The Language of Heresy in Bogomil and Cathar Traditions: Textual and Historical Perspectives

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Ever since Late Antiquity, the attempt of structuring the narrative of religious dissent has included specific terminology, semantic fields, *topoi*, rhetoric and stylistic devices, symbolical representations and metaphors. Diversified forms of allegorical procedures were used to knit together the threads of the texts written in support, or as a refutation of religious dissenting practices, and were not seldom drawn on scriptural interpretation and the homiletic hermeneutic. At times, these filaments were made of analogous textual material: for example, the Bogomils were often portrayed as "wolves in sheep's clothing" (cf. Matthew 7:15), but at the same time, the Cathar ritual of Dublin referred to the Cathars as to "sheep among wolves" (cf. Matthew 10:16).

The concept of heresy is reflected by language and literary means, as language plays a significant role in the process of understanding, perception, and perspective of the reality and phenomena[1].

This article represents a segment of a more comprehensive study on the role of textual procedures in medieval polemical literature, and represents a quest for the very "language of heresy". Hence, the aim is to delve more deeply into the ways of employing the figurative language in the writings attributed to Bogomils, Cathars and the orthodox theologians who refuted them, including some common literary patterns present in polemical texts. Namely, it would be important to see how the Bogomils and the Cathars could have been perceived on the basis of the literary analysis and symbolical language. Herewith, literary analysis may serve as an indicator unveiling the conceptual reservoir containing the elements of the "language of heresy". This article delves into the question of medieval dualist heresies in the period of their acme and the trajectories of their spread, by opening way towards the tracing of the specific "language of heresy"; it encompasses the period between the 11th and the 13th centuries, although it could also be understood as a segment within a more ample research

[1] Cf. Daniela Müller, "Neue Herausforderungen an die Kirchengeschichte: Abschied von den Katharern oder Neubesinnung auf die Quellen?" *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 108 (2018): 205–227, here 205–207.

framework stretching from the 10th to the 14th centuries. This study repositions the Cathars and Bogomils in comparative perspective, and delves into the perception of the interconnections between strategies for their self-portrayal, as well as the methods employed by their opponents.

More precisely, by submitting the textual threads, allegorical interpretation and exegetical approaches to the analysis, important peculiarities and specificities could be traced, which in turn reveal the conceptual background, semantic fields in which heretics and mainstream theologians were imbued, thus unvealing their different textual methodologies. In addition, some elements-indicators in respect to the origin of the different motifs they appropriated could thus be shaped, including the textual reception and transmission history, as well as the prominent formative elements and features of the heretical doctrine in question.

Although much has been written on the Bogomils and the Cathars, the vivid scholarly debates do not yet seem to have reached a consensus[2].

Revisiting the sources within a historical-critical analysis, a detailed scrutiny of literary material on a wider scale (including, *lato sensu*, parascriptural material and the sketching of the intertextual layers)[3], encompassing the investigation of the textual provenance of the doctrinal and discursive elements in a comparative perspective yields instructive results regarding the construction of the Cathar and Bogomil narratives, and result in the detection of broader underlying conceptual threads, knitting the tapestry of ideas[4] in the quest for the "language of heresy"[5]. Additionally, undertaking such an approach would result in the study of the local specificities of the "language of heresy" as employed in the given texts and within their

[2] For the brief overview of these debates, see Robert I. Moore, *The War on Heresy* (London: Profile Books, 2012), 332–336; contributions of Peter Biller, Claire Taylor, Mark G. Pegg, Robert I. Moore, Bernard Hamilton, and John H. Arnold in *Cathars in Question*, ed. Antonio Sennis (Suffolk: Ashgate, 2016).

[3] Anissava Miltenova, "Paratextual Literature in Action: Historical Apocalypses with the Names of Daniel and Isaiah in Byzantine and Old Bulgarian Tradition (11th-13th Centuries)," in *In the Second Degree: Paratextual Literature in Ancient Near Eastern and Ancient Mediterranean Culture*, eds. Philip Alexander et al., 267–284 (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Id. "Intertextuality in the Orthodox Slavic Tradition: The Case of Mixed-Content Miscellanies," in *Between Text and Text*, eds. Michaela Bauks et al., 314–328 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2013).

