

OVIDIUS UNIVERSITY FROM CONSTANTA
DOCTORAL SCHOOL

SUMMARY OF THE PHD THESIS

*THE BODY IN THEOLOGY OF
SAINT PAUL: ANTHROPOLOGICAL
REDEFINITION OF HUMAN IN
THE HISTORICAL HORIZON*

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CONSTANTA
2017

This doctoral thesis revolves around the concept of "body", which in the New Testament biblical language is expressed in two dominant terms: *sark* and *soma*.

As in Hellenic Judaism, the several New Testament authors vary in their approach to the flesh. The division can also be presented statistically. 91 of the 147 instances of *sark* are found in Pauline writings, especially in Romans and Galatians. The adjectives *sarkikos* (7 times) and *sarkinos* (6 times) are also found in Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians, other than an exception in Hebrews and 1 Peter. Compared to non-Pauline writings, these are few. In John the noun is found 13 times (in Acts and 1 Peter 7 times, and sometimes sporadic). *Kreas* is found in the New Testament twice at the St. Apostle Paul, with the meaning of meat as food.

St. Apostle Paul uses *sark* so often, that only the most essential passages for his understanding will be discussed.

(a) As mere flesh (of humans, animals, birds, fish), *sark* is found only in 1 Corinthians 15: 39. Occasionally it denotes the human body (as in 2 Corinthians 12:7, a thorn in the flesh probably refers to the disease; Galatians 4:13, the infirmity of the flesh, probably the diseases of old age; Galatians 4:14, my flesh means the sick body of St. Apostle Paul). But it can also refer to man in general. According to 2 Corinthians 7:5, "our flesh" (= us) did not reassure because there were struggles outside and fear inside (regarding the stability of the church). In marriage, the flesh is worried (1 Corinthians 7:28), for now it is the last time and the persecution threatens (1 Corinthians 7:29). When St. Apostle Paul says that before he began to preach the gospel, he did not join the flesh and blood (Galatians 1:16), he wants to say he did not join the people. If the flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50), it means that, after the anthropology of the Old Testament (Proverbs 5:11), to death, the whole man must disappear and a new *soma* come to life (body).

(b) *Sark* denotes the relationships that are of only temporary importance. Thus, according to the flesh, Jesus is the son of David (Romans 1:3), but from His resurrection, His divine filiation manifests according to the spirit of holiness (Romans 1:4). "Israel by the flesh" (1 Corinthians 10:18) is the whole people originating from the patriarch (Romans 4:1, 11:14). From him descended the brethren of St. Apostle Paul, his relatives by flesh (Romans

9:3, cf. "close to the people", se'er beşaro, relationship of body, Leviticus 18:6). The Messiah comes from him (Romans 9:5, 8). Sarx means the common humanity at Philemon 16, when St. Apostle Paul says that the slave Onesimus is Philemon's brother "both in the flesh and in the Lord." But St. Apostle Paul uses "the whole body" for "mankind" only in the fundamental expression of his theology, "The whole body cannot (namely no body can) praise God" (Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16, 1 Corinthians 1:29).

(c) Sarx is used not only to indicate physical relativity; can also be used on a general level, as a reference to everything that is human. Thus, "the wise after the flesh" are the wise men according to the standards of men (1 Corinthians 1:16; 2:6, "the wisdom of this time"). The weapons that St. Apostle Paul uses in the campaign are no longer the inventions of men, but are actually made by God (2 Corinthians 10:4). In contrast, there are those who want to be pleased with the Church by human means (Galatians 6:12), so that by human means they may enjoy glory through the circumcision of a Christian church (v.13). But the circumcised, like the uncircumcised, are under the condemnation that they do not enjoy the glory of God. St. Apostle Paul may have every reason to be glorified in the fall, in circumcision, in his zeal for the law. But that meant trusting in a human way that does not include God (Philemon 3:3). For with God only the righteousness of Christ, received through faith, can have any (positive) consequence (vv. 8-11).

