**Abstract:** *Transcendence and interiority. Søren Kierkegaard and Orthodox Theology*

Since this is a theological thesis, in order to be properly understood, or rather, in order not to be misunderstood or superficially understood, the theme of transcendence needs to be reinterpreted in the light of the paradigm changes that modernity and postmodernity have brought about at all levels. Particularly from a theological point of view, we are referring here to nihilism, pluralism and religious relativism. It must be acknowledged that thinking and talking about God (the theme of transcendence) needs to be updated, or rather renewed, since postmodern human thought is characterized by a "distrust of the metanarratives that have legitimized truth and knowledge" (Jean-François LYOTARD, *Condiția postmodernă. Raport asupra cunoașterii*, trad. de Ciprian Mihali, Idea Design & Print, Cluj, 2003, p. 11) and "postmodern society is devoid of transcendent values" (Ștefan ILOAIE, *Morala creștină și etica postmodernă. O întâlnire necesară*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj, 2009, p. 6). In view of these statements, how can we as theologians develop our discourse, given that it is based on Absolute Truth, which is revealed, and therefore transcendent? There seems to be an unbridgeable gulf between theological thinking and postmodern thinking. We believe that because of its dynamism, theological discourse can only continue to be relevant if it undergoes a process of renewal and at the same time if the attitude of incriminating the ethos of postmodernity, which only increases the distance between the Church and society, is overcome. Why does postmodern man no longer trust the metanarratives that until postmodernity were the source of meaning? This question should make us responsible and make us realize that these changes are neither "good" nor "bad". Orthodox theology must not deny them (in fact, it cannot) by appealing to the "glorious" past in which man "believed without a trace of doubt", but to understand them and respond to them in a relevant way by (re)turning towards the questions and dilemmas of the concrete man.

Thus, the main objective we propose in this paper is, on the one hand, to make a radical hermeneutic to the relationship between man and God from the perspective of Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) and orthodox theology, and on the other hand to propose new theological ways of speaking in the light of these paradigm shifts. But in order to accomplish this goal, both theological paradigms have to meet in dialog on an integrative ground, and this ground is the interiority and the life of man. In this respect, we consider two central premises underlying this thesis:

(1) Every human being feels a need for transcendence which is reflected in the desire to transcend, on all levels, human finitude. Through this God calls us to interpret and understand our own life beyond the framework of immanence. When it is realized and understood from a spiritual perspective, this need can become the foundation and the trigger of a moral-spiritual awakening which opens the way to living an authentic life, fully Christian, and therefore fully human.

(2) Our second premise concerns the concept of interiority. For the discourse on God to be truly relevant from an existential and moral-spiritual point of view, it is necessary that those called to this mission (bishops,

priests, theologians or any Christian who takes his vocation seriously), speak about God to the man of today starting from his experiences, his searches, his questions, his anxieties and dilemmas. In a word, starting from his interiority. That is why, in this thesis, we will try to reevaluate, from the point of view of Orthodox theology, one of the central premises of Christian existentialism: *to speak to man about God starting from man (or starting from his experiences), and not to speak to man about God starting from God.* This premise requires a use of the inductive method, which can be harnessed both theologically and existentially, by turning inward and towards life itself.