[4] cf. Yuri Stoyanov, "Pseudepigraphic and Parabiblical Narratives in Medieval Eastern Christian Dualism, and their Implications for the Study of Catharism," in *Cathars in Question*, ed. Antonio Sennis, 151–176 (Suffolk: Ashgate, 2016), 151–176; Id., "Diabolizing the Garden of Eden: Re-Interpretations of Jewish Pseudepigraphy in medieval Christian Dualism," In *The Cosmography of Paradise*, ed. Alessandro Scafi, 109–125 (London: The Warburg Institute, 2016).

[5] Antonio Rigo, *Monaci esicasti e monaci bogomili* (Firenze: Olschki, 1989).

respective contexts. Only after such a detailed source analysis it could become clear if and which analogies in self-portrayal existed between the Cathars and the Bogomils.

Namely, the crucial research questions for this short survey encompasses the following: how is religious dissent shaped by analyzing the "language of heresy" and semantic field of religious dissent on a selected source material, and in which manner and by which literary means do the heretics and polemists construct their respective cases within the given situational contexts.

Metaphorical language, and the employment of metaphorical vocabulary and terminology has played a significant role in polemical literature, and the textual treatment of heresy and paganism by the Early Christian authors (Irenaeus of Lyon [c.120/140–c.200/203], Hippolytus of Rome [c.170–c.235], Augustine of Hippo [354–430], Isidore of Seville [c.560–636], Epiphanius of Salamis [c.315–403], Justin Martyr [fl. mid-2nd c.], to mention only some)[6]. In textual procedures, heresy has thus been defined by means of metaphorical linguistic tools as well. The heretics and pagans have been frequently related to the semantic fields of insanity/madness, contagious illness, poison, serpentine symbolism, and venom. Apart from this relation between the semantic fields of heresy and insanity, another related point indicates the correlation between heresies and contagious illnesses, as it has been observed on numerous occasions in the history of heresiologies[7]. Metaphorical language has played a significant role in the polemical literature, but also in the texts written by or attributed to the heretics themselves in their self-portrayal.

Hence, the aspects of the literary analysis can be approached by focusing upon figurative language, stylistics, and literary devices.

1. Defining, naming and framing: *diversa sunt nomina, sed una perfidia*[8] - in the quest for *topoi*[9]

This segment of the literary analysis would also include the epithets and appellations given in to the respective heretics, as well as descriptive devices used in the particular contexts. It

[6] Cf. Aline Pourkier, *L'Hérésiologie chez Épiphane de Salamine* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1992), 64–75.
[7] As developed in Bojana Radovanović, "The Language of Religious Dissent: Comparative Perspective (9th-century Frankish and Byzantine Authors)" (PhD Diss., University of Vienna, 2018); cf. Robert I. Moore, "Heresy as Disease", in *The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages (11th – 13th c.)*. Proceedings of the International Conference, Louvain May 13–16, 1973, eds. Willem Lourdeaux and Daniël Verhelst, 1–11 (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1976).
[8] Theodor Mommsen and Paul Meyer, eds., *Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905; Reprint 1954, 1970), 876.

[9] Cf., among other, Arno Borst, *Die Katharer* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1953), An. II:240–253.

encompasses appellations and nominal descriptions of heretics, including polemical anti-heretical literary devices used by the apologists, *clichés*, rhetorical strategies, formulaic phraseology, recurrence to earlier ecclesiastic authorities in textual descriptions (in threading the polemical textual procedures and anti-heretical discourse)[10].

The *topoi* and the recurrence to figurative language represent powerful tools in polemical literature – in portraying and combatting heretical opponents. The practice of assimilation of a chronologically prior heresy into a more recent one – or inversely, including the naming of the more recently emerged heresy after the preceding one – as long as these have been presented as having points in common, was the habitual *modus operandi* in heresiological literature[11].

In the first half of the 10th century, Constantinopolitan Patriarch Teophylact Lecapenus (917–956) alluded to Bogomilism which was gaining momentum as to the "ancient and newly heresy…Manichaeism mixed with Paulicianism" and urged the Bulgarian Tsar Peter (d. 970) to anathematize it[12]. Similarly, even though at a later date, the Cathars were also associated with Manichaeans[13]. An important axis to examine is what has remained in the "language of heresy" from the earlier centuries[14]. For example, the term "Manichaeans" designated heretics in general[15]. Antonio Rigo has accentuated the importance of philological analysis in the comprehension of the *topoi*/*clichés* employed in the accusations of the hesychiasts for Bogomilism and Messalianism[16]. The Bogomils were associated with the Massalians as well[17]. Other similarities/comparisons with previous heresies were conveyed by the account of Cosmas the Priest (fl. 2nd half of the 10th c.), who compared the Bogomils with the Arians, Sabellians and Macedonians, due to the Bogomils' rejection of the Holy Trinity[18].