(d) This leads to the use of the kata sarka expression, by the body. Even though St. Apostle Paul lived as a man "in the flesh", he didn't continue to fight in the light of human considerations ("by flesh" 2 Corinthians 10: 2, 1:17). This principle also applies to "religious" matters. To glorify in the vision is equally reckless to glorify in circumcision (2 Corinthians 11:18), and even Jesus Christ Himself must be seen with new eyes, rather than simply in accordance with the old pre-Christian expectations and values, "even though we once referred to Christ from a human point of view (kata sarka), we are no longer referring to him as such" (2 Corinthians 5:16). Similarly, the Christian is no longer in the grip of self-centeredness, the standards that justify themselves, of the secular man. He goes "not after the body (kata sarka), but according to the Spirit (kata pneuma)" (Romans 8:4). Thus, the new life in the Spirit is parallel to the abandonment, in principle, of human efforts of own justification.

(e) The body, that is, the existence of the man remote from God, has therefore a call opposite to God. Not only does it lead to sin, it also becomes connected with it. Thus, St. Apostle Paul can draw a catalog of vices, which he characterizes as "works of the flesh" or

"desires of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16, 19; Romans 13:14). Moreover, in Galatians 5:17 he is able to say, "For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want." This is not the flesh of the anti-epicurean polemic, but the man himself, until he gives himself his own goals in opposition to God. Therefore, the law is weak in the flesh, because it can be used to serve purposes contrary to God (Romans 8:3). That is why God sent His Son in the vision of a sin-shaped human being who, in this form, closest to God of all men, could bring sin (self-justification before God on the basis of human achievements) to be Judged, so that after His death, only the realization of God could remain. The believer is thus already dead in respect for the ambitions and desires that shape life away from God. In this sense, he is no longer in the flesh (Romans 8:8). Moreover, he now lives after the life of God; "For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature" (Romans 7:18). For man really wants the realization of what is good, that is, of the real life. But, in fact, he serves the evil that he does not want, more precisely death, because he does not fall into the care of God, but he wants him to take care of himself. "So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin" (Romans 7:25b). Although St. Apostle Paul adopts here the typical Greek way of speaking, the understanding of man is totally different. Even *nous*, the rational power of mental understanding, is unable to find what is good, since the true meaning of life remains hidden from sin.

(f) On the other hand, St. Apostle Paul can say that the believer does not live his life in the flesh (Romans 7:5, 8:8; Galatians 5:24). But, on the other hand, as a believer, St. Apostle Paul still lives in the flesh (2 Corinthians 10:3; Galatians 2:20; Philemon 1:22-24). The contradiction is resolved in Philemon 1:22-24. To be in the flesh is for him something that has been defeated, that for him is all the same if he lives or dies. Life is to live in and for Christ, not for our own interests. Even death, seen as a departure and living with Christ, is better. But for the sake of the future of the kingdom of God, it is more important for him to remain in the flesh.

The combination from Colossians of *sarkos* seems to have a considerable Hellenistic influence. *Sarx* is here the material from which the body (*soma*) is composed (1:22, 2:11). In the Qumran texts, the equivalent of the Hebrew phrase *gewiyyat besaro* means "the physical body" (1Qp Habakkuk 9:2). For "the non-circumcision of the flesh" in 2:13 means the time before the body of the flesh was baptized (2:11). *Sarx* is not

corporeality but understanding of one's own body. Its meaning is shown in 2:18. The "mind of his body" or "sensual mind" (RSV), Gk. *nous tes sarkos*, is concerned with the angelic powers which, as a man of the *sarkos*, seems to be subjected. But the believer keeps on the head (2:18), in which the fullness of deity lives in the flesh (2:9). Thus, living in the flesh, he is not the subject of these powers, but in his own body, he already shares life in Christ (1:24).

Ephesians follows a similar thought. In his desire, the body is open to the powers and influences of the world, which are not flesh and blood (2:2, 6:12). In 2:11 *sarkos* appears temporary. The wall of distinction that existed between circumcision in the flesh and non-circumcision in the flesh, Jesus torn it down by His death in the flesh, destroying the law of commandments and ordinances.

