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COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

THEOLOGICAL CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN JOHANN BAPTIST HIRSCHER AND THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

Given its wide and intensive reception in the course of the twentieth century, there is no doubt about the theological heritage and historical importance of the Catholic Tübingen School.¹ But its relevance and significance for liturgical and sacramental theology has not yet been the subject of thoroughgoing academic study. Nevertheless, a strong case could be made that the representatives of the Catholic Tübingen School contributed greatly to liturgical and sacramental theology in addition to their reflections upon the historical nature of faith and revelation. Therefore, I will argue, on the basis of an analysis of primary sources, that there is a case for correspondence between the ideas and ideals of the Liturgical Movement and the ideas and ideals about the liturgy as they are developed by a representative of the Catholic Tübingen School.

In my present contribution, I will highlight the relevance of Johann Baptist Hirscher's thinking about the liturgy and theology of the Eucharist. More particularly, I will develop a comparative descriptive analysis, exploring the common ground between this rather unknown Tübingen scholar and the 20th century Liturgical Movement. It is important therefore to first situate Hirscher and describe his main ideas on liturgy and Eucharist. After which, I will briefly outline some major similarities between Hirscher's thought on the liturgy and the 20th century Liturgical Movement. However, in the third part of my paper I will focus on one

1. For foundational literature about the Catholic Tübingen School see among others: Josef Rupert Geiselmann, *Die katholische Tübinger Schule: Ihre theologische Eigenart* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964); Max Seckler, "Tübinger Schule. I Katholische TSch.," in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 10 (2001) nr. 287-290; Ulrich Köpf, "Tübinger Schulen," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 34 (2002) 165-171; Michael Kessler & Ottmar Fuchs, *Theologie als Instanz der Moderne: Beiträge und Studien zu Johann Sebastian Drey und zur Katholischen Tübinger Schule*, Tübinger Studien zur Theologie und Philosophie, 22 (Tübingen: Francke, 2005).

particular point of convergence, namely the aspect of community and the so-called ‘active participation’ in Hirscher’s thought. Finally, I will conclude this paper with some general observations about the theological correspondence between Hirscher and the Liturgical Movement.

1. Johann Baptist Hirscher

The figure of Johann Baptist Hirscher is often neglected, certainly in the context of liturgical studies or Eucharistic theology. Born in 1788, Hirscher was one of the founding members of the Catholic Tübingen School, together with Johann Sebastian Drey and Johann Adam Möhler. Appointed professor of Pastoral Theology and Moral Theology, Hirscher was strongly concerned with the celebration of the liturgy from the very outset of his academic career.

Even though I would not identify Hirscher with Febronianism² – the movement directed towards the nationalizing of Catholicism and as such the German equivalent of the French Gallicanism – he was definitely influenced by the liturgical ideas of Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg, vicar general of Konstanz, who carried out major liturgical reforms.³ Sailer also had an important influence on Hirscher through the tutelage of Johann Nepomuk Bestlin, who belonged to the famous *Sailerschule*. Reflections on *Kult und Kultreform* served as one of the major topics in almost all of Hirscher’s writings, including his famous *Die Christliche Moral*.⁴

For my research on Hirscher, I heavily rely on the works of Erwin Keller who has studied Hirscher’s liturgical writings and has published several journal articles on them in addition to editing the Hirscher volume of the *Wegbereiter heutiger Theologie* series. Concerning the liturgy as a central theme in Hirscher’s work, Keller, commenting on his *Christliche Moral*, states:

Darum empfindet man die Hereinnahme der Fragen um den Kult der Kirche nicht als gezwungen und als vielleicht entbehrliches Beiwerk, son-

2. Unlike Koenker, see: Ernest Benjamin Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 24. I don’t follow him for several reasons, mainly because I found few or no nationalistic tendencies in Hirscher’s thinking. See also Adolf Exeler, *Eine Frohbotschaft vom christlichen Leben: Die Eigenart der Moraltheologie Johann Baptist Hirschers (1788-1856)* (Freiburg: Herder, 1959), 22.

