

## ***Abstract***

This dissertation discusses the theological work of Johann Adam Möhler (1796–1838) with special emphasis on his ecclesiology. It is divided in two parts: the first part concerns Möhler's course of life in its cultural and historical context, the second part presents the intellectual richness of this Swabian theologian. As this work deals especially with Möhler's conception of the Church, the second part is focused on five ecclesiologically significant texts of this theologian: *Einheit in der Kirche* (1825), *Athanasius* (1827), *Anselm* (1827), *Symbolik* (1832) and *Introduction to the lectures on the Church history* (1837). These texts are introduced and analysed with the help of three selected interpreters (Geiselman, Wagner, Himes). The closing part of the dissertation summarizes Möhler's notion of the Church in four points:

1. Möhler's orientation qualifies him as a historian of the Church. That's why he builds on the essentially historical form of the Church. The basic variety and plurality of the Church life is his point of departure.
2. The determining character of the Church is its unity, founded in the operation of the Holy Spirit, and operating in the spiritual realm of the created and redeemed world endowed with life.
3. The Holy Spirit being the principle of the Church unity, its foundation is the incarnated Word Jesus Christ. Thus, the Church is radically soteriological in its character, merging in it humanity with divinity and its visible form is not deducible from its purely human aspect: the Church bears the tradition, the rich diversity of which bestows upon it the gift of permanence and infallibility, and it has an essentially sacramental form.
4. From the fundamentally historical concept of the Church, Möhler began to conceive the historical relation of man and God who became incarnated in the history. Should the relationship of God to man retain its fullness, i.e. both in its diversity and in its inner unity, then it is the Church where Mohler finds its place; there the relationship really begins, takes place and fulfills. The Church is able to unify the human diversity in the unity of the Spirit; the unity of the Church must be then characterized as the spiritual unity, operating in its three basic regions: doctrine, cult,

and social organisation.

Möhler's ecclesiology presents Church, which is positively constituted by Christ as a unity, and at the same time is lead by the Holy Spirit in such a manner that everything really human comes here to its unification. Therefore, the Church – in the Holy Spirit – is the place of the ongoing incarnation: Christ unified in himself each and every humanity with God, in order to bring every humanity unified with God in the Church also to the re-unified humanity.

Keywords: Church – Ecclesiology – Ecumenism – History of doctrines 19th century – Johann Adam Möhler 1796-1838