

PREFACE

The idea of writing this book goes back to 2005. At that time, I finished writing my doctoral dissertation on the personal individuation of the Holy Spirit (published later as *God Without a Face? On the Personal Individuation of the Holy Spirit*, [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011]). In order to pursue my doctoral research, I delved deeply and extensively into the doctrine of the Trinity in modern, medieval, and patristic eras alike. I realized from that intellectual journey the profound relevance and connectedness of the doctrine of the Trinity to the entire spectrum of Christian theology. I also perceived from my broad reading of the literature on trinitarian theology, especially the contemporary ones, that the doctrine of the Trinity is undoubtedly center-stage on the theological and philosophical scene in our postmodern age.

Be that as it may, I decided to take my study of trinitarian theology further, into the realm of the key anthropological and conceptual notions of “personhood” and “relationality.” The result was this book, which attempts to think about how trinitarian theologians of the modern and postmodern eras interacted with, and were shaped by, other modernist and postmodernist forms of inquiry. Postmodernity is thus the main context of this endeavor, and the notions of “personhood” and “relationality” are its primary subject.

Between 2005, when I started developing this project, and 2009, when I finished its first draft, many people contributed to my research process and made the production of this book a real possibility. I am deeply indebted to the Langham Trust, especially Dr. Chris Wright, and to its sister trust, John Stott Ministries, for generously offering me a one-year scholarship to pursue this project in a proper research center at the Yale Divinity School. Without this generous grant, I would have not been able to achieve my goal.

My sincere gratitude and appreciation go also to Yale Divinity School, personified in Prof. Miroslav Volf, who kindly invited me during the academic

year of 2008–09 to visit Yale and pursue research for one year as a Visiting Fellow in his Yale Center for Faith and Culture. Professor Volf offered me all the support and help I needed to sharpen my arguments and carefully assess my claims in this book. Professor Volf's invitation enabled me to enjoy the massive available resources in the Yale Divinity School's library, and Yale University's Sterling Library, which supplied me with all the literature I needed to complete my work.

I also convey my profound and unstinting gratitude to the Overseas Ministries Study Center (OMSC) and its ex-Director, Dr. Jonathan Bonk. I cannot find enough words to thank Jonathan for his incredibly generous offer of a free-of-charge residence at the center, which nicely sheltered me during my stay in New Haven. During my time at OMSC, Dr. Bonk was steadily supportive and encouraging to me and my project in ways I cannot even begin to praise.

My gratitude goes also to certain individuals, without the help of whom this project would have not seen the light. I am deeply indebted to the dear Professor Emeritus, David Kelsey, with whom I enjoyed discussing my project while I was at Yale. Professor Kelsey offered me and my project a considerable portion of his precious time. His remarks, critiques, and corrections played a substantial role in shaping the manuscript's form, as well as the arguments and claims I made therein. His challenging questions have consistently inspired me to dig deeper and elaborate more thoroughly.

My sincere thanks go also to Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Grosshans of Münster University. Professor Grosshans kindly and patiently read through the entire manuscript and provided me with valuable suggestions that have made the text more solidly and systematically constructed.

I also extend my thanks and perpetual appreciation to Dr. Terry Wright, who proofread the very first draft of the text before I submitted to Fortress Press and improved its English and who also prepared the indexes to the published version of the text. This is not the first manuscript Terry has proofread for me and helped prepare for publication. In this, he was helpful as always.

I am, most of all, grateful beyond words to Fortress Press for paying attention to my text and showing willingness to publish it. I sincerely thank every member of their team, who in their highly professional and impressively meticulous work, helped make the dream of producing this volume in its final form come true. My gratitude goes especially to Michael Gibson and Lisa Gruenisen for their professional and careful editing. Without their valuable comments and advice I would not have been able to solidify and crystalize my arguments, particularly in the second chapter.

To all these persons and institutions I am in much debt and endless gratitude. If there is valuable knowledge in this book, it must be attributed to their help, assessments, corrections, and suggestions. If, on the other hand, there are still gaps and weaknesses despite their impressive contributions, the responsibility lies solely on my shoulders.

Hartford Seminary, Connecticut
December 2013