3. Cf. Andreas Holzem, “Wessenberg, Ignaz Heinrich von (1744-1860),” in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 35 (2003) 662-667; Erwin Keller, *Johann Baptist Hirscher, Wegbereiter heutiger Theologie* (Graz/Wien/Köln: Styria, 1969), 22.

4. Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Die christliche Moral als Lehre von der Verwirklichung des göttlichen Reiches in der Menschheit* (Tübingen: Laupp, 1835).

dem als logische Folge eben der theologischen Grundkonzeption des Werkes.⁵

Keller highlights three main ideas in an attempt to grasp the core of Hirscher's thinking on the liturgy and the Eucharist, namely: the 'meal of the covenant' (*Bundesmahl*), the communal character of Eucharistic celebration, and the proclamation of Christ's death.⁶ Concerning the meal of the covenant, Hirscher clearly stresses the importance of the Last Supper and the anamnesis, he states:

Wenn wir nun, [...], in Erwägung bringen, daß unser Herr, da er von den Seinen Abschied nahm, auf das Glaubwürdigste verheißen hat, bei ihnen zu bleiben bis an's Ende der Welt, und ihnen einen andern Beistand (Tröster), den bei und in ihnen bleibenden Geist der Wahrheit senden wolle, [...]: müssen wir nicht glauben, indem wir sogar den Kelch dieses Bundes in die Hände nehmen, und ihn zum Vollstrecken (des Bundes) einander hingeben, daß gerade in der hl. Bundesmahle diese Verheißungen in Erfüllung gehen [...]?⁷

With his blood of the new covenant, Christ restored the bond between God and man at the Last Supper.⁸ According to Hirscher, the Eucharist is not only a sign of the bond between God and his people, but it also represents the bond between each individual person.

As such, the second aspect is the communal celebration of the Eucharist, which is the core of Hirscher's thinking: Eucharistic celebration can only be communal.⁹ He wants to make short shrift to the existing bad

5. Erwin Keller, "Kult und Kultreform bei Johann B. Hirscher," in *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 90 (1970) 333-456, p. 371.

6. Erwin Keller, "Messe und Meßreform bei Johann Baptist von Hirscher," in *Ober rheinisches Pastoralblatt* 66 (1965) 237-250. Unfortunately this contribution is partly based on an article which is mistakably being held as Hirscher's, while actually it is from the pen of Johan Sebastian Drey, namely: Johann Sebastian Drey, "Ehrebietige Wünsche und Andeutungen in Bezug auf Verbesserungen in der katholischen Kirchenzucht, zunächst in Deutschland," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 4 (1822) 225-259.

7. Quoted here is Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Versuch, den ursprünglichen Begriff der heiligen Messe zu entwickeln und die richtige Art und Weise ihrer Feier zu bezeichnen*, trans. R.F. Diebold (Baden: Zehnder, 1838), 57. See also Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Missae genuinam notionem eruere ejusque celebrandae rectam methodum monstrare tentavit* (Tübingen: Laupp, 1821), 43-44; 56-57; 59-60; 106; Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Betrachtungen über sämtliche Evangelien der Fasten mit Einschluß der Leidensgeschichte* (Tübingen: Laupp, 1829), 409. In referring to works of Hirscher, I make a selection of the most important quotations according to the specific theme.

8. For this see for example: Hirscher, *Missae genuina*, 60: "Festum ipsius proin christianae religionis unicum proprium definitum et essentielle est, quod Dominus noster instituit, et in quo novam, quam condidit Deum inter et homines relationem sancte a suis et aeterne custodiendam deponit" (original italicisation).

9. Cf. Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 20-27; Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Katechetik oder der Beruf des Seelsorgers die ihm anvertraute Jugend im Christenthum zu unterrichten und zu erziehen, nach seinem ganzen Umfange dargestellt* (Tübingen: Laupp, 1834), 600;

habits and most of his concrete proposals for a reform of the liturgy flow forth from his conviction that the Eucharist should be celebrated in a real community, surpassing the division between the priest and the people.