[10] Uwe Brunn, *Des contestataires aux "cathares"* (Paris: Brepols, 2006), 287–288; Jean-Louis Biget, *Hérésie et inquisition dans le midi de la France* (Paris: Picard, 2007), 18–20.
[11] Cf. Pourkier, *Hérésiologie chez Épiphane*, 159.
[12] Yuri Stoyanov *The Hidden Tradition in Europe* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 126, 128.
[13] Michel Roquebert, *La religion cathare* (Paris: Perrin, 2001), 46.
[14] Cf. Steven Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee. A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 49; Йордан Иванов, ed., *Богомилски книги и легенди* (София: БАН, 1925, 1970²), 20.
[15] *Topoi*, cf. Ивана Коматина, *Црква и држава у српским земљама од XI до XIII века* (Београд: Историјски институт, 2016), 166, 168; cf. Radovanović, "Language of Religious Dissent"; *clishés*: Maja Angelovska-Panova and Andrew P. Roach, "The Bogomils' Folk Heritage: False Friend or Neglected Source?" in *Heresy and the Making of European Culture. Medieval and Modern Perspectives*, eds. Andrew P. Roach and James Simpson, 129–149 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), here 146–147.
[16] Rigo, *Monaci esicasti e monaci bogomili*; Angelovska-Panova–Roach, "The Bogomils' Folk Heritage", 147.
[17] As in the epistle of Euthymius of Peribleptos: Stoyanov, *Hidden Tradition*, 140.
[18] *Козма Пресвитеръ Болгарскій писатель X вѣка*, ed. Михаил Попруженко (София: Придворна печатница, 1936), 1.15–2.9.

The quest for the "language of heresy" and its role in descriptions, definitions and portrayal of the deviant religious currents would also include the examples of the epithets employed for dissenting religious groups: for instance, the (most likely Bogomil) heresy attacked at the Synod of Žiča (1221) was described as a "thrice-damned" (*trikleta*) – due to the fact that the heretics in question rejected the Holy Trinity[19]; "evil faith" and "damned faith". The identical terms in framing the Bogomil heresy have been used at the Synods held in Bulgaria and Serbia[20]. Furthermore, dualist heresies in the Balkan area have been referred to by means of different appellations, which reach back to earlier sources. For example, according to a legend written down during the reign of Emperor Samuilo (d.1014), the three categories of people existed: the true believers, the semi-believers and the non-believers. The Orthodox Christians were assigned to the first group, the Muslims to the non-believers, whereas other non-Orthodox Christians fell into the semi-believer category[21]. Consequently, the Roman Catholic Christians, but also the Franks, Hungarians, Armenians and other non-Orthodox Christians were considered semi-believers[22]. Additionally, the term "pseudo-Christians" was attributed to the heretics from Dalmatia[23]; Euthymius Zigabenus (c.1050–1120) referred to the Bogomils as "pseudo-monks" and "godless priests". The Cathars, who alluded to themselves as to "good Christians" and "good men", were at times referred by the ecclesiastics as "hidden men"[24], or *filii Diaboli* the writings of Eckbert of Schönau (1120–1184), Benedictine monk and theologian, who recurred to various metaphors in portraying the Cathars in his incessant endeavors in refuting the 12th-century heresies[25].

The employment of particular language patterns can equally point to the political use and misuse of heresy: as it was attested upon the Council of Žiča, the term "heretics" was employed