The flesh in the passage from 1 Timothy 3:16, which seems to be a form of early faith, refers to the life of man, "Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory".

As for *soma*, some edifying explanations are also required.

(a) For St. Apostle Paul, *soma* has a special meaning, that of a person. Human existence - even in the sphere of *pneuma* (spirit) - is a fleshly, somatic one. It is non-Pauline to think of the body as just a figure or form. Passages like those from Romans 6:12 ("Do not let sin rule over your mortal bodies, and make you submit to your passions") and Romans 12:1 ("offer your bodies as a living sacrifice") clearly shows that *soma* is not only an outward form but the whole person. There is a series of passages at St. Apostle Paul, in which *soma* is generally understood as physical body (e.g. 1 Corinthians 5:3, 7:34). Only in one passage (1 Thessalonians 5:23) St. Apostle Paul follows the common language (liturgical?) and speaks of the man in a tripartite way, "Whether the spirit [the *pneuma*] and the soul [psyche] and the body [your *soma*] to be faithlessly guarded by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 12:4 and 1 Corinthians 12, 12-26 take on the image of the body's relationship with its limbs. The signs of Jesus (*ta stigmata tou Iesou*) that St. Apostle Paul bears in his body are understood to be the scars of the wounds that followed the ministry of Jesus (Galatians 6:17, 2 Corinthians 12:24 and maybe Galatians 2:20).

In 1 Corinthians 9:27 St. Apostle Paul writes, "But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified." Here the idea seems to be similar to what is said elsewhere about the members. In the same

Epistle, St. Apostle Paul may say, "If I give all that I have, and my body to be burnt, but not having love, nothing is of use to me." The phrase "to be burnt" is more appropriate than "to boast". The martyrdom of fire was not known before Nero, though a language used in the martyrs of Antioch (2 Maccabees, 7:37, 4 Maccabees, 18:3, Daniel 3:6). In Judaism, death by burning was reserved for those who committed adultery with a woman and her daughter, as well as priests who committed adultery (Sanhedrin 9:1). St. Apostle Paul appears to have the most severe punishment of self-sacrifice as worthless, apart from love.

The body is mentioned in relation to sex in Romans 4:19 (The body of Abraham was "as dead") and 1 Corinthians 7:4 (wife and husband master one on each other's body). But the warnings of infidelity (Romans 1:24, 1 Corinthians 6:13-20) show that a wider sense than a physical body is taken into account. The bodily deeds affect not only the individual act of sin, but the whole person, to the depths of it. This is also underlined by the questions of St. Apostle Paul, "Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ? ... Do not you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit that you have from God? ... So Glorify God in your body "(1 Corinthians 6:15, 19).

(b) The body is not something external to man who, as if being added to his essential ego, or to the soul. "Man has no soma; He is soma". Soma denotes man as a whole, man as a person. Soma can be understood as a man as the object of attention and as a subject of attention. He has a relationship with himself. This is shown, for example, in 1 Corinthians 9:27 where St. Apostle Paul speaks of the treatment of his body with its hardness and its obedience. This does not simply mean treating the body with hardness, but also the self itself. Similarly, 1 Corinthians 13:3 shows how one can sacrifice himself. There is the possibility of self-sacrifice in the service of God by offering his body as "a living sacrifice, holy and received by God" (Romans 12:1).

Only in one place is the soma mentioned as the subject of the actions of St. Apostle Paul. "For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live" (Romans 8:13). The deeds of the body (which in this context are identified with living in harmony with the body, Romans 8:12) suggest the action of the body. Body here is the equivalent of self, the human "I" is full of sin. The same idea arises from the relationship of the body with lust. The Christian should not be left with the lusts of the body (Romans 6:12) that can be dominated by the power of sin. Body lusts and desires are synonymous (Galatians 5:16, 24).