Thirdly, one can see that the leitmotif of Hirscher's first and most important work on the Eucharist, the *Missae genuinam notionem eruere ejusque celebrandae rectam methodum monstrare tentavit*, is the proclamation of the Lord's death on the cross, the redeeming character of this sacrifice of love as well as the thankfulness everyone should feel for this sacrifice. Although he was attacked on this, the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is very important to Hirscher. The problem was that for him, in contrast to mainstream 19th century theology, the Eucharist could not be constricted to the sacrificial character.¹⁰ So he says:

Aber auch Solche befinden sich einiger Maßen im Irrthume, welche die Messe ein Opfer nennen [...] und somit den ganzen Sinn derselben erschöpft zu haben glauben.¹¹

It is, among others, this sentence which caused trouble for him with Rome.

Although Keller's three-point summary of Hirscher is correct, I would add three more ideas or important elements concerning Hirscher's understanding of the liturgy and Eucharist: education, the efficacy of the Eucharist and the Kingdom of God. Hirscher stresses (1) the great importance of education and formation of both the people and the clergy which can be considered influenced by the Enlightenment.¹² Hirscher was making a case for a reformation of the liturgy, but not without a decent formation of both clergy and laypeople, otherwise the reforms would be futile from the start. A better understanding of what is happening fosters a better participation in the liturgy.

Hirscher was first and foremost a moral theologian, so (2) the efficacy of the Eucharist was another crucial aspect to him.¹³ A 'worthy receiving' (*der würdige Empfang*) of the Eucharist improves one's moral life. He or she who takes part in the 'gift of love' is being called but also equipped to practice this love in daily life:

Und nicht nur siehest du diese unaussprechliche Liebe zu ewigen Zeiten in der Stiftung des Herrn vor dir, sondern dieselbe will auch dein werden,

638-639; Hirscher, *Betrachtungen*, 408.

10. Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 62-63.

11. Hirscher, *Versuch*, 64.

12. For his ideas on education in liturgy, see among others: Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 92; Hirscher, *Katechetik*, 591-608; Johann Baptist Hirscher, "Über einige Störungen in dem richtigen Verhältnisse des Kirchentums zu dem Zwecke des Christentums," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 5 (1823) 193-262; 371-420, pp. 383-384; 390-392.

13. Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 29-50; Hirscher, *Betrachtungen*, 404-412.

du sollst sie empfangen, sollst an sie glauben, und ihrer gewiß und froh sein; und das so wahr, als wahr du das hl. Sacrament empfängst.¹⁴

It is important to note here his emphasis on the aspect of ‘*gemäß*’, which seems to be very typical of the Romantic era.¹⁵

Moreover, Hirscher stresses a good balance between the *ex opere operato* and the *ex opere operantis*, which was not the case in his time period where the prevailing theology emphasized the former over the latter. In his own words, Hirscher proclaimed “*sondern auch noch in unsern Tagen der wahre Sinn der sakramentlichen Wirksamkeit ex opera operato wenigst im Volke keienswegs hinreichend bekannt ist.*”¹⁶

A last characteristic, though certainly not the least, (3) is his understanding and usage of the Kingdom of God.¹⁷ This reveals a clear influence from the Tübingen School’s founding father, Johann Sebastian Drey. Hirscher introduces the Kingdom of God-theology in his reflections on liturgy. According to him the Kingdom is being mediated in and through the Eucharist:

So ist das hl. Abendmahl also die vom Herrn gestiftete Handlung, in welcher zu ewigen Zeiten alle Wahrheit und Gnade des Evangeliums in der Gemeinde [sic] der Christenheit wirklich wird, das Himmelreich zu ihnen kommt und in ihnen ist.¹⁸

Despite his theological contribution to the liturgy, as well as his contribution to other aspects of theology, Hirscher has too often been overlooked by theologians in favour of his more prominent colleagues: most often Möhler and to a more limited extent Drey. Moreover, the Tübingen School itself has never been widely “received” when it comes to the history of the liturgy; only few traces or a cursory mention can be found in liturgical handbooks and overviews. Interestingly, when there are statements on the Tübingen School, they almost always refer to the liturgical movement. While most theological historians mainly concentrate on Möhler or Drey, the works of Waldemar von Trapp and Anton L. Mayer are exceptions in that they additionally mention Hirscher in relation to the

14. *Ibid.*, 404-405.

