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TRANSITION FROM THE NAME ‘DOGMATIC’ THEOLOGY TO ‘SYSTEMATIC’ THEOLOGY

Przejście od nazwy teologia „dogmatyczna” do teologii „systematycznej”.

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Uvod

In recent decades, we have seen the replacement of the centuries-old term ‘dogmatic theology’ used in the context of Christian theology with the term ‘systematic theology’, especially in catholic theology. This study deals with the gradual development from the first term to the second term and ends with an indication of whether this is an official position of Catholic church or just a current trend.

1. The term ‘dogmatic theology’ in the documents of the Magisterium of the Church

Decree of Second Vatican Council on priestly training *Optatam Totius* requires: ‘Dogmatic theology should be so arranged [...]’¹. In the Latin version it reads: ‘Theologia dogmatica ita disponatur ut ipsa themata [...]’². In the Slovak edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, there is, for example, after the first sentence of point 36: ‘The Church [...] teaches that God [...] can be known [...] from the created world [...]’ note no 12, which refers to the dogmatic constitution of the First Vatican Council *Dei Filius* and to dogmatic constitution of the Second Vatican Council *Dei Verbum*³.

The Latin text in note no 12 is identical in this point: ‘(12) Concilium Vaticanum I, Const. dogm. *Dei Filius*, [...]; Concilium Vaticanum II, Const. dogm. *Dei Verbum*, 6⁴.’

The dogmatic constitution of the Second Vatican Council *Lumen gentium* is also quoted in the Slovak version of *Catechism of the Catholic Church* at the end of point 754 in note no 132: ‘Second Vatican Council, dogmatic constitution *Lumen gentium*, 6⁵.’

The same applies to note 136 in the Latin version of the work: ‘(136) Concilium Vaticanum II, Const. dogm. *Lumen gentium*, 6⁶.’

John Paul II wrote the following in encyclical *Fides et Ratio* from 1998:

Theologia dogmatica, ex parte sua, facultatem possidere debet [...],⁷ in English: ‘For its part, *dogmatic theology* must be able [...]’⁸.

The *Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries*, issued by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, requires the lecturer of liturgy to work closely with the teachers of dogmatic, moral and pastoral theology and canon law, to have frequent discussions with each other, to facilitate everyone’s focus on the same goal and to avoid the danger of the same things repeating frequently or contradicting each other⁹.

¹ Second Vatican Council, Decree on priestly training *Optatam Totius*, 16.

² Concilium Vaticanum Secundum, Decretum *Optatam Totius*, 16.

³ Cf. *Katechismus Katolickej cirkvi*, 36, note No 12.

⁴ *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 36, note No 12.

⁵ *Katechismus Katolickej cirkvi*, 754, note no 132; C. S. Bartnik, *The Language of Theology and the Language of Science*, „Theologia Bogoslovie“, 2001, vol 1, p. 9.

⁶ *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 754, note No 136.

⁷ Ioannis Pauli PP. II., Litterae encyclicae *Fides et Ratio*, 66.

⁸ John Paul II., Encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio*, 66.

⁹ Cf. Posvätná kongregácia pre katolícku výchovu, *Inštrukcia o liturgickej formácii v seminároch*, 53.

The most recent document of the Congregation for the Clergy, *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation, Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, from 2016, starts point 168 with a challenge: ‘Dogmatic theology [...] let it be taught in a systematic and orderly manner [...]’¹⁰.

The Italian text on the official website of Holy See is worded as follows: ‘La teologia dogmatica [...]’¹¹ The Spanish text on the same website states: ‘La teología dogmática [...]’¹².

2. The term ‘dogmatic theology’ in theological works

A three-volume work by renowned dogmatic theologians of the German language area was published more than two decades ago, with a clear title *Glaubenszugänge. Lehrbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*¹³.

The prefect emeritus of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and former professor of dogmatic theology in Munich G. L. Müller published his book at that time under the title *Katholische Dogmatik*¹⁴.

Twenty-three years after its publication he said in a lecture at the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology [...] in Bratislava:

The separation of dogmatics from moral doctrine, [...] we are not free to separate pastoralism from dogmatics¹⁵.

The entry ‘dogmatic theology’ is also included in the dictionary of world famous bibli-
cist J. Heriban¹⁶.

T. Schärfl wrote in a German journal *Stimmen der Zeit* in 1998: ‘But why look back? The answer is of both a theological and dogmatic nature’¹⁷.

C. V. Pospíšil commented in the theological journal: ‘From the point of view of dogmatic-theological terminology, it is the relationship between the content of faith [...] and the concrete experience of faith [...]; between dogmatic theology [...] and spirituality [...]’¹⁸.

¹⁰ Kongregácia pre klerikov, *Dar povolania ku kňazstvu. Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, 168.

