

# LOGOS` LIFE FROM PLATO TO THE TEACHINGS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

**Mihai D. Vasile, Ph.D**

*Institute of Philosophy and Psychology „C.R. Motru”, Bucharest*

**mdvasile@yahoo.com**

**Abstract:** *Logos`doctrine as a line of force crosses the entire ancient Greek philosophy and metaphysics as much as early Christianity. The tense problem is related to the life doctrine of Logos. Thus, for Plato, the model (Logos) is also creative Demiurge regarding being, goodness, rationality, and in terms of life, Logos is a generic form and, as such, it is doubtful that Plato's Logos is life itself. In terms of basic Christian doctrine, it is clear that Logos is life. The question is to what extent Christian Logos is comparable to the Platonic Logos.*

**Keywords:** *Demiourgos, Plato's Logos, creation, Christ-Word, God, John'Gospel Logos.*

In Plato`s, Logos was sometimes a faculty or power (du/namij), by which Demiurge designed and ordered the Creation, sometimes, a matter of intellect (nou=j) function in the divine ideas pleroma and model for the sensitive world.

Christian teaching about Logos is contained within the first 17 verses of the *Gospel of John*, which, in a simple and non-technical language, browse and decide all philosophical controversies matters, at the fullness of time, such as eternal pre-existence, the personality and deity of Logos in the divine relations within The Holy Trinity, before Creation. Secondly, the *Gospel of John* establishes the divine Logos relations with Creation and man, before the Incarnation, Logos being called universal „life”, „true light”, and „light of men” in a continuous process of bringing the world into being. Thirdly, the same divine being, personal and eternal, is described as „being made flesh”, a condition in which He revealed Himself as God. In this lineage, the derived nature of His being and His divinity is suggested by the fact that He is the highest form of acquisition of the divine nature as Son of His Father, which is also acquired being and equal in divinity with His origin.

Anywhere *the Gospel of John* reached, a testimony appeared and removed any objections to His perfect deity, and any claim on the separate nature of Logos or on His created being in relationship with His Father, but at the same time, the Symbol of faith clearly highlighted the individual personality of Logos. The language used to express the eternal personal distinction between Logos and Father, though clearly and precisely at that time, was the basis for the subsequent misunderstandings on the relationship between Father and Son as Logos. At the issue date of *the Gospel of John*, the Christian doctrine of Logos was not specified, even for Christian apologists and its application to the person of Christ was hesitant. But beyond issues, accents, limitations or misunderstandings, present in the writings of early Church Fathers, there were been separated some key features of Christian doctrine about Logos.

In the almost all comments from the first Christian centuries, the historical person of Jesus Christ was identified with the Logos. The reasoning was as follows: Jesus was the Logos or, at least, the Logos was Jesus. But given that dignity, Logos suggested easily - under the influence of Platonism - the idea of reason governed the universe, and because the person of Christ was treated as a perfect expression of the Logos, there was danger of too close or even exclusively link between Jesus and the universe assimilation

within the meaning of Christ's divine being as cosmic power. Of course it would be wrong to blame the Writers of the primary period - or at least apologists - making authentic *Gospel of Christ* in natural theology as Christian writers of the first centuries tried to find a common language with that of the Greeks and Romans whose hostility intended to disarm, so they naturally expressed the Logos doctrine in the form in which it can be most easily received and understood. The apologists have pointed out that the position of Christ is the center of all beings, as confirming pre-Christian doctrines, and, in particular, Platonism.

By the systematic theology of Alexandria, many Church Fathers and writers have written about the identity of Jesus Christ and the divine Logos. Thus, St. Ignatius Teoforul, in his *epistles* to Magnesians, Romans and Ephesians, calls him, although incidentally, Christ Logos and unique expression of God, "*Father mouth that speaks the truth*"<sup>1</sup>. *Diognet Epistle* declares Logos – no serve, no angel, no prince, but - master and creator of the universe, sent by the Almighty, through mercy and compassion, to save the world<sup>2</sup>. St. Justin Martyr and Philosopher is the first one, in *Dialogue with the Jew Tryphon*, who made a summary of the Logos names: Praise the Lord, the Son, Wisdom, Messenger, God, Lord, Word<sup>3</sup>. St. Justin, one can say that, started to build the cosmological aspect of the Logos doctrine, although ethical interest in terms of soteriological Christian teaching is equally strong. Theophilus of Antioch, in his Books to Autolic, is the first to use the term „triad” in the sense of „Trinity” when addressing to God as "*forseen Trinity*", which includes but on *God, His Word and His Wisdom*<sup>4</sup>. In Theophilus is found also set out firstly the idea of continuous birth of Logos from Father, through *kønwsiv* and continuous union of Father with Logos as Father's work in the world and among people, because the world cannot include Father, but Logos can be involved in the world as „image” - *pro/swpon* is the term used by Theophilus – of Father. Saint Irenaeus of Lugdunum is considered by Christian historiography one of the most remarkable early Church Fathers, because, among other things, his severe fight against weather heresies in order to defend the purity of the truth of faith. Gnostic heresies led him to emphasize the idea of eternal coexistence of Logos with Father in the person of Lord<sup>5</sup>, to combat the notion that the Logos was „done”, and to distinguish between making and generation (birth), rejecting any contingent doctrine to the fallout theory as an expression of the relationship between Logos and Father. Saint Irenaeus accepted the idea of the two generations (births), namely the birth from eternity through the godness is both as the Father and as the Son, and the birth in time by which the Son became man, and Logos is embodying and is thriving in the world, using the terms "Son" and "Logos" as synonyms. He conceived the Logos as the absolute tool of the divine revelations for all time, so that in them not only God Himself, but Logos appears. Because of his righteous belief, St. Irenaeus was far away from a type of subordination vision - quite normal at the time - but also because understanding the limitations of human consciousness in exploring the profound nature of relations between Father and Son, which is a superbeing mystery. For Saint Irenaeus, Father is God revealing Himself, and Son is God revealed, the same person with the Logos and Jesus Christ who is the Logos became human person, so that the whole human race is again united with God and can attain the new divine incorruptibility: "*Just to the extent that God does not need anything* - Saint