[19] Cf. Euthymius Zigabenus, *Orthodoxae fidei dogmatica panoplia*, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca* 130 (PG), ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857–1866), 1291D–1294D; cf. Id., *The Panoplia Dogmatike by Euthymios Zigabenos*, ed. Nadia Miladinova (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
[20] Cf. *Борилов синодик. Издание и превод*, ed. Иван Божилов et al. (София: ПАМ Пъблишинг Къмпани, 2010).
[21] Иванов, *Богомилски книги*, 268.
[22] Radoslav Grujić, "Legenda iz vremena cara Samuila o poreklu naroda," *Glasnik skopskog naučnog društva* 13 (1933): 1–3, here 1; *poluverci*: cf. Dušanov zakonik, ch. 9, in: *Dušanov zakonik*, ed. Nikola Radojčić (Beograd: SANU, 1953), 33; Grujić, "Legenda", 2; cf. Иванов, *Богомилски книги*, 268; Jovanka Kalić, "Srpski državni sabori u Rasu," in *Evropa i Srbi. Srednji vek*, ed. Tibor Živković, 185–195 (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 2006), 190–193.
[23] *Codex Diplomaticus Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae* II–VI, ed. Tadija Smičiklas (Zagrabiae: Ex officina Societatis typographicae, 1904–1908), *II*, 296.
[24] Yuri Stoyanov, *The Other God. Dualist Religions from Antiquity to the Cathar Heresy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 194–195, 191.
[25] cf. Eckbert of Schönau, *Sermones tredicim contra Catharos*, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (PL) 195:13–106, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1844–1855), here I:17D; XI:90C; XIII:98C.

to designate political opponents[26]. The above-mentioned examples are indicative of the various and at times analogous rhetorical strategies and metaphorical language recurred to in refuting deviant and unorthodox theological doctrines. Nevertheless, the particular contextual situations should be taken into consideration, as it would be important to examine, if and how the figurative language changed in the changing circumstances. Moreover, it would also be important to scrutinize which in which manner the intertwining of currents and constitutive, as well as inherited elements were reflected in the very "language of heresy"[27].

2. Exegetical approaches and allegorical scriptural interpretation: from Biblical passages to *topoi* - "Sheep among wolves" and "wolves in sheep's clothing"

The allegorical (Scriptural) interpretation[28] may serve as a basis for conceptual and doctrinal divergence, and act in the role of the indicator pointing to the "language of heresy", as it represents a reservoir, affluent with vast array of metaphorical devices[29]. This segment of the analysis should take into consideration the allegorical exegesis of the Scriptures represents a pillar in the process of literary analysis, together with homiletic hermeneutic and spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures, including topology/themes/imagery (Biblical/heathen), recurrence to the wisdom literature and scriptural passages, parascriptural narratives, appropriation of pseudepigraphical material, adaptations and modifications of Biblical

[26] Aleksandar Solovjev, "Svedočanstva pravoslavnih izvora o bogomilstvu na Balkanu," *Godišnjak 5* (1953): 1–103, here 15–16; Коматина, *Црква и држава*, 166.
[27] Yuri Stoyanov, "The Interchange Between Religious Heterodoxies in the Balkans and Caucasus: The Case of the Paulicians," in *The Balkans and Caucasus*, ed. Ivan Biliarsky et al., 106–115 (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), here 109–110; Id., "Parabiblical Narratives"; Bernard Hamilton, "Wisdom from the East: the reception by the Cathars of Eastern dualist texts," in *Heresy and literacy 1000–1530*, eds. Peter Biller–Ann Hudson, 38–60 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994); Maja Angelovska-Panova and Ružica Cacanoska. "Historical and Cultural Implications of Bogomilism". *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 36/4 (2016): 37–52, here 49; Edgar Hösch, "Kritische Anmerkungen zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Bogomilenforschung," in *Kulturelle Traditionen in Bulgarien*, eds. Reinhard Lauer–Peter Schreiner (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1989), 111, 114.
[28] The allegorical scriptural interpretation was developed in the Alexandrian school, and saw its apex in the writings of Origen (c.184–c.253), Clement or Alexandria (c.150–c.215), and Philo of Alexandria, a Hellenized Jewish exegete and philosopher (c.20 B.C.E.–c.50): cf. Darren M. Slade, "Patristic Exegesis: The Myth of the Alexandrian-Antiochene Schools of Interpretation", in *Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry*, 1/2 (2019): 155–176; Davide Del Bello, *Forgotten Paths: Etymology and the Allegorical Mindset* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), ch.2 "Nomen est omen: Etymology and Allegory"; Gillian R. Evans, *The Language and Logic of the Bible. The Earlier Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 101–124.
[29] On the allegorical interpretation in the Bogomil circles, see: Euthymius Zigabenus, *Panoplia Dogmatica*, ed. Migne, PG 130: 1200A 1–14, 1289D–1331D, 1321–1322.

narratives, patterns of intertextual relations[30], symbolical representations and metaphors, employment of parables and allegories[31].