¹¹ Congregazione per il clero, *Il dono della vocazione presbiterale. Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis sacerdotalis*, 168.

¹² Congregación para el clero, *El don de la vocación presbiteral. Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis sacerdotalis*, 168.

¹³ Approaches to faith. A textbook of Catholic dogmatics; cf. W. Beinert [ed.], *Glaubenszugänge. Lehrbuch der katholischen Dogmatik. Part 1*. Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn – München – Wien – Zürich 1995.

¹⁴ Catholic dogmatics; cf. G. L. Müller, *Katholische Dogmatik. Für Studium und Praxis der Theologie*. Herder, Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1995.

¹⁵ G. L. Müller, Encyklika Veritatis splendor po 25 rokoch. Obsah, posolstvo, výzvy. Úvahy nad encyklikou Veritatis splendor (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.kbs.sk/obsah/sekcia/h/dokumenty-avyhlashenia/p/zborniky-z-konferencii/c/aktualne-otazky-ludskej-mravnosti#Obsah>

¹⁶ Cf. J. Heriban, *Príručný lexikon biblických vied*. Second revised edition. Don Bosko, Bratislava: 1994, p. 321 and 1006. Entries dogmatická teológia a teológia; K. Rahner, H. Vorgrimler, *Teologický slovník*. Zvon, Praha 1996, p. 68-69. Entry: dogmatika; G. Barbaglio and S. Dianich [ed.], *Nuovo dizionario di teologia*. 7th edition. San Paolo, Milano 1994, p. 1556-1557 and 1648; *ibid.*, p. 1756-1758; P. Petrosillo, *Il Cristianesimo dalla A alla Z. Lessico della fede cristiana*. San Paolo, Milano 1995, p. 121. Entry: Dogmatica; *Lexicon. Dizionario Teologico Enciclopedico*. 3rd edition. Piemme, Casale Monferrato 1997, p. 314. Entry: Semerano, M. Dogma / Dogmatica; V. Judák, *Pápežský primát v biblickom a dejinnom svetle*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2003, no 8, p. 454; V. Judák, *Historické a politické súvislosti misie svätých Cyrila a Metoda medzi Slovanmi*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2013, no 7, p. 373; M. Šuráb, *Dogmatika na ambóne*, [in:] *Teologálne čnosti z interdisciplinárneho pohľadu*. Editor M. Lichner. Dobrá kniha, Trnava 2018, p. 367, 370; A. Tyrol, *Východiská biblickej pastorácie na Slovensku v 21. storočí*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2001, No 5, p. 207.

¹⁷ T. Schärfl, *Úvahy o teológii dialogu*, „Teologické texty“ 2006, No 3 (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.teologicketexty.cz/casopis/2006-3/Uvahy-o-teologii-dialogu.html>; cf. A. Kolping, *Současné trendy v německé katolické teologii*, „Teologické texty“ 1995, No 5, p. 160.

¹⁸ C. V. Pospíšil, *Úvahy o některých aspektech křesťanské spásy*, „Teologické texty“ 2005, No 4 (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.teologicketexty.cz/casopis/2005-4/Uvahy-o-nekterych-aspektech-krestanske-spasy.html>; cf. C. V. Pospíšil, *Hermeneutika mystéria: struktury myšlení v dogmatické teologii*. Krystal OP,

Under-Secretary of the Synod of Bishops and the coordinator its Theological Commission Luis Marín de San Martín said that Theological Commission of the Synod of Bishops 'For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission' is comprised of 25 members. They are experts in various religious sciences (dogmatic and fundamental theology)¹⁹.

Catholic university in Lublin publishes the theological magazine *Roczniki Teologiczne*. Every month there are articles dedicated to some of them theological discipline. It is always dogmatic theology in February.²⁰ In one of the articles the name of this theological discipline is also found in its title: 'Christ and the Perfection of Creation in Schleiermacher's Dogmatic Theology'²¹.

The Czech dogmatic theologian C. V. Pospíšil wrote that 'it is certainly interesting that the order of the treatises in a certain respect corresponds to the division of the dogmatic- theological material in the Sentences by Peter Lombard. Unlike previous Czech dogmatic manuals, we no longer find here a part defined as 'general dogmatics [...]'²².

Another Czech author E. Jindráček wrote that:

[...] understanding the dogmatic statements because it not only opens the way to their lasting sense, but it is [...].

The basic tool and the way to this interpretation is not the historical-critical method itself [...], but above all [...] (ceremonial council and dogmatic definition) [...].

Our goal was primarily to characterize the philosophical concept of dogmatic formulations'²³.

In the cited Magisterial documents in the footnotes, he states in the Latin original:

Quod [...] attinet ad doctrinam Fidei, formulae dogmaticae dicuntur [...] (*Cum oecumenicum Concilium*, „AAS” 58 (1966): 659–660).