15. See also Joris Geldhof, “Baader sur l’Eucharistie,” in *Questions liturgiques* 89 (2008) 194-208.

16. Hirscher, “Über einige Störungen,” 223. See also Hirscher, *Betrachtungen*, 411-412. Sailer also wrote on the balance between the *ex opere operato* and the *ex opere operantis*, cf. Manfred Probst, *Gottesdienst in Geist und Wahrheit: Die liturgischen Ansichten und Bestrebungen Johann Michael Sailers (1751-1832)*, Studien zur Pastoralliturgie, 2 (Regensburg: Pustet, 1976), 248.

17. Hirscher, “Über einige Störungen,” 194-198; 220; 224-225; Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 5-6; 65; 89-90; Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Über das Verhältniß des Evangeliums zu der theologischen Scholastik der neuesten Zeit im Katholischen Deutschland zugleich als Beitrag zur Katechetik* (Tübingen: Laupp, 1823).

18. Hirscher, *Über das Verhältniß*, 120.

liturgical movement.¹⁹ Nevertheless, neither really elaborates on him or his work, which leaves Keller as the only prominent scholar who seems aware of Hirscher's liturgical legacy; though sadly his work dates from the 1960's and 1970's.

2. Hirscher and the 20th Century Liturgical Movement

One could say that Hirscher was part of a liturgical reform movement. Both Keller and von Trapp interpret him correctly against the background of the so-called *Aufklärungskatholizismus*, for which the reform of the liturgy was an important element.²⁰ Even so, von Trapp – with whom I tend to agree – recognizes that Hirscher is less radical than the main proponents of this *Aufklärungskatholizismus* and pays more attention to theological grounding and deepening of the liturgical reform.²¹

Nevertheless, in studying Hirscher, it struck me how many of his ideas on liturgy were realised during and after the Second Vatican Council. The council's decisions on liturgy were very much foreshadowed by what has become known as the Liturgical Movement, classically defined between the paper given by Dom Lambert Beauduin at the Malines Conference in 1909 and Vatican II in the 1960's.²² The present study does not aim at tracing Hirscher's direct influence on 20th century writers and thinkers. For now, I will describe the points of convergence between Hirscher's writings on liturgy and the Liturgical Movement.²³

The first similarity between the Liturgical Movement and Hirscher is the rediscovery of the early Church as a liturgical model. Along with the Liturgical Movement, Hirscher refers to the early Church by grounding his arguments with quotations from the Church Fathers as well as with

19. However, it should be mentioned that these authors can be considered outdated. Apparently there is no recent reflection on the Tübingen School and the Eucharist or liturgy in general. See: Waldemar Trapp, *Vorgeschichte und Ursprung der liturgischen Bewegung: Vorwiegend in Hinsicht auf das deutsche Sprachgebiet* (Münster: Antiquariat Stenderhoff, 1979); Anton L. Mayer, *Die Liturgie in der europäischen Geistesgeschichte* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971).

20. Keller, "Kult und Kultreform," 336-346; Trapp, *Vorgeschichte und Ursprung*, 203-204.

21. *Ibid.*, 216-217.

22. See Hans-Christoph Schmidt-Lauber, "Liturgische Bewegungen," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 21 (1991) 401-406, p. 404.

