationship “God—human being,” but also stresses its horizontal perspective, which

translates the theological truth into the acceptance of (and care for) other human beings. Jürgen Moltmann, a contemporary Protestant theologian, develops these ideas further stating that the “relational” aspect of *Imago Dei* underscores the fundamental dignity of every person. He also stresses that human rights properly understood should include democratic relationships between people, cooperation between societies, concern for the environment, and responsibility for future generations. Moltmann’s broad perspective is in line with German philosopher Jürgen Habermas’s belief that the biblical concept of *Imago Dei* can be applied to advocate for equality of all people, regardless of their origin or religious convictions. From this perspective, the concept of *Imago Dei* can serve as an important symbol of religious inclusion and human dignity in the broadest possible sense.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arato, Andrew. 2016. *Post Sovereign Constitution Making: Learning and Legitimacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Athanassiadi, Polymnia. 1993. “Persecution and Response in Late Paganism: The Evidence of Damascius.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 113: 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.2307/632395>.
- Baden, Joel S. 2012. *The Composition of the Pentateuch: Renewing of the Documentary Hypothesis*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Beek, Huibert van, ed. 2006. *A Handbook of Churches and Councils: Profiles of Ecumenical Relationships*. Geneva: World Council of Churches.
- Childs, Brevard. 1984. *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction*. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Clines, David J. A. 1968. “The Image of God in Man.” *Tyndale Bulletin* 19: 56–103.
- Creach, Jerome F. D. 2013. *Violence in Scripture, Interpretation: Resources for Use of the Scripture in the Church*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox.
- Cruz, Gemma T. 2010. *An Intercultural Theology of Migration*. Leiden: Brill.
- Dominus Iesus*. 2000. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Holy See. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20000806\\_dominus-iesus\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html).
- Gager, John G. 1983. *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Garr, Randal W. 2003. *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity and Monotheism*. Leiden: Brill.
- Gaudium et Spes*. 1965. Vatican Council II. The Holy See. [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html).
- Gregorios, Paulos M. 1980. *Cosmic Man, The Divine Presence, The Theology of St. Gregory of Nyssa*. New York: Paragon House.
- Gregory of Nyssa. *Dogmatic Treatises; Select Writings and Letters*. Translated by William Moore and Henry Austin Wilson, in: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (NPNF)*, edited by Philip Schaff. Peabody MA: Hendrickson Pub. Series II. Volume 5. 1996.
- . *Gregorii Nysseni Opera (GNO)*, edited by Werner Jaeger. Leiden 1958.
- . *Patrologiae cursus Completus. Series Graeca Prior (PG)*, edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. Paris. Volume 44–6. 1863.

- Grenz, Stanley J., and Roger E. Olson. 1992. *20th-Century Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Goody, Daniel G. 2008. *A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- . 2009. "Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 70 (3): 642–8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056390907000306>.
- Gulczyński, Mariusz. 2007. *Nauka o polityce*. Warszawa: Druktur.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 2006. *Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*. Translated by Brian McNeil. Edited by Florian Schuller. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- IOM (International Organization for Migration). 2016. "Global Migration Trends Factsheet 2015." International Organization for Migration. <https://gmdac.iom.int/global-migration-trends-factsheet>.
- Kamionkowski, Tamar. n.d. "Created in the Image of God." Bible Odyssey. Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/created-in-the-image-of-god>.
- Kasper, Walter. 2003. "Current Problems in Ecumenical Theology." The Holy See. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/card-kasper-docs/rc\\_pc\\_chrstuni\\_doc\\_20030227\\_ecumenical-theology\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/card-kasper-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20030227_ecumenical-theology_en.html).
- . 2005. "Ecumenical Movement in the 21st century." World Council of Churches. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/jwg-rcc-wcc/the-ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century>.
- Kelly, John N. D. 1978. *Early Christian Doctrines*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Kobia, Samuel. 2005. "Challenges Facing the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century." World Council of Churches. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/foundational-texts/challenges-facing-the-ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century>.
- Komorowski, Marcin. 2013. "Pojęcie teologii w pismach Platona i Arystotelesa." *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Philosophica* 23: 3–26.
- Ladner, Gerhart B. 1993. "The Philosophical Anthropology of Saint Gregory of Nyssa." In *Studies in Early Christianity, A Collection of Scholarly Essays*, edited by Everett Fergusson, David M. Scholer and Paul C. Finney. New York: Routledge.
- Luther, Martin. 1956. "Commentary on the 82nd Psalm." In *Luther's Works*. Translated by Charles M. Jacobs. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann. Volume 13: Selected Psalms II. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House. 39–72.
- Manavhela, Gvashi. 2012. *Theological justification of apartheid in South African churches: Did churches in South Africa justify apartheid?* Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- McCord, James I., and Allen O. Miller, eds. 1977. *A Christian Declaration on Human Rights*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Meredith, Anthony. 1989. "The concept of mind in Gregory of Nyssa and the Neoplatonists." *Studia Patristica* 22: 35–51.
- Michaud, Derek, and Hyung-Kon Kim. 1999. "Jürgen Moltmann." Boston Collaborative Encyclopedia of Western Theology. Accessed 18 May 2020. <http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/moltmann.htm>.
- Middleton, Richard J. 2004. "Created in the Image of a Violent God? The Ethical Problem of the Conquest of Chaos in Biblical Creation Texts." *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 58 (4): 341–55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096430405800403>.
- . 2005. *The Liberating Image: the Imago Dei in Genesis 1*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos.