One of the most illustrative examples attesting the employment of biblical quotations in service of presenting or refuting the given doctrine stems from the Gospel of Matthew[32]. These were employed both by the Bogomils and Cathars, as well as the orthodox theologians who wished to refute their doctrines.

The New Testament metaphor of Lord's sheep was amply recurred to, used, reused and paraphrased ever since the first polemical treatises have seen the light of the day; not seldom has it come into interplay in apologetical contexts. For example Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea (c.260–339), while addressing his fierce critique of the heretics, stated that the shepherds of the Church have to chase the heretics – compared to wild beasts – away from Christ's sheep: …οἱ πανταχὸσε τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ποιμένες ὥσπερ τινὰς θῆρας ἀγρίους τῶν Χριστοῦ προβάτων ἀποσοβοῦντες[33].

Although at an earlier date, in the treatise against the Manichaeans composed by Peter of Sicily at the very end of the 860's, the aims of the heretics are depicted by the image of a wolf in a sheepskin, and directed towards the accusation of the truth and leading the unlearned and simple people into error: *…κατηγορεῖν τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἐξαπατᾶν τοὺς ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἰδιώτας…ὡς ἐν κωδίῳ προβάτου λύκον περικαλύψαι*[34].

Similarly, in the treatise against the heretics by Cosmas the Priest, composed in the second half of the 10th century, the Bogomils were portrayed as "wolves", or "wolves in sheep's clothing"[35].

Panoplia Dogmatica by Euthymius Zigabenos, as well as the *Alexiad* by Anna Comnena (1083–1153) serve as the most comprehensive sources on the danger of the Bogomils' sweeping over

[30] Stoyanov, "Parabiblical Narratives"; Id., "Garden of Eden".
[31] Cf. Daniela Müller, „The Making of a Cathar counter-church, the 'ecclesia Dei', through the '*consolamentum*' ritual (baptism of the Holy Spirit)," in *The Making of Christianities in History. A Processing Approach*, eds. Staf Hellemans and Gerard Rouwhorst (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020, forthcoming).
[32] "sheep among wolves": cf. Mt. 7:15: *Adtendite a falsis prophetis qui veniunt ad vos in vestimentis ovium intrinsecus autem sunt lupi rapaces* – "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves"; Mt. 10:16: *Ecce ego mitto vos sicut oves in medio luporum estote ergo prudentes sicut serpentes et simplices sicut columbae* – "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves", KJV. Cf. Acts 20:29.
[33] Eusèbe de Césarée, *Histoire ecclésiastique*, 4 vols., trad. Gustave Bardy, *Sources Chrétiennes* 31 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1952), IV, 24.
[34] Peter of Sicily, "Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure", ed. Ch. Astruc et al., *Travaux & Mémoires* 4 (1970): 3–67, here 37, 80–81.
[35] Mt. 7:15, cf. Bernard Hamilton and Janet Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies in the Byzantine World, c. 650–c.1405* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 116; Маја Ангеловска-Панова, "Дуалистичката иницијација во дискурсот на религиско-духовната алтернатива," ИСТОРИЈА XLVIII/1 (2013): 77–92, at 78.

the Byzantine territory at the close of the 11th century. In both texts, the Bogomils were described by means of the similar metaphors - *τὸν λύπον ὑποκρύπτοντες*[36]in *Panoplia Dogmatica*, and *λύκος ἐστὶν ἀκάθεκτος*[37] in *Alexiad*, in which the princess, daughter of Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenos (ca.1058–1118), consecrated significant space to the description of Bogomils, and the danger they induced. The metaphor of wolves in sheepskin is widely present in the medieval tractates, in the writings of the alleged heretics, as well as those of the polemicists.[38]

The Cathars were also referred to as "sheep among wolves" in the Cathar Ritual of Dublin[39]. But not only: in 1208, at the dawn of the Albigensian Crusade, as a consequence of the spread of the "*pravitas haeretica*" which threateningly swayed the territories of nowadays South of France, Pope Innocent III wrote to count Raymond VI and, as frequently attested in his letters, resorted to the arsenal of literary devices aimed at encouraging the Frankish nobles at suppressing the heresy. The Pope compared the heretics to "wolves in sheep' clothing" – *lupi rapaces in ovium vestimentis*, but also to the "little foxes" – *vulpesculae* – which demolish the Lord's vineyard[40]. In the writings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153), abbot of the Cistercian abbey, ecclesiastical reformer, and one of the most influential opponents of heresies, the Cathars were described as "wolves and foxes"[41], whereas in the polemical invective against the Cathars framed by Eckbert of Schönau, the Cathars were depicted as "little foxes that demolish the vine