23. To get a grip on the content of the Liturgical Movement – which is not so easy to demarcate – I used the work of Fenwick and Spinks, which gives a concise but sound overview of the main features of the Liturgical Movement, see: John Fenwick & Bryan Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995). Although the book as a whole is very valuable, I am mainly relying on pages 5-11.

various old and non-Roman canons and liturgies.²⁴ In this regard, he states at the beginning of his *Missae*:

Verlangt Jemand, daß ich hinsichtlich der ächten (ursprünglichen) Bedeutung des hochhl. Abendmahls genügende Vertheidigungsgründe angebe, so berufe ich mich auf die hl. Schrift und die Zeugnisse des Alterthums.²⁵

As this early work shows, Hirscher clearly had a good knowledge of other liturgies besides the Roman one.

A next element pointed out by Fenwick and Spinks is the rediscovery of the Bible as a liturgical tool. Again, Hirscher uses the Bible to sustain his arguments but he also pleads for paying closer attention to the proclamation of the Word in the liturgy.²⁶ The convergence with the Liturgical Movement can hardly be overstated here. He attaches a lot of importance to the homily – several of his own sermons are published and, quite frankly, are very admirable – but he also points out that we really should keep together the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

Vormals ist die Verkündigung des göttlichen Wortes zu gering gewürdigt, in unserer Zeit [...]. Die Verkündigung des göttlichen Wortes und die Messe sind zwei wesentliche Theile eines ächt christlichen Kultus, und werden sie bleiben, so lange die christliche Religion selbst bestehen wird.²⁷

A rediscovery of the Eucharist is another main feature of the Liturgical Movement and again there is a great convergence with Hirscher, for example when he makes a case for offering the cup to the laity and for regular communion by the faithful.²⁸ Hirscher particularly underlines the importance of the Eucharist for Christian life:

Das Abendmahl ist der Cult der christlichen Religion – der allgemeine, und ordentliche. Der Cult bei einer religiösen Gemeinde ist das ins öffentliche allgemeine kirchliche Leben übersetzte Symbol derselben.²⁹

The Liturgical Movement eventually began focusing on the use of the vernacular as a crucial reform to the liturgy which also was an equal con-

24. Throughout his writings he refers, among others, to Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, the Apostolic Constitutions, Justin Martyr, Cyprian, etc. but also to the liturgy of Constantinople, the Nestorian Rite, the Malabar Rite, the liturgy of Saint James, the Mozarabic Rite, the Gallican Rite, etc.

25. Hirscher, *Versuch*, 5.

26. Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Betrachtungen über die sonntäglichen Evangelien des Kirchenjahres*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Laupp, 1837); Hirscher, *Betrachtungen*.

27. Hirscher, *Versuch*, 89.

28. Respectively: Hirscher, *Katechetik*, 613-616; Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 105-106.

29. Hirscher, *Über das Verhältniß*, 118-119. Other citations in which Hirscher connects Eucharist and Christian life: Hirscher, "Über einige Störungen," 390-392; Hirscher, *Katechetik*, 590.

cern for Hirscher.³⁰ Hirscher was one of the first to publish German orders of Mass, demanding the hierarchy to seriously consider them.³¹

In addition to these four points, Fenwick and Spinks mention the re-discovery of other Christian traditions and the emphasis on proclamation and social involvement as further characteristics of the Liturgical Movement. In the context of the latter they refer to the experiments with the worker-priests. This is something not found in Hirscher's works. Although proclamation and good preaching was very important to him, evangelization and social involvement were not his main topics. With regard to other Christian traditions it can be stated that although he had contact with Protestants – being appointed a professor in Tübingen – they had very little influence on his writings. He definitely was not a vigorous apologetic, unlike other catholic contemporaries.