- Moltmann, Jürgen. 1975. "The Theology of Human Rights and the Theology of Liberation (Interim Report)." *Reformed World* 33 (6): 268–74.
- . 1976. "A Christian Declaration on Human Rights." *Reformed World* 34 (2): 58–72.
- . 1981. *The Trinity and The Kingdom of God*. London: SCM Press.
- . 1985. *God in Creation*. Translated by Magaret Kohl. London: SCM Press LTD.
- Padilla, Ellaine. 2014. *Theology of Migration in the Abrahamic Religions*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Peek, Charles W., George D. Lowe, and L. Susan Williams. 1991. "Gender and God's Word: Another Look at Religious Fundamentalism and Sexism." *Social Forces* 69 (4): 1205–21. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/69.4.1205>.
- Peterson, Ryan S. 2016. *The Imago Dei as Human Identity*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Pietras, Henryk. 2000. *Początki teologii Kościoła*. Kraków: WAM.
- Przyszychowska, Marta. 2006. "Wstęp." In *O stworzeniu człowieka [De opificio hominis]*. Kraków: WAM. 5–39.
- Robinson, Dominic. 2011. *Understanding the Imago Dei. The Thought of Barth, von Balthasar and Moltmann*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Royal, Robert. 2006. *Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century: A Comprehensive World History*. New York: Crossroad.
- Sharp, Andrew M. 2012. *Orthodox Christians and Islam in the Postmodern Age*. Leiden: Brill.
- Smith, Jane I. 2007. *Muslims, Christians and the Challenge of Interfaith Dialogue*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Solomon, Norman, Richard Harries, and Timothy Winter, eds. 2005. *Abraham's Children, Jews, Christian and Muslims in Conversation*. London: T. & T. Clark.
- Steigmann-Gall, Richard. 2003. *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919–1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sullivan, Francis A. 2002. *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
- Szczerba, Wojciech. 2008. *A Bóg będzie wszystkim we wszystkim. Apokatastaza Grzegorza z Nyssy. Tło, źródła, kształt koncepcji*. Kraków: WAM.
- . 2011. "Apokatastaza a teologia. Teologiczny wymiar koncepcji wiecznego powrotu w greckiej tradycji filozoficznej." *Theologica Wratislaviensia* 6: 17–32. <http://theologica.ewst.pl/uploads/2012/12/Szczerba-Wojciech.Apokatastaza-a-teologia.pdf>.
- Torbett, David. 2006. *Theology and Slavery: Charles Hodge and Horace Bushnell*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press.
- UNHCR. 2018. "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017." United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Accessed 18 May 2020. <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2017/>.
- . 2019. "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018." United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Accessed 18 May 2020. <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2018/>.
- Wilson, Stephen M. 2017. "Blood Vengeance and the *Imago Dei* in the Flood Narrative (Genesis 9:6)." *Interpretation: Journal of Bible and Theology* 71 (3): 263–73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020964317698762>.
- Zachhuber, Johannes. 2000. *Human nature in Gregory of Nyssa, Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*. Leiden: Brill.