Christifideles ergo se avertant oportet ab opinione secundum quam: primum quidem formulae dogmaticae [...] Qui talem opinionem amplectantur relativissimum dogmaticum non effugiunt [...] (*Sacra Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei, Mysterium Ecclesiae*, „AAS” 65 (1973): 396–408'²⁴.

Prague; Karmelitánské nakladatelství, Kostelní Vydří 2010, p. 234; P. Maturkanič, *Pastoral practice in the light of the 21st century*. Lulu Publishing Company, Morrisville 2021, p. 48.

¹⁹ Cf. TTKBS (RV). Mons. Marín de San Martín: Úloha teológov pri biskupskej synode (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.tkkbs.sk/view.php?cislocclanku=20210820031>

²⁰ Cf. *Roczniki Teologiczne*, 2022, No 2, Dogmatic theology; Booklet 2: Teologia dogmatyczna (online). Retrieved from: <https://ojs.tnkul.pl/index.php/rt/issue/archive>; A. Adam, *Charisms in the Service of the Universal Church*, „*Roczniki Teologiczne*“ 2019, Booklet 2, p. 53-69 (online). Retrieved from: <https://ojs.tnkul.pl/index.php/rt/article/view/9273/8549>; A. Adam, *Theological Icons of the Virgin Mary in the Teachings of Pope Francis*, „*Roczniki Teologiczne*“ 2021, Booklet 2, p. 133-150 (online). Retrieved from: <https://ojs.tnkul.pl/index.php/rt/article/view/14396/15371>; A. Adam, *The Relationship of Pope John Paul II to the Father of the Redeemer*, „*Roczniki Teologiczne*“ 2022, Booklet 2, p. 57-71 (online). Retrieved from: <https://ojs.tnkul.pl/index.php/rt/article/view/16646/16163>

²¹ Cf. K. M. Vander Schel, *Christ and the Perfection of Creation in Schleiermacher's Dogmatic Theology*, „*Roczniki Teologiczne*” 2017, Booklet 2, p. 47-67 (online). Retrieved from: <https://ojs.tnkul.pl/index.php/rt/article/view/9068/8758>

²² C. V. Pospíšil, *Trinitární teologie a pneumatologie v díle doktora Richarda Špačka (23. 11. 1864 – 23. 9. 1925)*, „*Studia Theologica*“ 2011, No 3, p. 69; cf. p. 70, note 19, p. 84 (online). Retrieved from: <https://studiatheologica.eu/pdfs/sth/2011/03/04.pdf>

²³ E. Jindráček, *Filozofická povaha dogmatu*, „*Studia Theologica*“ 2004, No 2, p. 31-33 (online). Retrieved from: <https://studiatheologica.eu/pdfs/sth/2004/02/03.pdf>; cf. P. Maturkanič, *The Magnitude of human Life in the Horizon of Socio-Transcendental understanding*, [in:] *Spiritual and social Experience in the Context of Modernism and Postmodernism*. Lulu Publishing Company, Morrisville 2021, p. 181.

²⁴ E. Jindráček, *Filozofická povaha dogmatu*, „*Studia Theologica*“ 2004, No 2, p. 31, notes No 49-50 (online). Retrieved from: <https://studiatheologica.eu/pdfs/sth/2004/02/03.pdf>

Another Czech author J. Mikulášek states that ‘[...] the American theologian James Gustafson [...] talks about ‘reductionism’, [...] in which the Church was defended only on the basis of biblical and dogmatic statements [...]’²⁵.

Ecumenical view. Slovak Orthodox dogmatic theologian I. Belejkaníč recently wrote two books, *Pravoslávne dogmatické bohoslovie I*²⁶ and *Pravoslávne dogmatické bohoslovie II*²⁷.

3. The term ‘systematic theology’ in theological works

More than two decades ago C. V. Pospíšil, he wrote that a certain christological issue could also be approached from a systematic-dogmatic perspective²⁸.

The same author wrote in another article about ‘dogma’²⁹.

In other of his articles we read:

It is a problem of integrating Mariology into the unit of systematic theology³⁰.

[...] placement of soteriology in the system of individual systematic-theological treatises [...]³¹.

E. Krumpolc said: ‘It should be noted that Boublík, as a fundamental theologian, deals with research christological issues in terms of systematic theology, and in particular theology fundamental, [...]’³² and

This assessment will sound very well in line with the guidelines for theological work systematic theologian, outlined by our leading dogmatic theologian C. V. Pospíšil [...]’³³.

4. The terms ‘dogmatic theology’ and ‘systematic theology’ in theological works in the same text

Two decades ago, when the term ‘dogmatic theology’ was gradually abandoned and the term ‘systematic theology’, introduced, the following text also appeared:

What place should be reserved for soteriology between individual treatises of systematic or dogmatic theology? [...]