[36] Euthymius Zigabenus, *Panoplia dogmatica*, ed. Migne, PG 130:1320C.
[37] Anna Comnena, *Alexiad* XV, ed. Migne, PG 131:1168/9; *Fontes Graeci historiae Bulgaricae* (*ГИБИ*) VIII, 141–149 (София: БАН, 1972), at 141; as for Euthymius Periblepton, cf. Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*, 143.
[38] Cf. the mutual accusations phrased by recurring to the analogous metaphors of wolves in sheepskin between Hincmar of Reims and Gottschalk of Orbais, 9th-century monk accused of heresy: Hincmar of Reims, *Epistolae*, ed. Ernst Perels, 1–228, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, *Epistolae in Quart* VIII (Berlin: Weidmann, 1939), here Ep. 169, 162, l. 13–14; Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, ed. Migne, PL 125: 473–0618, here 485D–486A, 613–614; Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *De Praedestinatione*, in *Œuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais*, ed. Cyril Lambot, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense 20 (1945): 180–258, here 244.
[39] Cf. Mt. 10:16, cf. Daniela Müller, "Neue Herausforderungen," 205-227; Anne Brenon, ed., "Rituel cathare, Manuscrit de Dublin", in *Écritures cathares*, ed. René Nelli, 274–322 (Paris: Planète, 1968).
[40] Pope Innocent III, *Regestorum sive epistularum liber sextus*, ed. Migne, PL 214: 971; 215: 358, 362; 215: 1354; 216: 836; Eckbert of Schönau, *Sermo* XIII, ed. Migne, PL 195:98C; Rebecca Rist, "*Lupi rapaces in ovium vestimentis*: Heretics and Heresy in Papal Correspondence," in *Cathars in Question*, ed. Sennis, 229–241, here 232–233; John H. Arnold and Peter Biller, eds., *Heresy and Inquisition in France, c.1200–c.1300* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 117; Mark Gregory Pegg, *A Most Holy War. The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 22 sq.; *Pierre des Vaux-de Cernay, Historia Albigensis*, ed. Pascal Guébin and Ernest Lyon, I, 51–65 (Paris: Champion, 1926).
[41] Cf. Bruno Scott James, ed., *The Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, letter 318 (Stroud: Sutton, 1998²), 389–391.

of Lord"[42] - *…ad munimendum catholicae fidei, ut arceantur a vinea Domini vulpesculae pessime, quae demoliuntur eam*.[43]

Some highly-laden metaphors do not necessarily stem from the Scriptures. For example, In the middle of the 10th century, Patriarch Theophylact Lecapenus composed a letter to Peter, Tsar of the Bulgars, in which he gave the instructions to the ruler regarding the suppression of the heresy of the Bogomils, which was spreading throughout Tsar's lands. The Patriarch described Bogomilism by referring to the *topos* used in the aim of symbolically representing the heresies, as contained in the writings of the early Christian writers (e.g. Epiphanius of Salamis): he refers to it as a "serpent-like and many-headed hydra of impiety"[44], and Pope Innocent III (1160/1–1216) described the Cathar heresy at the dawn the Albigensian Crusade by recurring to the analogous metaphor[45]. In this example, the imagery has evidently been derived from the heritage of the pagan antiquity. At times, Pope also equated the heretics with *draco*, *serpens*, Leviathan, *ut cancer Provinciam pene totam infecit*[46] - aligning to the *topoi* attested in the writings of the Early Christian authors[47]. The similar metaphor employs Eckbert of Schönau, comparing the heretics' words with cancer and leprosy, which threatens to infest the limbs of Christ[48].