The understanding of St. Apostle Paul of soma is "I", as "person", distinct from sarx (flesh), as illustrated in Romans 7:14 "but I am unspiritual (sarkos), sold as a slave to sin" (verse 14). The body is open to the two possibilities, the desire and the obedience. In this sense, there is no difference between the "body of sin" (Romans 6:6) and "sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3). When St. Apostle Paul calls out, "Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death" (Romans 7:24), he thinks of the shattered character of human existence as he finds expression in the flesh. He sees in existence the power of sin, of the flesh and of the soul, which can mean either destruction or life. Man's bodily existence does not in itself mean anything bad or good. Rather, the body is a sure sphere of the existence of man's relationship with God.

(c) In this light, it is understandable why St. Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 highlights the resurrection of the body against the Corinthians. The understanding of St. Apostle Paul of the resurrection is influenced by Jewish anthropology. Human life can only be thought through the body. Thus dividing man into soul and body along the line of thought of Greek anthropology is thus excluded (2 Corinthians 5:1-10). These are the two possibilities before man. The first is the existence to earth in space-temporal terms, although, naturally, a spiritual body cannot be thought in terms of matter. The purpose of St. Apostle Paul is to express the essential nature of man. This is characterized by existence in the body, using, again, the terminology of space and time. The body in the sense of "me", "the person", will be dead by the creative act of God. "And God gives him a flesh as he wanted, and to every seed a flesh of it... So is the resurrection of the dead, It is sown (flesh) in corruption, rises in unrighteousness... It resembles natural body and rises a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:38, 42, 44). The continuity of the earthly and the celestial body is not based on transformation. If that were the case, Paul would have emphasized the temporal aspect of his concept of "spiritual body" (verse 44). The idea would then be a body formed of a substance called "pneuma". But St. Apostle Paul is not concerned with the description of the spiritual substance from which the soma is constituted. He is interested in the fact that God determines the soma through the Spirit as a power of God (verse 50). Thus, after the resurrection, this soma is no longer the subject of sin and death. It is no longer divided into it. This results from the understanding of destiny, hope and love, concepts that St. Apostle Paul develops in 1 Corinthians 13:13. The earthly existence of man is characterized by these paradoxical contradictions (1 Corinthians 13:13). The only thing that is not contradictory or fragmentary in this life is the love that is perfect now and in the life that will come to life.

With these concepts St. Apostle Paul describes the continuity between the earthly and the heavenly bodies. This shows the personality of man as not something to be discarded. He does not find himself attached to him. It remains a gift.

(d) About this, soma has a specific meaning to St. Paul the Apostle, where it no longer refers to the individual, but to a group. It speaks of soma Christou, the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27, Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:12). St. Apostle Paul takes over the image of the body to express the essential character of the Christian Church. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-30, the exhibition thus takes over the Greek idea of the body (verse 14-26), relying on the necessity of various limb functions for the unity of the body. But the essential character is not based on this (Greek) image. It is based on Christ Himself. "For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, many being, are a flesh, so also Christ. For we all have been baptized in one Spirit to be one flesh" (1 Corinthians 12:12).

The constitutive act of baptism does not mean that the body of Christ is a problem for the community that constitutes itself and grows through a ritual of initiation. Rather, the description of the church as the body of Christ means that Christ constitutes the existence of the individual as part of the body. The reward of the Spirit is related to baptism (1 Corinthians 12:13). The church has an eschatological character. It exists through the promise of God in Christ for the future.

The Last Supper is based on the concept of the body as a community (Matthew 14: 22-25, Matthew 26: 26-29, Luke 22:19, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23 -26). St. Apostle Paul refers desperately to pagan practices, referring to sin, but the death of Christ is the one that gives the Last Supper the most important meaning. His death is the decisive savior act "for you" (1 Corinthians 11:24) and is thus proclaimed by the Last Supper (1 Corinthians 11:26). In the center are not the elements or substance of bread and wine, but the action of the body of Christ knowing that it depends on His blessing and is the subject of His Lord. Being guilty of the body and blood of the Savior (verse 27) means an act of one brother against another. Offering the body of Christ to death is the decisive accomplishment of God's promise of man's day. It is the authentic sign of the church that understands itself as the body of Christ. The proclamation of the body of Christ is given to us in death, and the image of the body of Christ as the Church is given to us as an irreversible consequence.