In this paper [...], we will pay attention to a number [...] of projects to reintegrate soteriology into the whole dogmatic theology [...]

[... Karl Rahner ...] considers soteriology as a kind of base of the entire building of his systematic theology. [...]

Nevertheless, the best way out of the path to understanding christological dogma is the meaning Jesus Christ for us³⁴.

²⁵ J. Mikulášek, *Křesťanství a „realita lidského života“*. Projekt fenomenologické teologie Edwarda Farleyho, „Studia Theologica“ 2019, No 1, p. 79.

²⁶ In English: Orthodox dogmatic theology; cf. I. Belejkaníč, *Pravoslávne dogmatické bohoslovie I*. Pravoslávna bohoslovecká fakulta, Prešov 1995.

²⁷ Cf. I. Belejkaníč, *Pravoslávne dogmatické bohoslovie II*. Pravoslávna bohoslovecká fakulta, Prešov 1996.

²⁸ Cf. C. V. Pospíšil, *Problematika věděni a vědomí vlastní osobní identity Ježíše z Nazareta*. Refugium Velehrad-Roma, Velehrad 1998, p. 8.

²⁹ Cf. C. V. Pospíšil, *Metoda v současné systematické teologii*, „Teologické texty“ 1993, No 3, p. 77.

³⁰ C. V. Pospíšil, *Místo mariologie v dějinách*, „Teologické texty“ 2000, No 5, p. 205-207.

³¹ C. V. Pospíšil, *Ježíš je Kristus a Spasitel*, „Teologické texty“ 2002, No 2 (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.teologicketexty.cz/casopis/2002-2/Jezis-je-Kristus-a-Spasitel.html>; cf. C. V. Pospíšil, *Problematika christologického hymnu*, „Teologické texty“ 1997, No 1, p. 28; *Systematická teologie z Ameriky*, „Teologické texty“ 1996, No 6 (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.teologicketexty.cz/scan/1996/06/209.jpg>

³² E. Krumpolc, *Ježíš historický a Kristus víry v nedávno uveřejněném díle Vladimíra Boublíka*, „Studia Theologica“ 2018, No 1, p. 71.

³³ Ibid., p. 86.

³⁴ C. V. Pospíšil, *Ježíš je Kristus a Spasitel*, „Teologické texty“ 2002, No 2 (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.teologicketexty.cz/casopis/2002-2/Jezis-je-Kristus-a-Spasitel.html>

5. Possible reasons for replacing ‘dogmatic theology’ with ‘systematic theology’

The term ‘systematic theology’ almost everywhere on theological faculties replaced the previous term ‘dogmatic theology’³⁵.

C. V. Pospíšil states that, in view of the renewal method in ‘dogmatic’ theology in accordance with decree *Optatam Totius* point 16, some experts propose to abandon the term ‘dogmatic theology’, dating back to the time when the classical manual was born, and propose to use the term ‘systematic theology’³⁶. They include R. Fisichella,³⁷ a significant theologian in the field of fundamental theology, the first president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization newly established since June 2010.

The reason may also be that the term ‘dogmatic’ is used today in general scientific discourse as well as in the linguistic use of social means of communication almost exclusively with a negative connotation.

This is also perceived by the Slovak expert on the creation of specialized terminology, who considers the term ‘dogmatic’ to be less clear than the term ‘vieroučný’³⁸ (meaning ‘dogmatic’) and highly overloaded in meaning, which in the Slovak cultural consciousness indicates quite different and, moreover, negative facts. According to him, it is not appropriate to use expressive words into terminology, e.g. the word ‘dogmatic’³⁹.

There is an expression in the *Catholic newspaper*: ‘The Holy Spirit enters into this teaching, but we still adhere to the old dogmatic methods which no longer belong in our schools?’⁴⁰.

In Slovak, the term ‘vieroučný’⁴¹ (meaning ‘dogmatic’) is also used, e.g. when designating of constitution of First Vatican Council *Dei Filius*⁴² or the first two constitutions of Second Vatican Council *Lumen gentium*⁴³ and *Dei Verbum*⁴⁴. The equivalent ‘dogmatic’ better

³⁵ Cf. A. Adam, *Teologálne čnosti a pôsobenie milosti*, [in:] *Teologálne čnosti z interdisciplinárneho pohľadu*, Ed. M. Lichner. Dobrá kniha, Trnava 2018, p. 11.