3. Semantic field analysis - *Leitmotiv*: Body and bodily symbolism - image of self and the way others perceive it

The importance of the semantic field of the body symbolism has often been insisted upon ever since the composition of the first Early Christian polemical treatises[49]. The semantic field

[42] Arnold and Biller, *Heresy and Inquisition*, 117.
[43] Eckbert of Schönau, *Sermo* XIII, ed. Migne, PL 195:98C; cf. Song of Songs 2:15: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes", KJV.
[44] Cf. Ivan Dujčev, "L'epistola sui Bogomili del patriarca constantinopolitano Teofilatto", *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, 63–91, vol. 2, Studi e testi 232 (Rome: Città del Vaticano: 1964), here 88–91; Stoyanov, *Hidden Tradition*, 128.
[45] Pope Innocent III, *Epistolae*, ed. Migne, PL 216: 836; Cf. Pegg, *Holy War*, 184 sq.
[46] Pope Innocent III, *Epistolae*, ed. Migne, PL 215: 1545, 1546, 1469; cf. Eckbert of Schönau, *sermo eorum serpit ut cancer*: Sermo I, ed. Migne, PL 195:13 C.
[47] The theme of the serpent, inherent to the textual treatment of heresies, is present in Christian heresiology in Justin, Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, to mention only some: cf. Irenaeus of Lyon, *Contra Haereses Libri Quinque*, ed. Migne, PG 7A: 1115–1117; Pourkier, *Hérésiologie chez Épiphane*, 80, and especially note 25; 73–78, 120, 211, 334; Epiphanius of Salamis, II. *Panarion* 57, I, 2 (haer. 34–64), ed. Karl Holl, Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 31, 344, I (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922); Jean-Paul Rassinier, "L'hérésie comme maladie dans l'œuvre de Saint Augustin", *Mots*, n°26 (mars 1991): 65–83.
[48] Eckbert of Schönau, *Sermo* I, ed. Migne, PL 195:13c: *Sermo eorum serpit ut cancer, et quasi lepra volatilis longe lateque discurrit, pretiosa membra Christi contaminans*.
[49] Cf. Irenaeus, *Contra Haereses*, ed. Migne IV, 33, 1076–1079; Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, eds. Klaus D. Daur and Joseph Martin, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 32 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), 114.

analysis thus represents a broader and a more encompassing structure stemming from the above-demonstrated literary analysis.

Furthermore, one of the most prominent questions which stems from the afore-mentioned passages is how the allegorical (scriptural) interpretation serves to construct the body of believers. Construction of the body of believers is important in both - mainstream and heretical texts and identification, achieved by an analogous method: insiders versus outsiders. Here, we witness the construction of the body by means of allegorical, spiritual scriptural interpretation.

Bodily symbolism and bodily unity symbolism represent the *Leitmotiv* of heretical and anti-heretical discourse, pointing to the importance of belonging to the given group and aligning to the semantic field of the "other": the church of God has a power to bind and dissolve – *solve et coagula* – whereas one of the differences between the "official" and Cathar church, as demonstrated in ritual, is reflected in the notions of spiritual versus factual unity, and spiritual versus factual excommunication. The Cathar Ritual of Dublin is affluent with metaphors, conveying a powerful message and symbolism aligning to the allegorical and spiritual interpretation of the scriptures: "heavenly bread" instead of "daily bread"[50], the stance according to which the true Christians constitute the temple of God and the word's commandments represent the flesh of Christ (cf. John 6), reflecting the deeper spiritual interpretation of the New Testament; the gap between the "church of sheep" and "church of wolves"[51] – and can be understood as the superimposition onto the verse in Matthew 10:16, discussing sheep and wolves.

Moreover, the Eucharist was one of the burning contestation points between the dualist dissenters and the Christian church, and it represented a powerful metaphor of the bodily unity symbolism, from which the dissenters were cut off[52]; and, the attempt to construct the "social body" is aimed at by means of the extirpation of the heresy. Namely, transposed to another level, the above-said conveys the image of the body of believers being constructed, implying the "social body" likewise.[53]

[50] Cf. *Interrogatio Iohannis*, 8:"For I am the bread of life that came down from the seventh heaven, wherefore who so eats my flesh and drinks my blood, these shall be called the children of God" –accessed March 1, 2020, http://gnosis.org/library/Interrogatio_Johannis.html, based on: Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 458ff.
[51] Brenon, "Rituel cathare".
[52] Cf. Eckbert of Schönau, Sermo I, ed. Migne, PL 195:13BC.
[53] Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72.