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<sup>1</sup> St. Ignatius, *To Romans*, VIII.

<sup>2</sup> *Diognet Epistle*, VII. 1.

<sup>3</sup> St. Justin Martyr and Philosopher, *Dialogue with the Jew Tryphon*, LXI.

<sup>4</sup> Theophilus of Antioch, *The second Book to Autolic*, XV.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Brune, (1992), *Pour que l'homme devienne Dieu*, 3e éd., St-Jean-de-Braye (France), Édition Dangles, p. 402; p. 477–480.

Irenaeus says - *man needs communion with God, so the glory of man is to preserve and continue the service of God*<sup>6</sup>.

In Clement of Alexandria work, features of the Logos Christian doctrine appear clearly, in the details of the learning love, sympathy for intellectual activities, enthusiasm for knowledge, all these feelings regarded as the only path to the true interpretation of the *Gospel*. No less sincere is recognizing the need for faith and love in search of truth, and desire to bring all humanity to hope in Christ, and to apply in any field of thought and action principles embodied in the life and teachings of Christ.

Clement has transformed the idea of Logos - identified with Christ – in the highest religious principle to explain the state of the world and to expose the Christian teaching, trying to build a theological system on the idea of Logos as the beginning and foundation<sup>7</sup>. For Clement, the doctrine of Logos is concrete and productive: Logos is the creator of the universe and God revealed in the *Old Testament* Law, in the Greek philosopher and, ultimately, in the fullness of time, through His incarnation, *"that no sun can not look on the true God! It may do so only at saving Word, which is the Sun of the soul, but He, when rises in the deep mind, enlightens the eyes of the soul ... Just think and Plato, when speaking of God covered with words like this: "All are around the emperor of the universe, He is the cause of all good" ... I know, Plato, your teachers, although you want to hide! Geometry you learned from the Egyptians, astronomy from Babilonians, but the laws, those that are true, and worship to God, to the Jews you owe*<sup>8</sup>.

Logos forms, together with Father and the Holy Spirit, the divine Trinity and through Logos man can know God, because Father can not be expressed in words: *"If the principle of anything is hard to find, the harder it is to show first and the old principle, which is cause to birth and continued existence of all things. How could speak of One Who is neither kind nor difference, nor species, no individual, no number, no accident, nor anything subject under accident? You can not call in any way as "all", because "everything" is ruled in order size, and God is the Father of all. You should not speak of parts of God, that one is indivisible, so is the infinite, not that you can not browse, but in that it is dimensionless and has no end, and therefore is not form and no name. Give we God a name, then name it is not proper, or call it One, or Good, or lying, or very existence, or God, or Creator, or Lord, not his name them as name of God, but because of where we find embarrassment, use beautiful names for God, for our minds to rest on them and not wander about other appointments. Each of these names, taken separately, do not reveal God's being, but all of them show the power of the Almighty; that names we give to God are, or words to show us His attributes, or words that show relationships between them; but none of them tell us what God is. But we can not acquire through apodeictic science something about God, this science is based on previous knowledge, the knowledge that we are better known. The Unborn but before there is nothing! It remains, therefore, that only by divine grace and only by Word born of Him we know The Unknown*<sup>9</sup>.

Clement states and refined Platonic doctrine of Logos in the sense that Logos, as divine reason is, essentially, the world teacher and legislator of mankind, but as the embodiment in the person of Jesus Christ, the Logos is also the savior of the human race and the founder a new life that begins with faith, through knowledge and contemplation and lead, through love and compassion, to immortality and deification. Christ, the

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<sup>6</sup> Saint Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, IV, 25, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Eugène de Faye, (1898), *Clément d'Alexandrie. Étude sur les rapports du Christianisme et de la Philosophie grecque au IIe siècle*, Paris, Ernest Leroux, Éditeur, p. 240 sq.

<sup>8</sup> Clemens o Alexandreus, *Protreptikos*, VI, 68. 4. – 70. 1

<sup>9</sup> Clemens o Alexandreus, *Stromata*, V, XII, 81. 4 – 82. 4.