³⁶ Cf. M. Serenthá, *Teologia „dogmatica“: una qualifica ancora adeguata?*, „Teologia“ 1982, No 4, p. 273-313; R. Fisichella, *Che cos’è la teologia*, [in:] C. Rochetta, R. Fisichella, G. Pozzo, *La teologia tra rivelazione e storia – Corso di teologia sistematica I*. Bologna, 1988, p. 163-252, [in:] C. V. Pospíšil, *Problematika vědění a vědomí vlastní osobní identity Ježíše z Nazareta*, p. 8, nota No 7; A. Adam, M. Gilski, *Výzvy súčasnej teológie v kontexte dokumentov Druhého vatikánskeho koncilu a roku viery – 2. časť*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2013, No 4, p. 152; P. Mikluščák, *Systematicko-teologická analýza príhovoru Jána Pavla II. k členom Konferencie biskupov Slovenska v Šaštíne 1. júla 1995*, „Duchovný pastier“ 1996, No 2, p. 52.

³⁷ Cf. R. Fisichella, *Che cos’è la teologia*, [in:] C. Rochetta, R. Fisichella, G. Pozzo, *La teologia tra rivelazione e storia – Corso di teologia sistematica I*. Bologna, 1988, p. 163-252, [in:] C. V. Pospíšil, *Problematika vědění a vědomí vlastní osobní identity Ježíše z Nazareta*, p. 8, nota No 7.

³⁸ In English: ‘dogmatic’.

³⁹ Cf. B. Belák, *Jazykové a terminologické otázky. Zásady tvorby terminológie*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2000, No 1, p. 40; Slovenská akadémia vied. Jazykovedný ústav Ľudovíta Štúra SAV, *Slovník súčasného slovenského jazyka. A – G. Veda*, vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, Bratislava 2006, p. 686, points 3. and 4.

⁴⁰ P. Páterek, *Ako viesť modernú výučbu náboženstva*, „Katólicke noviny“ 2021, No 48, p. 19.

⁴¹ In English: ‘dogmatic’; cf. A. Adam, *Charizmy – v kontexte dokumentu Kongregácie pre náuku viery Iuvenescit Ecclesia – prvá časť*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2018, No 7, p. 316; A. Tyrol, *Poznámky k vieroučnej konštitúcii Dei Verbum*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2002, No 9, p. 438; G. L. Müller, *Encyklika Veritatis splendor po 25 rokoch. Obsah, poslanstvo, výzvy. Úvahy nad encyklikou Veritatis splendor* (online). Retrieved from: <https://www.kbs.sk/obsah/sekcia/h/dokumenty-a-vyhlasenia/p/zborniky-z-konferencii/c/aktualne-otazky-ludskej-mravnosti#Obsah>

⁴² *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 36, note No 12.

⁴³ Cf. A. Adam, *Encyklika Ecclesiam suam – súčasť ekleziológie koncilového obdobia*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2014, No 6, p. 254; A. Adam, *Dekrét Ad Gentes – Integrálna formácia evanjelizovaného človeka*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2015, No 9, p. 313.

⁴⁴ Cf. A. Tyrol, *Poznámky k vieroučnej konštitúcii Dei Verbum*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2002, No 9, p. 438.

corresponds to this word ‘vieroučný’⁴⁵ like ‘systematic’. ‘Vieroučný’ is translated in English as ‘dogmatic’ in the quoted article⁴⁶.

The negative connotation of the term ‘dogmatic’ was not given by Catholic or by orthodox churches or Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia, which includes ‘dogmatics’ among the main work areas of systematic theology,⁴⁷ but the secular environment for which the principles and fixed norms of christian doctrine are still not convenient in the period of postmodern relativism, although it itself sticks to them, e.g. in atheism or materialism, where it is firmly established that there is no God or gods, souls, angels, afterlife, spirits, heaven, hell, purgatory, etc., and both these philosophical movements are not going to change this. Christians do not accuse them of their supposed ‘dogmatism’ because they adhere to their fundamental principles. Thus, it is people outside the Christian opinion who have a problem with the term ‘dogmatic’ and Christians should not let the wrong opinion of the connotation of this term they proclaim be imposed on them.

This is not the first case of misunderstanding of the centuries-old basic term used in theology. A similar situation occurred after 1948 in Slovakia with the words ‘parish priest’ or ‘comrade’, to which some gave a pejorative connotation. The Catholic and Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia do not take this into account in the case of the word ‘parish priest’ and, without being influenced by some opinions from the non-Christian environment, they continue to use the designation of the said official ecclesiastical function, with which the inhabitants of countries where the Soviet-type socialist social system was not the dominant opinion apparently had no problem. We should respond similarly to incorrect reactions to the term ‘dogmatic’.

The word ‘comrade’, also used in books published by Spolok svätého Vojtecha in Trnava⁴⁸ before 1948 in Slovakia, was used by members of the Communist Party and was required to address teachers or public officials, lost its original positive meaning⁴⁹ ‘companionship’ and it has not yet been possible to restore its original meaning after 1990.

This may also apply to the historical name ‘Soviet Union’, which many may not like, but it is not a reason for us not to use it for one state during the period from its establishment after the October Revolution in 1917 until its collapse on 31 December 1991.