Apart from the above mentioned characteristics of the Liturgical Movement found in Fenwick and Spinks, there are still other convergences between Hirscher's interests and those of the Liturgical Movement. It is important to note the pastoral-liturgical approach employed both by Hirscher as in the Liturgical Movement. Pastoral concerns are a major motive for Hirscher's plea for reform. He was an appointed professor of Pastoral Theology and his pastoral concern is clearly shown in the subtitle of his 1834 *Katechetik: Der Beruf des Seelsorgers die ihm anvertraute Jugend im Christenthum zu unterrichten und zu erziehen*. Like in all his works, the liturgy is prominent throughout this book. Other convergences between Hirscher's writings and the Liturgical movement are: his plea for a new breviary, the demand for decent missals, an adapted liturgy for children and young people and even something that can be interpreted as a call for 'concelebration'.³²

30. Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 65-78; Hirscher, "Über einige Störungen," 392-396; Johann Baptist Hirscher, "Über die Verbindung der Erziehung mit dem Unterricht in Volksschulen," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 3 (1821) 191-230, pp. 216-218; Johann Baptist Hirscher, "Die heilige Messe an Sonn- und Festtagend des Jahrs," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 3 (1821) 346-349. Keller correctly points out the difference between his early works and his works after 1830. In his work from 1846 for example, Hirscher is much more tolerant towards the Latin language, see: Johann Baptist Hirscher, *Erörterungen über die großen religiösen Fragen der Gegenwart: Den höheren mittleren Ständen gewidmet*, Bd. 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1846), 139-140; Keller, "Kult und Kultreform," 397-398.

31. Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 98-99;108-144.

32. Johann Baptist Hirscher, "Einige Hoffnungen und Wünsche aus Veranlassung der neu errichteten Bisstümer der oberrheinischen Kirchenprovinz," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 10 (1828) 195-231, pp. 199; 226-228; Johann Baptist Hirscher, reviewing Franz Oberthür, "Meine Ansichten von der Bestimmung der Domkapitel und von dem Gottesdienst in den Kathedralkirchen," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 8 (1826) 314-324, p. 319; Hirscher, *Über das Verhältniß*, 278; Hirscher, *Katechetik*, 562-568. Concerning the concelebration, he does not use the exact term, but when fulminating against every

However, the most important point of convergence pertains to the quest for community and participation. Mentioned as the very first characteristic of the Liturgical Movement by Fenwick and Spinks, it also was Hirschers main concern when writing on liturgy and the Eucharist.

3. Celebrating with the Whole Community

With Dom Lambert Beauduin's monumental speech, *La vraie prière de l'Église*, the active participation of the laity to the life and especially to the liturgy of the Church became one of the main features of the Liturgical Movement. It results in the famous statement of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 14: "that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy."³³ Given this pronouncement, Hirscher's emphasis on the active participation of the laity and on the authentic celebration of the liturgy with the whole community is particularly interesting.

Relying on Drey's ideas of the Kingdom of God, Hirscher states that this Kingdom is anticipated and even effectively manifested through communal worship.³⁴ Just as it has been mentioned earlier, Hirscher argues that God's Kingdom is being meditated in and through the Eucharist. In his important article, *Über einige Störungen in dem richtigen Verhältnisse des Kirchentums zu dem Zwecke des Christentums*, he explicitly connects these thoughts on the Kingdom and the Eucharist with the notion of unity.³⁵ This unity, or community within the Kingdom, is the meaning and goal of the Eucharist.³⁶ The Church is not only a consequence but a fundamental goal of the Eucharist, the latter being instituted by Christ for this particular reason. The Eucharist is the feast of what

priest doing his own mass, as well as holding several masses at the same time in the same church, he states: "aber nicht einzusehen ist, warum jene Priester, welche keine dieser Gottesdienste zu halten haben, sich nicht hier oder dort anschließen, sondern abgesondert für sich noch Messe lesen sollen oder wollen." Hirscher, *Meine Ansichten*, 319.

33. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html (access: 4/01/2011).

34. "Regni igitur coelestis in nos adventus est, et realis ipsius in nobis sustentatio, quo omnia, quaecunque illud lucis habet, virtutis gratiae atque solatii, fidelibus ex mente institutoris porriguntur, atque ab his accipiuntur et manifestantur." Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 6.