Incarnate Logos, is God and man, and only through him people can rise to divine life. Therefore it is said of Christ that He is the sun of justice: "*Light, cleaner than sunlight, we shone from heaven to us those who were buried in darkness and locked in the shadow of death. Light that is eternal light and all things involved in living light live. These will say the words: "new make". "Sun of justice" crosses equally the whole mankind, imitating his Father, Who, "rises His sun over all men" and wet with truth dew the whole mankind, with the true faith dew. The sun, by His crucifixion, had turned death into life. He proclaimed the good, waked up the people to work the good and reminds them true life, giving us the legacy the really great, divine, that nobody can take from us. Through His heavenly teaching He deifies man "laws giving in the people's hearts and write them in their hearts"*"<sup>10</sup>.

Christian teaching is - after Clement - the revealed Word of God about creation, training and salvation of humankind through the incarnate Logos, whose work culminates in the knowledge (*gnosis*), perfectly understood by Clement as true knowledge of God, that can be gained only through the reason disciplined by love and justice, in order to reach rational theology after going through alegorism<sup>11</sup>. The doctrine of Logos becomes the center and source of all of Clement's theological system.

Logos never existed outside the Father but is from eternity with Father, and, as Son, the Logos is the beginning of the founder, cause or principle of all things that are as they are, He Himself being without beginning. He is the creator of the world, the source of light and life, in a sense that he is beginning of the created beings series, but due to his divine being, in a specifically different way from each other. He is the interpreter of the Father attributes, the personal expression of truth, educator of the human race - of the Greeks through philosophy, of the Jews by law, and, after the Incarnation in Christ, of all those who by faith receive His teaching, towards knowledge, and from knowledge to love, and from love to the "inheritance of the kingdom of Father".

Clement supported without hesitation the distinction between Father and Logos, such that the real problem to be solved in connection with Clement's doctrine about Logos, is to ascertain whether Clement distinguish between Logos as primary existent, and Logos as the Son of the Father, thinking as two persons, namely, the Logos Itself, immutable and unalterable in God (the immanent Logos), on the one hand, and on the other hand, the emanation of the Logos-Son of God from the immanent reason (Logos justified through creative action). Eusebius, in his *Church History*, says that about Clement is said to be writing *Hypotyposeis*, where the Logos-Son is called with the same name as the Logos of the Father, but He does not incarnate nor the Logos of the Father, but a certain power of God, as such a flow from the Logos himself who became thought and continuously deviates on the people's hearts. This is the only place where Clement made such a distinction, and its real significance is obscure, and, outside his text - lost, in fact - it is impossible to use in support of any opinion contrary to the whole conception of Clement`s great trilogy about Logos - one and the same from beginning to the end of the things - that directs people to the faith, teaching them, and, ultimately, bringing the perfect knowledge of God. Moreover, in *Stromata* (V, 1. 1-5.), Clement objects in using the term *Logos Proforikos* (Lo/goj proforiko/j) to denote the Son, on the grounds that devalues the dignity of the Son, and not heeding the distinction between *Logos Endiathetos* (Lo/goj e)ndia/qetoj), as the highest Logos, and *Logos Proforikos* (Lo/goj proforiko/j), as the Logos below, as there was a tendency in some Christian philosophers more rudimentary - as Theophilus of Antioch and Tertullian - (or influenced by Plato), to distinguish between the unspoken Logos and the spoken Logos, in order to identify the

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<sup>10</sup> Clemens o Alexandreus, *Protreptikos*, XI, 114. 1.-4.

<sup>11</sup> Ch. Bigg, (1913), *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, p. 115-119.

Son as the divine Reason, with the Logos immanent in the mind of the Father, and with the hypostasis of the Son as creation instrument<sup>12</sup>. As with other similar controversial theology places of Clement, the only type of criticism is a judicious interpretation of the less known about the precise formulated statements, so that questionable expressions must be reported to the entire work of the author.

General concept of Clement was clearly expressed in the doctrine of Logos as the eternal Son equal, but distinct from Father, manifested throughout human history and, ultimately, to incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. Clement says clearly in the decisive words of the *Protreptikos`* prologue: *"because the Word was from the beginning, so the Word was and is divine beginning of all existences; and that for now He received name, the name of Christ - as enshrined in the old name, name worthy of power - so I called Him new Song. The Word, Christ, is the cause of our existence in olden times - that He was in God - and our existing good - now that He was shown between people - the Word itself, which is one and only other - and God and man - because all good things. Learning from Him to lead a good existence, we are led to eternal life"*<sup>13</sup>.

Clement writes uplifting words of glory at Christ and His work in full training people eternal life in a completely orthodox dogmatic note<sup>14</sup>. Alexandrus put words calling to salvation in Jesus's mouth, stating for the first time in a simplified form, the dictum of the Church Fathers long career in theology, namely that God became man so that man to deify: *"Therefore you will be said by Lord Himself, "Who, being face of God, not considered to be an abduction to be just with God but emptied Himself was" merciful God, desiring long to save the man. Word Himself prompts you very clearly now, making you redder of your disbelief, yes, I say, the Word of God became man, so you're the man, that man can reach God"*<sup>15</sup>.

