

The Social Dimension of the Orthodox Liturgy: From Biblical Dynamism to a Doxological Liturgism

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A historical and theological journey in 12 steps, from the early Biblical origin to later Patristic and contemporary expression of the Orthodox liturgy, in order to uncover the social dimension of Christian liturgy. Some of the causes are analyzed in brief: the marginalization of the Antiochene tradition, an overdose eschatology, the “modern” understanding of the Bible, the gradual loss of the prophetic character of the Church, which is more evident in the Bible, and the marginalization – until the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church – of its witnessing responsibility, have resulted in a significant legacy that hinders any real Biblical and liturgical renewal. The experiment of the Church of Greece that launched nearly 20 years ago an official, albeit unsuccessful, liturgical renewal project. The final proposal is a combination of both this neglected prophetic character and the prevailing eschatological dimension of the Orthodox faith, with all that these imply for an authentic and genuine Orthodox liturgical practice.

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I propose to critically approach this delicate and extremely important issue from an Orthodox perspective. I will try to analyse the development of the Orthodox liturgy both historically and theologically: historically, by focusing on the early Biblical origin, the later Patristic development and the recent experiment in the Church of Greece; and theologically by referring to recent Orthodox theological constructions *vis-a-vis* the *desideratum* of liturgical renewal. I will do this in 12 steps, combining the two approaches.

1. To proceed to an Orthodox critical approach in any issue is an extremely difficult task. On what ground and from what sources can one really establish it? The Roman Catholics have Vatican II to draw from; the

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