Regarding the objection that it is not appropriate to use expressive words in terminology, e.g. the word ‘dogmatic’,⁵⁰ it should be argued that it is not a word taken over, but a word established in theological science for a very long time, which an expert in philology with an absence of education in theology may not know.

Probably for this reason, instead of explaining the Catholic concept, many theologians resigned and tried to replace the term with another term, more acceptable to the public, while not knowing the true meaning of the term.

6. Origin of the word ‘dogmatic’ in theology

If many theologians did not resign themselves to the situation, it would be necessary to explain patiently – as the author of this study attempts to – that in the Catholic doctrine the term ‘dogmatic’ comes from the word ‘dogma’ and it comes from the Greek word ‘to dogmenon’,⁵¹ meaning: ‘what is fixed’. Originally, it meant not only some assumption, or

⁴⁵ In English: ‘dogmatic’.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Obsah*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2002, No 9, p. 391.

⁴⁷ Cf. Evanjelická bohoslovecká fakulta. Katedra systematickej teológie (online). Retrieved from: <https://fevth.uniba.sk/katedry-instituty-a-pracoviska/katedra-systematickej-teologie/>

⁴⁸ In English: Saint Adalbert Association.

⁴⁹ Cf. J. Haľko, *Prvý dekan Bohosloveckej fakulty v Bratislave Dr. Emil Funczik*, „Duchovný pastier“ 2016, No 2/3, p. 128.

⁵⁰ Cf. B. Belák, *Jazykové a terminologické otázky*, p. 40.

⁵¹ Το δεδωμενον.

opinion, but also a certain decision, principle, authoritative order, provision in science or in state life.⁵² In this meaning, the word ‘dogma’ also occurs in the Sacred Scripture (cf. Est 3:9; Dan 2:13; Lc 2:1; Acts 16:4; 17:7 etc.). The representatives of the Tradition used the word ‘dogma’ for certain, firm principles of faith and morals⁵³.

According to another interpretation, the term ‘dogma’ comes from the Greek word δοκεω,⁵⁴ meaning ‘to appear’ or ‘to seem true or good’. In patristics and scholastics, this term was usually represented by its equivalents such as ‘the truth of faith,’ ‘the word of truth’ (Eph 1:13, 2 Tim 2:15, Jas 1:18) or ‘the truths of the gospel’ (1 Tim 6:5, 2 Tim 2:18, 3:8, 4:4, Tit 1:14)⁵⁵.

First Vatican Council published the following definition of the term in 1870: ‘By divine and Catholic faith, all those things must be believed which are contained in the written word of God and in Tradition, and those which are proposed by the Church, either in a solemn pronouncement or in her ordinary and universal teaching power, to be believed as divinely revealed’⁵⁶.

In the above-mentioned three-volume work of significant dogmatic theologians representatives of the German language area, the meaning of the word ‘dogma’ in Catholic doctrine is explained in detail⁵⁷.

The dictionary *Slovník súčasného slovenského jazyka*⁵⁸ explains that the word ‘dogmatic’ according to the first point means referring to dogmas, articles of faith, according to the second point not admitting doubts, objections. ‘Dogmatic theology’ is theological discipline, dealing with the systematic interpretation of revealed truths which the Church submits to believe in⁵⁹. According to the *Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*⁶⁰ ‘dogmatic’ means an adjective from the word ‘dogma’ which is a solid and unchangeable article of religious doctrine not requiring evidence⁶¹.

7. Systematicity as part of any scientific discipline

⁵² Decretum, lex.

⁵³ Cf. P. Kandra, *Prednášky zo špeciálnej dogmatiky I*. Rímskokatolícka cyrilometodská bohoslovecká fakulta, Bratislava 1987, p. 28-29; J. Krupa, *Katolícka dogmatická teológia. Prolegomena – Trinitológia – Ekleziológia – Graciológia*. Univerzita Komenského, Bratislava 2014, p. 315.

⁵⁴ Dokeo.

⁵⁵ Cf. G. L. Müller, *Katholische Dogmatik*, p. 79.

⁵⁶ First Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution concerning the Catholic Faith*, Chap. 3. Faith, „Denzinger: Sources of dogma“ 1792 (online). Retrieved from: <http://patristica.net/denzinger/#n1200>; cf. DH, 3011; *Code of Canon Law* (online). Retrieved from: https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html, can. 750 and 1364; G. L. Müller, *Katholische Dogmatik*, p. 80.