(e) Colossians and Ephesians develop the image of the body of Christ that is distinct from that of the other Pauline epistles. The understanding of the Colossians of the

body of Christ is presented in the anthem of Colossians 1:15-20. The fragment shows the clues of an adaptation. In my opinion, the "church" (verse 18a) is an interpretative addition to the author in an already existing hymn. In the original form of the hymn, the body of Christ was the world. There are affinities with the Gnostic motives that later meet in Gnostic systems that present the body of the original man as an expression of the world. The cosmic dimension of the saving act of Christ is particularly clear. The world, as the cosmos, is understood as the body of Christ. If "church" is understood or not as a textual addition to an already existing hymn, the passage clearly refers to the person of Christ and his work as having cosmic valences. "For in Him He delighted (God) to dwell upon all the fullness. And through the One with Himself to reconcile them, whether on the earth or in the heavens, making peace through Him through the blood of His cross." [Colossians 1:19]. But this is not unique. Check further, Ephesians 1:22: "And He subdued them under His feet, and above all, He gave Him the head of the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who filled all things in all." The Cosmic Significance of Christ is also Expressed in Romans 11:36, which immediately preceded the idea of being "a body in Christ" [12:5] and 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, where it speaks of Christ as the redeemer of the Father's kingdom, where God can be everything in everything.

If men were threatened by cosmic forces, redemption was here offered to them, which was preserved even in front of that power. "The whole realm of existence is linked to him as mediator of the Kingdom of God." "In contrast to an enthusiastic emotional understanding of the body of Christ that refers to the whole universe, already physically reconciled in Christ, the Pauline's point of view is that the body of Christ is a call to obedience and ministry before the Lord." The idea that Christ is the head of the world is rightly maintained in this connection by reference to the church in verse 18. His body is the Church, the one in which this obedience is proclaimed for its realization in the world. If the symbolic ideas here are correctly interpreted, it is clear that the world and the church are not two fixed entities set in a permanent opposition. The Church signifies the recognition and realization of the true possibilities in the world, under the Kingdom of Christ, the freedom of faith and love in the world.

In contrast to the Epistle to the Colossians, the concept of the body as the church of Christ is clear to the Ephesians from the beginning. Christ is the head (kephale) of the body of the church (4:15). Neither the Greek concept nor the general body as a body fit exactly here. The passage speaks of the believers who grow "in every way in him, who is the

head, in Christ; from Him, the entire well-formed body, through all the ties that give it strength, grows according to the work measured to each of the members, and is built in love" (4:15). These ideas of the body are well impregnated in the motives that will be found later in the Gnostic writings. It is clear that the Ephesians attacks here Gnostic ideas, inside and outside the church. "Children" (nepioi) are those who are hesitant and not guided, who are worn by any adherence to doctrine (verse 14). They were probably Gnostics who went beyond knowledge, but they are not accurately described.

The image of the body of the Church is taken into consideration, not to protect it, but to provide a defining understanding of the church for the situation after St. Apostle Paul. The teaching of St. Apostle Paul on unity in multiplicity in 1 Corinthians 12 is now brought forward, emphasizing the idea of the head. For leadership involves both reign and promise. The Church is based and supported by Christ. In order to keep it from mistaken teachings and schisms, it is not presented in an institutional way, but in view of the fact that the body and the head are mutually bound in love and truth. "Two possibilities stand opposite one another, existence in the flesh, which is in unity and love, and isolated existence, on the other... There is unity in the church, in speaking and doing what is commanded - the fractionation of love in the sphere truth. And there is also the arbitrary assertion of subjective opinions in all their deceptive attraction. "Thus, the church has its place in the world. It does not stand against it, it is placed in this. "The body of Christ is exactly the Church in which Christ moves into the world. The teaching of the Gospel of the Church is the answer to cosmic anxiety".

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