There are numerous references in the text of Clement, concerning the fact that the Son is working "by the will" and "in accordance with the will of Father, in order to preserve the Father`s authority, not to limit the power of the Son. Such statements do not imply any idea of inferiority or subordination of the Son to the Father, but are intended to express the overall harmony of the Father and the Son and to exclude Gnostic dualism, and any sentence able to disturb the unity between the divine beings, who do not allowed temporal sequence or the Son's procession from any other cause than the very essence of divinity<sup>16</sup>.

To argue the identity of the Father and the Son, Clement used a Platonic terminology, which takes *pleroma* ideas as the medium. Thus, in one passage, Clement says: *"Mind (nou=j) is home ideas and mind (nou=j) is God"*<sup>17</sup>, adding that only Christ looks directly into the world of ideas to fulfil God's will, although *"it is difficult to achieve God's place, which Plato called the place of ideas ... a place that embraces all and the universe ... to grasp with your mind (vo×ς) itself the good in itself and thus achieve its aim of thinking"*<sup>18</sup>.

In another passage, referring to the Christian Logos, Clement summarizes the whole Christian doctrine, as the catechesis model of St. Peter's Pentecost and the relationship of Christianity with Platonism and Judaism when practicing: *"Word of God said: "I am truth", so the Word of God to be seen with the mind. "For who be called true philosophers? For those, I say, who like to contemplate the truth!"*. In the *Phaidros*

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<sup>12</sup> Ch. Bigg, (1913), *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, p. 90.

<sup>13</sup> Clemens o Alexandrus, *Protreptikos*, I, 6.5. – 7.1.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, 7.3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, 8.4.

<sup>16</sup> Ch. Stead, (1994), *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity*, Cambridge, At the University Press, p. 189.

<sup>17</sup> Clemens o Alexandrus, *Stromata*, IV, XXV, 155.2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, V, XI, 73.3 – 74.2., p. 353.

dialogue, Plato said that talk of truth as about an idea. And the idea is God`s thought that barbarians ["Jews"] named him the word of God. Textual, Plato says these: "be, but to dare to speak the truth, especially when it comes to truth. That the real essence of soul, which is colourless, shapeless and without possibility to be achieved, it looks only to the mind, leading its soul." When the Word went out in the world, He was the cause of creation; then, Himself was born, the Word was made flesh, that may be contemplated"<sup>19</sup>.

H. A. Wolfson believes that in its catechesis, Clement made two identifications<sup>20</sup>, namely: the first, Clement identifies the Christian Logos from the *Gospel of John* with Filon's Jewish Logos, and distinguishes two stages of existence of the Logos; firstly, before out in the world to create it, the Logos was only a thought of God, and then, after He got out of God and created world, the Logos became a distinct personal being. Clement actually performs a third identification when claims that "*the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us for a while witty and truth*" in the historical person of Jesus Christ.

In the second identification, however, Clement equate Logos and truth by arguing a reference to Plato's dialogue *Phaidros*. And as Plato speaks about the truth, not in the idea of truth, but really understanding the truth as ideal, as the whole paradigm of ideas, and the private truths of the world - and in *Philebos* (59 C) and *Republic* (IX, 585 c), Plato called the truth as a fundamental property of all ideas - Christian Logos is described by Clement as truth that includes all ideas. Also in *Stromata*<sup>21</sup>, Clement uses the term "intelligible world" describing it in line with the Platonic doctrine of separation of these two worlds - that of essences, separated from the world of appearances or the shadows: "*barbarian philosophy knows a different world, spiritual and material world; one, the original, different, and other, face of so-called model; one leading to the monad, as it is spiritual; the other, the material leads to exad. In the monad the sky is unseen, faceless earth and spiritual light*". But Clement's goal is to highlight the similarity between Plato's doctrine of creation and biblical essay of Creation, as continuing with quotations from *Scripture*: "*Scripture says:*" in the beginning God created heaven and earth, the earth was invisible. "Then added: "And God said to be light, and was light" ... Did not find, really, that from these words of Scripture Plato took his doctrine when he left the ideas of living beings in the spiritual world and in this world has the material forms, created by the spiritual genre?". Thus, Clement interprets in the Christian sense the first day of creation through the Logos, referring to the intelligible world creation mentioning three of the seven stages of creation after Plato, namely, "the invisible heavens", the earth unseen (or holy), and "intellectual light". Referring to Plato's description of the ideal paradigm of the visible world is continued by Clement describing the four living beings in the material world, called intelligent souls.

By putting together passages in which Clement speaks of God, the Logos and the world of ideas, it follows a consistent doctrine of Christian Logos<sup>22</sup>. So, ideas are intelligible world that is contained in the Christian Logos as the house. Christian Logos has two stages of evolution. In the first stage, the Logos is the same with God, and in the second stage - the stage of creation of the world, "heaven and earth" from *Scripture* - Logos becomes a spiritual being, but personal and distinct. In turn, the ideas contained in the Logos, were also in two stages of existence, namely in Logos as the core reason,

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, V, III, 16.1.-5., p. 319-320.