⁵⁷ Cf. W. Beinert, Einleitung in die Dogmatik, [in:]. W. Beinert [ed.], *Glaubenszugänge. Lehrbuch der katholischen Dogmatik. Band 1*. Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn – München – Wien – Zürich 1995, p. 6-15; K. Rahner, H. Vorgrimler, *Teologický slovník*. Zvon, Praha 1996, p. 66-68. Entry: dogma; G. O’Collins, E. G. Farrugia, *Dizionario sintetico di teologia*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vaticano 1995, p. 112; A cura di G. Bof, Piccolo vocabolario teologico. In: A cura di G. Barbaglio, and S. Dianich, *Nuovo dizionario di teologia*. San Paolo, Milano 1994, p. 1853. Entry: Dogma; A cura di G. Barbaglio, and S. Dianich, *Nuovo dizionario di teologia*, s. 1557 a 1639. Entry: C. Vagaggini, Teologia; P. Petrosillo, *Il Cristianesimo dalla A alla Z. Lessico della fede cristiana*. San Paolo, Milano 1995, p. 121. Entry: Dogma; *Lexicon. Dizionario Teologico Enciclopedico*. Piemme, Casale Monferrato 1993, p. 313-314. Entry: M. Semeraro, Dogma / Dogmatica.

⁵⁸ In English: *Dictionary of the Contemporary Slovak Language*.

⁵⁹ Cf. Slovenská akadémia vied. Jazykovedný ústav Ľudovíta Štúra SAV, *Slovník súčasného slovenského jazyka. A – G*. Veda, vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, Bratislava 2006, p. 686.

⁶⁰ In English: *Short Dictionary of Slovak Language*.

⁶¹ Cf. Slovenská akadémia vied. Jazykovedný ústav Ľudovíta Štúra, *Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*, The third, supplemented and revised edition. Veda, vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, Bratislava 1997, p. 119. It should be specified from a religious point of view that this is a solid and unchangeable article of religious doctrine that does not require evidence in terms of empirical or exact sciences. However, it requires theological evidence or reasons.

When answering the question whether the term ‘systematic’ is an adequate substitution of the term ‘dogmatic’ theology, it should be remembered that the concept of ‘science’ in general – that is, not only theological but any science without distinction – is a systematic whole of knowledge obtained by a uniform path from certain and known principles. Science thus includes:

1. unity of the subject,
2. unity of method,
3. an organized system⁶².

The third characteristic indicates that the ‘organized system’, i.e. ‘systematicity’, is not only a characteristic of ‘dogmatic’ theology but any other theological discipline and any other science. The question is why the name ‘systematic theology’ should apply only to ‘dogmatic’ theology? Isn’t any ‘systematic’ also fundamental theology, biblical theology, liturgical theology, moral theology? Of course that they are. After all, if they did not contain the third element – the system – they could not be a science. It follows from the above that the term ‘systematic theology’ specifies or characterizes the previous name ‘dogmatic’ theology or does it rather make it less clear, obscure?

The topic is also developed by the following considerations on the characteristics of any science:

Theology, like any other science, exhibits characteristics which, according to today’s state of epistemology, characterize certain activity as scientific. Given that it is a dynamically developing system of logically linked claims, it is a science⁶³.

Theology is a system of revealed truths. The concept of *science* includes two elements:

1. the entire methodological process of getting to know a given section of fact (formal or real) may be called scientific knowledge;
2. science is the systematic arrangement of sentences related to a given subject and logically connected to each other.

The method determined by the subject itself and adopted in the given field of science must also be preserved in scientific knowledge⁶⁴. The adopted principles draw conclusions according to the rules of thinking. Their systematic and verifiable summary is thus science⁶⁵.

Dizionario sintetico di teologia confirms that ‘dogmatic theology’ it is the main theological subject which, on the basis of the data revealed in the Sacred Scripture and the Tradition, systematically examines and presents all the important doctrines of Christianity⁶⁶.

If we replace ‘dogmatic theology’ with ‘systematic theology’, the above-mentioned requirement of the document Congregation for the Clergy *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*: ‘Let the dogmatic theology [...] be taught systematically and in an orderly [...]’⁶⁷ manner will change to: ‘Let the systematic theology [...] be taught systematically and in an orderly [...].’ Can the ‘systematic’ or other theological disciplines be taught in a way other than ‘systematic’? Why put to the name of theological discipline a requirement that is an obvious feature of any science and without which it would not be a science? What would we say to the proposal to rename ‘mathematics’ as ‘exact science’? Anyone would be surprised by such an act. This only points to the fact that ‘systematicity’ is part of every science, therefore it is not necessary

⁶² Cf. P. Kandra, *Prednášky zo špeciálnej dogmatiky I.*, p. 7; J. Krupa, *Držať sa svojho vyznania. Úvod do katolíckej teológie*. Univerzita Komenského, Bratislava 2010, p. 14; P. Volek, *Vzťah filozofie a viery*, „Duchovný pastier“ 1996, No 3, p. 108.

⁶³ Cf. C. V. Pospíšil, *Metoda v súčasnej systematickej teológii*, „Teologické texty“ 1993, No 3, p. 78.