35. Hirscher, "Über einige Störungen," 196.

36. "Ex dictis ergo liquet, a Christo ecclesiam veritatis cognitione et vitae sanctitate insignem – partam, sanctamque coenem (tertio) in id institutam fuisse, ut *ejusdem ecclesiae membra fidei suae veritatem et unitatem communi voce et ritu profiterentur*, atque *unius familiae Dei*, cujus caput Christus sanctus est, *se consortes – charitatis purae et actualis manifestatione, exhiberent.*" Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 27 (original italicisation). See also: Hirscher, *Betrachtungen*, 408.

Hirscher calls ‘*einer allgemeinen Christusfamilie*’, in which all partake, those present and absent, the living and the deceased. Sharing the same bread, eating Christ’s body, makes this community whole:

In dieser Vereinigung um den Einen Tisch soll sich die Eine Gemeinde, die sich Jesus mit Seinem Blute erkaufte, und mit Seinem Geiste geheiligt hat, darstellen – die Gemeinde der Kinder Gottes auf Erden. Wir demnach müssen, so wahr wir, das heilige Sacrament empfangend, von dem Einen Brode essen, so wahrhaft in Gesinnung und That als Glieder Einer Familie und als Brüder untereinander leben, und, vom Tische der Liebe aufstehend, Werke der Barmherzigkeit, der Versöhnlichkeit, des Friedens und der Großmut üben.³⁷

Hirscher speaks of the ‘table of love’ and there are multiple references to God’s love and the love amongst each other in his *Missae*.³⁸ Since the Eucharist is of crucial importance in creating this community of love, Hirscher – like the protagonists of the Liturgical Movement – reacts against the common practice of his time. According to Hirscher there was a gap between the people and the clergy:

Ein Hauptvorwurf, welchen man unserer Liturgie machen muß, besteht in der Scheidung, die sie zwischen dem Priester und Volke setzt, und wodurch letzteres mehr zum Anwohnen bei dem Cultus, als zur wesentlichen Mitfeier desselben berufen erscheint.³⁹

The communal aspect of the liturgy is essential and the concept of participation, ‘*das mitfeiern*’, often comes up in his writings. In his work against scholasticism, he formulates it as follows:

So ist nichts mehr zu wünschen, als daß die Katechumenen angeleitet werden, diesen ihren Cultus nicht bloß als Anwesende, sondern als wesentlich Theilnehmende zu begehren.⁴⁰

Further on in the same paragraph again the term ‘*mitzufeiern*’ in contrast to ‘*beiwohnen*’ appears and Hirscher concludes by saying that it was Jesus’ intention and our duty “*die Messe als öffentliche der gesamten Gemeinde zugehörige Handlung gemeinsam mit dem Priester zu begehren.*”⁴¹

This fundamental conviction about the essence of liturgy as a communal act leads him to advocate certain practical reforms of the liturgy; some of which I mentioned before. Most significant is the plea for liturgy

37. *Ibid.*, 408.

38. Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 20-27.

39. Hirscher, “Einige Hoffnungen und Wünsche,” 213-214.

40. Hirscher, *Über das Verhältniß*, 123.

41. *Ibid.*, 124.

in the vernacular.⁴² Indeed, how could people actively participate if they don't understand what is going on? Hirscher writes:

Da nemlich die heil. Messe eine gemeinschaftliche religiöse Handlung sein soll, und man von dieser Gemeinschaftlichkeit immer mehr abkömmt, je mannigfaltiger, und von dem lateinischen Formulare abweichender die Meßgebete sind, welche das Volk in die Hände bekommt: so scheint es verdienstlich, dem gemeinen Manne den Meßritus in seiner Muttersprache mitzuteilen, damit er sich an den Priester anschließen möge, und dieser nicht mehr und mehr vereinzelt, d. h. ohne nähere Gemeinschaft mit den Anwesenden – die heil. Handlung vollführen müsse.⁴³

However, only translating the Latin and publishing German prayer books – like the one he reviews above – is definitely not enough for a profound liturgical reform. This becomes very clear later on in his *Missae* where he argues that the unity between the priest and people also expresses itself through common action.⁴⁴ When everybody is just concentrating on their own personal prayer book it evidently hampers communal worship. People don't listen to the Latin prayers being said in mass. Another – more pragmatic – argument Hirscher develops is that the Latin language masks a lot of the priests' ignorance concerning the liturgy. Hence, if they would celebrate in German and people would understand them, priests would have to do much more effort and would have to improve their '*ars celebrandi*'.