<sup>20</sup> H.A. Wolfson, (1956), *The Philosophy of Church Fathers*, vol. I, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, p. 268.

<sup>21</sup> Clemens o Alexandreus, *Stromata*, V, XIV, 93.4 - 9.4.2.

<sup>22</sup> R.M. Grant, (1986), *Gods and the One God*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, The Westminster Press, p. 90-91.

and in the visible world as shadows or "faces" - "seed" St. Maximus the Confessor will tell - built-in objects of the visible world. Clement acknowledges that one of the sources of his doctrine is "barbarian philosophy" of Plato, and more specifically, the theory of Platonic ideas. *Gospel of John*, considered the essence of his doctrine about Logos, is Clement's argument as the basis of the fact that the Logos, even in the second stage of His becoming, is God. And the fact, that the incarnate Logos in the historical person of Jesus Christ is God, needs no demonstration because it is proved clearly and undoubtedly, by the *Gospel of John*.

Origenes continues, but refined to Clement about the Christian Logos doctrine, relying on Christ's statement "I am not of this world" (*John* 8:23), and "My kingdom is not of this world" (*John* 18:36). In this sense, Origenes distinguishes between a false theory of ideas - to have a reject - and the true theory of ideas, to be developing: "I pointed the weight to indicate that this world is, that does not get anyone to believe that thus affirm the existence of simple images (εἰκόνες τᾶνες), which the Greeks call them "ideas"<sup>23</sup>. As it can be seen, Origenes considers false the platonic theory of ideas, or at most, an instrument which is used to express the Savior's true doctrine of ideas which is the Christian teaching as "something more beautiful and grand".

H.A. Wolfson considers<sup>24</sup> - unlike other exegetes of Origenes - that the passage was not corrected by Rufin under the influence of Latin tradition represented by Cicero and Seneca, but plays exactly the nuances of origenist thought that distinguishes among i)de/ai, ei)ko/nej and fantasi/ai, in order to play Filon of Alexandria distinction that made it among the "bodily images" (ἄδῶαι), "non-bodily images" (εἰκόνες ...σᾶματοι) and "visible images" (ἰρατᾶ εἰκόνες). Filon's distinction was regarded by Origenes much closer to the spirit of *the Gospel* than Plato's "cut" between the world of sensitive and intelligible world - in fact Plato did not consider anywhere "ideas" as "images" - due to the fact that the description of the Son-Logos as "visible image of the invisible God", in *Peri Archōn* (I, 2, VI), is directly based on the words of the Apostle: „the face (ei)kw/n) of the invisible God (a)o/raton)" (*Colossians*, 1:15). „Face" (ei)kw/n), which had not yet seen, is the image of God as Logos, as it was understood by Filon and Clement of Alexandria<sup>25</sup>, the image of the Son consubstantial with the Father and accomplishing His will.

For Origenes, the term "images" (ei)ko/nej), and the words "powers" (du/nameij) and "virtues" (a)retai/), are in terms of *Scripture*, equivalent to the Platonic term „ideas" (i)de/ai) in terms of existing reasons in Demiurge's Logos, and therefore, Origenes rightly states on Logos quality of „face" (ei)kw/n) of the Father that is the unseen (to\ a)o/raton), as Plato calls it the non-bodily (to\ a)so/maton), in order to bring the true veneration to God<sup>26</sup>. In the *Preface to Peri Archōn*, Origenes proposes "to examine, however, whether the notion that Greek philosophers call ... a)so/matoj, i.e. „non-bodily" are somehow under a different name in *Scripture*. Firstly, we have to see how to design even God Himself, if he has or not the body, whether or not he has any one seen look, if He has in particular any (seen) state or if more than flesh. Origenes rejects the common interpretation of the ideas world of Logos as fantasies of the mind designed in heaven and having reality: "It is quite strange to our way of thinking to suggest the existence of a non-bodily world, with no consistency only in the imagination and in the slippery realm of opinions (fantasi/ai)<sup>27</sup>. Origenes' statement is very clear in considering

<sup>23</sup> Origenes, *Peri Archōn*, II, 3, VI.

<sup>24</sup> H. A. Wolfson, (1956), *The Philosophy of Church Fathers*, vol. I, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, p. 270-271.

<sup>25</sup> Clemens o Alexandreus, *Protrepitkos*, X, 98.4.

<sup>26</sup> Origenes, *Philocalia seu Ecloga de operibus Origenis a Basilio et Gregorio Nazianzeno facta*, XVII, 6.

<sup>27</sup> Origenes, *Peri Archōn*, II, 3, VI.

Platonic world of ideas - as it is vulgarly understood - to have existence only in the human mind as pure fantasy or fleeting thought.