⁶⁴ Cf. P. Kandra, *Prednášky zo špeciálnej dogmatiky I.*, p. 7-8; J. Krupa, *Držať sa svojho vyznania*, p. 15.

⁶⁵ Cf. P. Kandra, *Prednášky zo špeciálnej dogmatiky I.*, p. 9; J. Krupa, *Držať sa svojho vyznania*, p. 17.

⁶⁶ Porov. G. O’Collins, E. G. Farrugia, *Dizionario sintetico di teologia*, p. 378. Entry: Teologia dogmatica; G. Barbaglio and S. Dianich [ed.], *Nuovo dizionario di teologia*, p. 1592. Entry: C. Vagaggini, Teologia.

⁶⁷ Kongregácia pre klerikov, *Dar povolania ku kňazstvu*, 168.

to put it in the name of any of them, nor to replace the current name 'dogmatic theology' with it.

Conclusion

Finally, a question can be asked: in which documents of the Church's Magisterium the name 'systematic theology' is used?

So far, the above applies only to the replacement of the name 'dogmatic theology' with 'systematic theology'. This does not apply if the name 'systematic theology' is perceived as a summary of the dogmatic, fundamental, moral and spiritual theology and social doctrine of the Church⁶⁸. An apt explanation of the difference between dogmatic and systematic theology can be found in the claim that 'systematic theology' it is characterized as an attempt to reveal the main Christian truths in a coherent and scientific manner. In practice, it often coincides with dogmatic theology, but may differ in that it involves discussing moral issues. It may differ from dogmatic theology in that it pays more attention to methodology, terminology, the use of philosophical principles, a strictly unified and challenging perspective in terms of the conditions and limits of theological knowledge⁶⁹.

Streszczenie:

W ostatnich dziesięcioleciach mieliśmy do czynienia z zastąpieniem terminu „teologia dogmatyczna” nazwą „teologia systematyczna”. W niniejszej pracy przedstawiono stopniową ewolucję od pierwszej nazwy do drugiej. Należy podkreślić, że opinia autora dotyczy jedynie zastąpienia nazwy „teologia dogmatyczna” określeniem „teologia systematyczna”, natomiast nie odnosi się do sytuacji, gdy nazwa „teologia systematyczna” jest postrzegana jako podsumowanie teologii dogmatycznej, fundamentalnej, moralnej i duchowości oraz nauki społecznej Kościoła. Autor zgadza się z tezą, że „teologię systematyczną” charakteryzuje się jako próbę odświeżenia głównych prawd chrześcijańskich w sposób spójny i naukowy. W praktyce często pokrywa się ona z teologią dogmatyczną, ale może różnić się tym, że obejmuje dyskusję o kwestiach moralnych. Od teologii dogmatycznej może się różnić zwróceniem większej uwagi na metodologię, terminologię, stosowanie zasad filozoficznych, ujednoczone i kwestionujące spojrzenie na uwarunkowania i granice wiedzy teologicznej. Na zakończenie autor wskazuje, czy zmiana nazwy jest oficjalnym stanowiskiem Kościoła katolickiego, czy tylko aktualnym trendem wielu teologów i wydziałów teologicznych jednostek naukowych.

Słowa kluczowe: przejście, teologia dogmatyczna, teologia systematyczna, teologowie, wydziały teologiczne, Urząd Nauczycielski Kościoła, Kościół katolicki

Summary:

Transition from the Name 'Dogmatic' Theology to 'Systematic' Theology

The term 'dogmatic theology' has been replaced with the term 'systematic theology' in recent decades. This study presents the gradual development from the first term to the second. It emphasises that the author's opinion applies only to the replacement of the term 'dogmatic theology' with the term 'systematic theology'. This does not apply if the term 'systematic theology' is perceived as a sum of dogmatic, fundamental, moral and spiritual theology and the social doctrine of the Church. The author agrees with the statement that 'systematic theology' is characterized as an attempt to reveal the main Christian truths in a coherent and scientific way. In practice, it often coincides with dogmatic theology, but may differ in that it involves a discussion on moral issues. It may differ from dogmatic theology in that it pays more attention to methodology, terminology, the use of philosophical principles, and a unified and

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Petrosillo, *Il Cristianesimo dalla A alla Z*, p. 403. Entry: Teologia.

⁶⁹ G. O'Collins, E. G. Farrugia, *Dizionario sintetico di teologia*, p. 386; cf. G. Barbaglio and S. Dianich [ed.], *Nuovo dizionario di teologia*, p. 1647-1649; P. Petrosillo, *Il Cristianesimo dalla A alla Z*, p. 403.

challenging perspective on the conditions and limits of theological knowledge. The author concludes by pointing to whether the term change is an official position of the Catholic Church or just a current trend of many theologians and theological faculties.

Key words: transition, dogmatic theology, systematic theology, theologian, theological faculties, The Magisterium of the Church, Catholic church

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