In addition to the issue of the language, Hirscher proposes other improvements to make the liturgy more accessible and communal. Considering his own liturgical rubrics he says: "*Ich habe mir den Priester während der heil. Handlung größtentheils gegen das Volk gekehrt, und in der Mitte desselben gedacht.*"⁴⁵ This sounds very familiar to us today, but we should notice that Hirscher writes this in 1821. Also remember his plea to allow the laity to drink from the cup. More frequent even is his plea for regular communion by the faithful.⁴⁶ In Hirscher's time, of course, receiving communion was not at all as frequent as today. For him though it was crucial for a real participation and a good Christian life. However, receiving communion was surrounded by a lot of restrictions, mainly having to do with sin and confession. That is why, apart from the

42. See *supra*, note 28.

43. Hirscher, *Die heilige Messe*, 346.

44. "verum ss.coena in id instituta est, ut omnia Christi membra, quae uno invisibili capite junguntur, et communi religione ligantur, eandem unitatem communi etiam actu manifestantes, communi voce et actione communem patrem adorent [...]." Hirscher, *Missae genuinam*, 65-66.

45. *Ibid.*, 105.

46. *Ibid.*, 78-86; Hirscher, *Katechetik*, 613-616; Johann Baptist Hirscher, "Etwas über die Anwendbarkeit der Religionsvorträge," in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 7 (1825) 226-243, pp. 232-235.

Eucharist he also pays a lot of attention to writing on the sacrament of reconciliation, advocating— using the council of Trent – that those not suffering from mortal sin should be able to receive communion without auricular confession. A final point that can be mentioned here is the fact that Hirscher is in favour of putting an end to the practice of having several masses at the same time in one Church.⁴⁷ He refers to the principle of Ignatius of Antioch in his letter to the Philadelphians: ‘one city, one altar, one bishop’ – and thus one community.⁴⁸

4. Conclusion

This paper wanted to highlight the relevance of Hirscher’s thinking for the history and theology of the liturgy. More particularly, it identified this 19th century Tübingen scholar as an important, albeit often neglected, precursor of the 20th century Liturgical Movement. Von Trapp says Hirscher and with him Sailer are, “*erst in neuerer Zeit wieder “entdeckt” worden. Dabei wurde ihre Stellung zur Liturgie jedoch meist übersehen oder umgegangen, obwohl sie bei ihnen eine große Rolle spielt.*”⁴⁹ With the help of well-selected illustrations I have shown how Hirscher and the Liturgical Movement shared several similar concerns with regard to the reform of the liturgy. The direct influence of Hirscher’s colleague Johan Adam Möhler on the Liturgical Movement is widely received but it would also be interesting to study to what extent the leading figures in the Liturgical Movement were aware of Hirscher’s innovative ideas on the Eucharist and liturgy.

In this paper I limited myself to giving a comparative descriptive analysis of Hirscher and the Liturgical Movement. In particular, I tried to show the richly developed community-aspect in Hirscher’s thinking. Hirscher, I believe, would be very pleased to read the Vatican II documents, especially *Sacrosantum Concilium*, and it is remarkable to see how far ahead of his time he was. Studying theologians like Hirscher can make us aware of the fact that the reform of the liturgy must be an ongoing process.

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47. Hirscher, *Meine Ansichten*, 317-318.

48. Apart from Ignatius he also refers to the third sermon of Augustin on the first epistle of John. See *ibid.*, 318.

49. Trapp, *Vorgeschichte und Ursprung*, 204.

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