Origenes is not related to the original theory when it rejected Platonic doctrine of ideas as there are seats to prove knowledge of Origenes that Plato assumed that ideas are substances (ou)si/ai), separated from matter, having a real existence as thought (ou)si/ai) of God (Demiurge). For Origenes also, "ideas" of Plato were thoughts (dia/noiai) of God that God used them as models (ei)kono/smata) to create all things. At the same time, Origenes brought a new vision on the Logos including ideas pleroma, when he distinguished between ideas as God's thoughts, and the thoughts of people as mere fantasies about the world of ideas, as Plato himself suggestion in the dialogue *Parmenides* (132 b - c), where Socrates abandons the assumption that ideas are only in souls (e)n yuxa/j) of people, and not in the mind (Logos) of God (Demiurge). What Origenes adds, however, makes the difference both from gregarious concepts about the world of ideas, and to the Platonic theory of ideas, meaning that none of the interpretations can be identified or equated with the world where Jesus Christ came from through the incarnation, and to which the needy saints to come: „that is why I see not how it might say that the Savior proceed from there, or that the apostles would switch in there. There is no doubt that the Savior teaches us something much greater and more beautiful than this world and that in there calls and urges all who believe in Him, to turn their aspirations”<sup>28</sup>.

And although Origenes rejects the existential interpretation of imaginary worlds of the vulgar ideas theory, or thought in the Plato way, he does not deny the real existence of another world where Christ has arrived from, and the saints go to, treated as the world about which *Scripture* says: „In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (*Genesis 1:1*)”. Origenes states that the words of *Genesis*, "designate another heaven and earth than the dome of heaven, which have been made - as the *Scriptures* say - in two days afterwards, and the land was later called „earth”<sup>29</sup>. Primordial heavens and the earth - to be restored in the whole universe at God's *parousia* - are - Origenes added in the platonic way – „that heaven and earth in that they have borrowed the name of the heavens and the land we see”<sup>30</sup>, i.e., there is the ideal earth and the heaven as a specimen of which were made by imitation, visible sky and land. Ideal world, of which Christ came down, is described by Origenes to be inhabited, actually, for some ideal beings, saints, eternal Law and Gospel, to which the Law of Moses is "copy and shadow" (*Hebrew, 8:3*): „this is outlet heaven and earth and rest of the faithful, and of these, the first will be the saints, and "the meek" of this "land" they will inherit, because Law teaches so, and the Prophets and the Gospel. In this "earth", I think, they will find true and living patterns of those prescriptions that He gave them as "face and shadow of the heavenly" ... They will learn here what is called "eternal gospel" and that eternal "New Testament", which will never grow old”<sup>31</sup>. Elsewhere, Origenes is more trenchant when he says: "What the Holy *Scriptures* have named „the land of the good”, we believe that a "country of the living"; it has as "heaven" that I mentioned above and, after the word of Christ, there are written or were written the names of saints and that close and hug this earth, which the Savior promised in His Gospel on behalf of the meek”<sup>32</sup>.

Certainly Origenes put the question of ideal world location, in comparizon with the ideas world of the vulgar theory and with Plato`s conception, and his answer - though it takes as an opinion - is consistent with the *Gospel*, in spite of its paradoxical

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 124–125.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, II, 9, I, p. 161.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, III, 6, VIII, p. 260.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, II, 3, VI, p. 125.



consequences. Origenes stresses in this effect: *"Of course the question is whether the world the Lord speaks about is separated from ours, and if it is a separate space and moral quality, or if it is higher only in honour and quality, while from the territorial point of view it is also within the boundaries of this world. Last case seems to me more credible"*<sup>33</sup>. It follows from this passage that Origenes is inclined to place the "next world", promised by Christ, "within the borders of this world" and, therefore, not in Logos. Final consequence, unspoken by Origenes, was set out by Mircea Eliade, based on the Gospel's text: *"The Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God will come. In response, He said: "The kingdom of God comes not so as to strike the eyes. Do not say: "Look over here!" Or "There it is there!" For behold, the kingdom of God is inside of you" (Luke, 17:20-21). The triumph of Christianity and the Church - Eliade says - introduced a period of stability and political, social, and religious equilibrium, as against the Christian eschaton mean a return to chaos before God's parousia exalted in many of the first Christian centuries millennialisms condemned by the Church. Consequently, Eliade interprets literally the words of St. Luke, in that: "With the triumph of the Church, the kingdom of heaven is really on earth, because in a sense, the old world had just been destroyed"*<sup>34</sup>.

In another passage, Origenes uses a formulation which, although it seems more accurate and more nuanced, however, increases the perplexity concerning the ratio between "other world" and the Logos-Christ, and to locate it. Thus, Origenes states the problem: *"It would have to investigate too if the One born and "first born than the whole make" must be called: Being of beings (ou)si/a ou)siw=n), idea of ideas (i)de/a i)dew=n) and from the beginning (e)n a)rxh/), while His Father and God is beyond all this"*<sup>35</sup>. Origenes problematizes, so if it is legitimate the assimilation and definition of Logos - described by St. John the Evangelist *"the only the one born"* (John 1:14), and called by the Apostle *"first born before all creation"* (Colossians, 1:15), and identified by Saint Parents existing Origenes' ancestors with Christ - through the words "Being of beings" (ou)si/a ou)siw=n), "Idea of Ideas" (i)de/a i)dew=n) and "from the beginning" (e)n a)rxh/).