Additionally, ritual can undoubtedly be observed as a bridge, binding the community together[54]. Thus, the analysis of the ritual attested among the Bogomils and the Cathars may contribute to the information regarding conceptual analogies or differences between these groups[55]. Thus, it is in the ritual that the construction of the opposites occurs, the separation and delimitation between those belonging to the given group, and the "outsiders", or "others"[56], and the importance of the study of ritual among the Bogomils and the Cathars has been stressed in several contributions[57]. The similarities between the "Ritual provençal" and the form of confession later introduced in Bulgaria have been noted[58], as have the important trajectories of research[59].

In conclusion, the above structured scheme of linguistic analysis will yield a fresh perspective on the (inter)woven textual threads in the fabric of the very "language of heresy", by prioritizing the theme-based approach, with connected sub-topics, integrated within a theme.

The scrutiny of the topological and symbolical representations of dualist heresy would yield interesting results, especially when compared to heretical and anti-heretical textual tools used in describing heretics. Namely, the comparative perspective and the analysis of the texts related to Bogomils and the Cathars, as well as their respective opponents, allows the detection of literary patterns and strategies the authors of the given texts recurred to, as well as of the ways in which they resorted to the scriptural interpretation.

Hence, both the polemicists, as well as the Bogomils and the Cathars have at times employed similar discursive means in combatting their opponents (which was the well-attested practice from the times of the Early Christian authors). The way of refuting and dealing with "the others" is often analogous[60]. Nevertheless, the employment of certain figures of style, and Biblical sequences can also be quite distinct, and would rather corroborate the thesis of different

[54] On the rituals of Florence, Lyon and Dublin, and their significance, see Müller, "Cathar counter-church"; "Neue Herausforderungen", 215; Brenon, "Rituel cathare"; David Zbíral and Anne Brenon. "Nové poznatky o původu okcitánského katarského kodexu z Lyonu a tzv. "Lyonského řádu". *Religio* XXIV, 2016 (2): 189–217.
[55] cf. Andrew Roach, *The Devil's World. Heresy and Society 1000–1300* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2005), 70.
[56] Müller, "Neue Herausforderungen", 216–223.
[57] Müller, "Cathar counter-church", "Neue Herausforderungen", 215; Zbíral–Brenon, "Nové poznatky"; overview of the literature in Roquebert, *Religion cathare*, 426–427.
[58] Bojan Džonov, "Le modèle de confession chez les Bogomiles et les Cathares". *Palaeobulgarica* 4 (1980): 87–92; Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*, 289; Christine Thouzellier, ed., *Rituel Cathare* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1976), 182–184.
[59] Bernard Hamilton, "The Legacy of Charles Schmidt to the Study of Christian Dualism," *Journal of Medieval History* 24/2 (1998): 191–214, here 26, 53; Milan Loos, *Dualist heresies in the Middle Ages* (Praha: Academia, 1974), 261; Roach, *Devil's World*, 70.
[60] Cf. Daniela Müller, "Our Image of 'Others' and our Own Identity", in *Iconoclasm and Iconoclash. Struggle for Religious Identity*, eds. Willem van Asselt, Paul van Geerst, Daniela Müller, and Theo Salemink, 107–123. Jewish and Christian Perspective Series 14 (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

allegorical and exegetical approach the authors relied upon. The scriptural interpretation differs in some respect in writings of heretical and mainstream theologians: the symbolism of the Body implies the spiritual body by the Cathars, opposed to the body of the believers gathered together in the Eucharist in the texts of the mainstream Christian theologians.

ABSTRACT

Ever since Late Antiquity, the attempt of structuring the narrative of religious dissent has included specific terminology, semantic fields, *topoi*, rhetoric and stylistic devices, symbolic representations and metaphors. Diversified forms of allegorical procedures were used to knit together the threads in the texts written in support, or as a refutation of religious dissenting practices, and were not seldom drawn on scriptural interpretation and the homiletic hermeneutic. At times, these filaments were made of analogous textual material: for example, the Bogomils were often portrayed as “wolves in sheep’s clothing” (cf. Matthew 7:15), but at the same time, the Cathar ritual of Dublin referred to the Cathars as to “sheep among wolves” (cf. Matthew 10:16).

Words, carriers of meaning and message, are often endowed with nuances, which can sometimes make all the difference; and the heretics were frequently accused of recurring to erroneous interpretations and for twisting the meaning of the Scriptures. Hence, the correct interpretation becomes the pillar-stone and the bearer of meaning, and metaphorical language takes up a pivotal role in the process of the transmission of the message.