Of these three qualifications of the Logos, the term "Being of beings" (ou)si/a ou)siw=n) belongs to Origenes and was imagined according to Plato's pattern, who uses the "ousia" within the meaning of "idea"; also, the term "arche" was used by Plato in the phrase "archetypal paradigm" (para/deigma a)rxh/tupon) in order to describe the Logos in the state of the archetypal model for the intelligible world, idea of ideas and reason of God (Demiurge)<sup>36</sup>. Origenes conclusion, namely that, the Father of the Logos and God in the same time, is "above all", also reflects the conclusion of Plato's *Republic* (508 c - 509 b), which takes into account that, while truth and knowledge are considered similar to Goodness (God), they can not be considered the Good (God) himself, as *"Good is to be deemed worthy of rank and one higher honor", „beyond being, beating her in dignity and power"*.

Consecutively, it comes whether the Christian Logos may be called - in an Orthodox sense - "idea of ideas" within the meaning of the house of the whole ideas. In a passage where the first verse comments are to the *Gospel of John*, i.e. *"In the beginning was the Word"* (John 1:1), Origenes says: *"Truth is the firstborn who comprised the reasons being (Logoi) of the entire universe, according to the will of the Father, with the highest acuity, sharing this reason to each creature, according to merit and to that extent to*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, II, 3, VI, p. 124.

<sup>34</sup> M. Eliade, (1963), *Aspects du mythe*, Paris, Gallimard, p. 87.

<sup>35</sup> Origenes, *Contra Celsum*, VI, LXIV.

<sup>36</sup> H. A. Wolfson, (1961), *Religious Philosophy*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, p. 44-47.

*which each creature is close to the truth*<sup>37</sup>. Christian Logos is called by Origenes<sup>38</sup> – according to Plato's model - content of the ideas as paradigms or plans in accordance with the Demiurge (God) created the sensible world, and even he likens the divine creation to the work of a craftsman or architect (*Peri Archōn*, III, 5, IV) - as Plato had done in the famous example by making the bed as the idea of "bed" - which is building a house after a pre-existing model or plan in his mind. The term "logoi" is the literal meaning of "reasons" and, as in the Stoic doctrine where there is the term "seminal reasons" (spermatikoi\ lo/goi), it was taken by Origenes "naked" of the materiality of Stoic meaning, and used for the purposes of „ideas in the mind of God” and „power (du/nameij) of the Logos” which are immanent in the world.

Wondering in what way "in the beginning was the Word" as "first born before all creation", and how can be the Word called "Intelligence" (Nou=j and Lōgoç) of the cosmos, and to what extent comprehensive Wisdom that all were brought into being - as the Psalmist says (*Ps. 104:24*) - Origenes meet Plato and Aristotle combining concepts with biblical-Christian terminology, where the Logos as Son and the Father's Wisdom play a crucial role in the creation of the world in as "efficient cause" and Demiurge, while being seat for the intelligible world consisting in ideas called, in turn, reasons (*logoi*) of things. In this sense, Origenes says: *"Since the term arche meanings, which I distinctly before, are so numerous, to see if which of them will have to understand the verse "In the principle was the Word"... It is possible to understand as the meaning of "efficient cause", i.e. the performer, if "God commanded, and they were built" (Ps. 148:5). For Christ is a kind of Demiurge by the Father says: "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3) and "To be a strength by mid-water" (Genesis 1:6). In principle, therefore, Christ is a Demiurge, whereas Wisdom, and that it is Wisdom, is called the principle. For Wisdom, to Solomon saith: "God created me as a principle of His ways" (Prov., 8:22), for the Logos be in the principle, i.e. in Wisdom"*<sup>39</sup>.

Secondly, the sensitive world was brought into being as universe governed by order (*kosmos*), and remains the cosmos due to its participation (*metoxh/*) in Logos, and therefore *"blessed are only those who are partakers of holiness, of wisdom and even of the godness": "supreme good, to which every thoughtful creature hastens and which can rightly be called the target of all ... is to acquire the likeness of God, as it is possible that thing ... and God Himself depicts in the Gospel that resemblance not only having to run in the future, but as having to be done through His mediation"*<sup>40</sup>. Sensitive world is therefore, in the view of Origenes, a creation by imitation (*mi/mhma*) the Logos, the terms "participation" and "imitation" were released in the arena of philosophical dialogues by Plato in *Parmenides* (132 c-d), *Cratylus* (423 b) and *Timaeus* (49 a), in order to describe relations between the sensible world and the intelligible world of ideas. However Origenes remains not in Plato's point, but refines the sensitive world creation theory - under the Neoplatonic influence<sup>41</sup> - and explains the creation of the material world as a consequence of the fall into sin of the angels, which, as a result of sin committed against God, have suffered a "throwing down", a "kneeling down", a "procession down" (*katabolh/* – *pro/odoj* in Plotinus) on earth: *"I think it would not have to pass in silence the fact that Holy Scripture called the creation of the world with its new and proper name when it spoke of "katabolia of the world" ... expression in Greek,*

<sup>37</sup> Origenes, *Commentarii in John*, I, XXVII, 186.

<sup>38</sup> H. Crouzel, (1962), *Origène et la philosophie*, Paris, Aubier, p. 177–179.

<sup>39</sup> Origenes, *Commentarii in John*, I, XIX, 110–111.

<sup>40</sup> Origenes, *Peri Archōn*, III, 6, I.

<sup>41</sup> J. Dillon, (1992), *Origen and Plotinus: The Platonic Influence on Early Christianity*, in: Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (eds.), *The Relationship between Neoplatonism and Christianity*, Dublin, Ireland, Four Courts Press Ltd., p. 7–26.

katabolh/, means soon "to overthrow", i.e., „throw down”<sup>42</sup>. *Katabolia* of the world occurs as Origenes, because the spirits „got sick” of divinity, because of their "return" and "rolling" from the face of godness, return followed by their "glissade" and their "collapse": "This seen world was founded for those souls who, in because too great passions of their minds, needed these more compact and bold bodies. Because of this, by bookmarking this word *katabolh*, it was indicated lowering all the top-down<sup>43</sup>.

It should be noted also that Origenes, opposed to Plotinus using the term *pro-odos* meaning *rundown, descent, descension*, when using the term *katabole* refers to *katabolia of the world* in two ways - both allowed by the etymology of the word *katabole* - namely, in the metaphysical sense of grounding, foundation of the world and, in the sense of divine history of the world (theodicy).

Following the Christian tradition of identifying pre-existing Christ with Wisdom and Logos, Origenes argues that „*the first-born before all creation*”- pre-existing Christ - involves in Himself throughout the intelligible world of the Father`s reasons as the Father`s Logos - almost in the same way that Plato's Demiurge contained ideas in his mind: "It may be called the Son as Word, because He transmits the secrets hidden in the Father, who is in a way intelligence (nous) whose word (logos) is the Son. For as in our case, a word is a transmitter (angelos) of ideas from mind, so the Word of God, who knew the Father, reveals to us the Father that He knew"<sup>44</sup>. This is followed by an Origenes` exposure which strengthens its doctrine of pre-existence of souls, about their incarnation as punishment for their sins to turn from divinity and the final state restoration (*apokatastasis*) of all created beings, in the first, heavenly, paradisiacal state. Beyond that *apokatastasis* counter free will with which any being was endowed at creation, *katabolia* world theory devalues human body - considered a consequence of the fault of the soul - which canceled soteriological value of the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Christ in His human body.

In a passage from *Peri Archōn*, concerning to the Logos as Wisdom, Origenes maintains pre-existing theory of souls in Logos, combining grounds of the *Old Testament*, with Plato`s leading also to the conclusion that the Logos contains in Itself the whole intelligible world of ideas. Thus, Origenes says: "Because these creatures, which He himself had outlined and sketched, Wisdom says through Solomon`s mouth that It was built "in the beginning of His works" and that because It is the one that contains within Itself all beginnings (α)ρχα/ι - "first principles"), all the grounds (λο/γου/ι - "reasons") and all species (ιδε/α/ι - "forms", "ideas") of all creatures"<sup>45</sup>.

There are many places in the origenist text highlighting Origenes subordinating design affected by Philo Judaeus` theory about the second God in his *Allegory of laws*<sup>46</sup>. Thus, Origenes says: "So, even if we call (the Word) "the second God" (δευ/τερον Θεο/ν)), to know that we only call the second God simply by virtue (α)ρεθ/ι) which comprises all the virtues (α)ρετα/ι), and reason (λο/γον) which includes the reasons (λο/γου/ι) of all make created by nature"<sup>47</sup>. Here Origenes also says that the Logos itself contains all the ideas he called "reasons" and "virtues" which, along with creation of the world, are immanent in created things, and the term "virtues" (α)ρετα/ι) is equivalent to the term "power" (δυναμει/ς), used by Philo Judaeus to describe a similar process in *Allegory of laws*, but also in *Questions about Genesis*. However, should not be ignored that Origenes has also in the same text a very orthodox expression of the intra-trinity

<sup>42</sup> Origenes, *Peri Archōn*, III, 5, IV.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>44</sup> Origenes, *Commentarii in John*, I, XXXVIII, 227.

<sup>45</sup> Origenes, *Peri Archōn*, I, 2, II.

<sup>46</sup> Ph. Judaei, *Sacrum legum allegoriarum. Post Sex Dierum Opus Liber*, II, XXI, 86.

<sup>47</sup> Origenes, *Contra Celsum*, V, XXXIX.

relationship, which is paradoxical, for a thinker as rigorous as Origenes, to keep in one place and the same two sentences in a contradictory report<sup>48</sup>. Thus, Origenes says: *"Therefore we worship the Father of Truth, and Son, which He also is the Truth, because, in hypostatically terms, They form two distinct realities or two distinct people, but They exist, are one by counsel, by understanding, by the unity of will, so that whoever saw the Son, Who is "the radiance of the glory and image of God", that saw God, whose face the Son is"*<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> H. Crouzel, (1956), *Théologie de l'image de Dieu chez Origène*, Paris, Aubier, p. 90–94.

<sup>49</sup> Origenes, *Contra Celsum*, VIII, XII.