



A Hungarian Theologian Abroad: The Reception of the Lima Document in the Works of Gellért Békés OSB (1915–1999)

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Abstract

This article aims to provide an insight into the ecumenical work of a Hungarian Benedictine monk, Gellért Békés. First, I offer a short overview of Békés's life, who was forced into exile by the socialist regime and who spent almost half a century as Professor at the University of Saint Anselm in Rome. Next, I review Békés's publications and the main thrust of his thinking in the field of ecumenical theology. The central part of my article is devoted to the presentation of his Italian monograph (*Eucaristia e chiesa*, 1985), which can be considered to be his most important work and in which he gives a comprehensive account of his ecumenical theology of the Eucharist, especially in the light of the Lima Document of 1982. His major contribution lies in the fact that he took into account the interrelation between the various ecumenical documents and he integrated the newly retrieved dimensions of the Eucharist. He also commented on the idea of Real Presence developed by the Lima Document in the light of Catholic doctrine. Last but not least, this article wants to contribute to the reception of Békés's thought, which has hardly begun even in his own country.

Keywords

Gellért Békés, Eucharist, ecumenical dialogue, reception of the Lima Document, Hungarian theology

Introduction

In various ways, the Second Vatican Council can be considered a milestone in the life of the Catholic Church, and this was particularly evident in the theological discourse that preceded and followed the Council sessions. Vibrant intellectual centres emerged all around the world with the aim of preparing and then deepening the ecclesial teaching formulated by the Council. The countries of East-Central Europe,

however, were prevented from being part of this dialogue. In various ways and to different degrees - varying from country to country - the life of the Catholic Church in the region was restricted between 1945 and 1990. In Hungary, the initial harsh persecution of the Church was replaced by a 'soft dictatorship': the Holy See and Hungary concluded a partial agreement in 1964, which allowed the Church to regain some of its freedom but the state authorities continued to exercise control over Church life, including theological education (even though by this time it became possible for candidates for the priesthood to pursue theological studies in a foreign country). As a consequence, Hungarian theologians had only limited and delayed access to the current literature, and their involvement in the international dialogue was very limited. In fact, only theologians working at the Academy of Theology in Budapest were able to join the ongoing theological debates in some ways. Naturally, the same difficulties applied to Hungarian theologians' participation in the ecumenical dialogue as well.

At the same time, members of the four officially functioning religious orders of the period - although they were primarily involved in secondary school education - mobilized their intellectual capital and became the major mediators of the reception of the Council. This process was much helped by those members of various religious orders who were forced to leave the country before 1950. One of these religious intellectuals was the Benedictine monk Gellért Békés, who taught at the Benedictine University of Rome (Saint Anselm) between 1946 and 1994. As deputy to the major superior of the Hungarian Benedictines outside Hungary, he travelled to many countries in Europe to maintain contact with members of the Hungarian emigration. In the years following Vatican II, Békés was assigned to teach courses in ecclesiology and it was at that time that his interest turned toward ecumenism. Apparently, this fact proved to have a decisive effect on the rest of his life and work.

In this article I want to present a short overview of Békés's ecumenical theology with particular attention to his interpretation of the Lima Document of 1982, which formed the main focus of his theological investigations. In my discussion of this theme, I shall make reference to his works that were written in languages other than Hungarian, while at the same time I shall rely on the more extensive Hungarian literature on the topic. In addition, I have also had the opportunity to consult material of his intellectual legacy in the library of the Archabbey of Pannonhalma (Hungary), and I have tried to incorporate my findings into the following reflections.¹

¹ I am very grateful to Professor Beáta Tóth (Sapientia College of Theology of Religious Orders, Budapest, Hungary) for her help in finalising the study.

In the Service of Ecumenism: The Life and Work of Gellért Békés

Békés was born in Budapest in 1915 and entered the Benedictine community of Pannonhalma (founded in AD 996) in 1932. Between 1933 and 1940 he studied philosophy and theology in Rome, where he obtained a doctorate in the spiritual theology of St. Clement of Alexandria. After his studies, he was for a short period a teacher at the secondary boarding school run by the Benedictines in Pannonhalma, and in 1946, at the request of his Archabbot, he returned to Rome to become professor of Dogmatic Theology (Sacramentology) and Liturgical Theology at the University of Saint Anselm. He was later assigned to teach Ecclesiology and Ecumenism, and he also served twice as Dean of the Faculty of Theology and subsequently as Vice-Rector of the University.

During his career he served the emigrated Hungarian community as translator of the New Testament (first edition in 1951), editor-in-chief of the *Katolikus Szemle [Catholic Review]* (a journal of emigrated Hungarians since 1949) and pastor in the *Hungarian Pax Romana* intellectual movement. In addition to all this, his work as a literary translator and poet is also worth mentioning. Between 1946 and 1966 he was procurator general of the Hungarian Benedictines, and between 1957 and 1992 he was deputy to the Archabbot of Pannonhalma in Rome. He returned to Hungary in 1994, where he continued to serve the dialogue between the churches during the last years of his life: he was a member of the ecumenical commission of the Hungarian Bishops' Conference and cultivated his friendships and professional contacts as an organiser of and participant in ecumenical meetings. Békés died in 1999 while on holiday near Sankt Lambrecht and was buried in Pannonhalma.

Békés's ecumenical commitment was evident from an early age as he helped in editing the journal *Egység Útja [The Way of Unity]* during the Second World War. Later, he was more deeply impressed by the ecumenical movement when he participated at the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Uppsala. In addition to his work as a professor, in the 1970s and 1980s he organised a number of conferences on ecumenical themes at the University of Saint Anselm, partly in collaboration with the Ecumenical Institute in Strasbourg, and he also studied major documents, such as, the Accra Document of 1974 and the Lima Document of 1982. The proceedings of the discussions were published in the *Studia Anselmiana* series of the university edited by Békés. He was invited to be a guest lecturer at the University of St. Gregory in Rome, but he also lectured at summer schools in Dunwoodie Seminary in the Archdiocese of New York. At least a quarter of Békés's publications deal with ecumenical theology, and nearly

four-fifths of his writings in this field are in Italian, English, German and Spanish – not Hungarian!²

On surveying the entire corpus of Békés's publications on ecumenical themes, six main areas seem to emerge as the focus of the emigrant Benedictine theologian's interest: (1) the history of the ecumenical movement; (2) evaluating the figure of Martin Luther; (3) the nature and method of the ecumenical dialogue; (4) the relationship between Word and Sacrament; (5) the Eucharist and the Lima Document; and (6) ecclesiological themes. His writings in foreign languages belong to the latter three areas. If we look at the impact of Békés's work, we find that until the political change in 1990 he had been a leading Hungarian figure in ecumenical theology. He published his articles in Hungarian journals from the second half of the 1970s, and after 1990 he edited several thematic collections of his earlier writings. Although his internationally renowned work is still little known in Hungary, his person and his role in the ecumenical dialogue are still remembered through his friendships.

The Interpretation of the Lima Document by Gellért Békés

First of all, it must be noted that Békés focused on the second chapter of the Lima Document, in particular the one dealing with the Eucharist, although in one study he also commented on the question of the ministerial priesthood.³ The real significance of his approach lies in the fact that he treated the subject in the context of the ecumenical dialogue, especially in the context of some bilateral documents (Catholic-Anglican 1972, Catholic-Lutheran 1978, Catholic-Orthodox 1982). He summarised his research in a book published in Italian in 1985 titled *Eucaristia e chiesa. Ricerca dell'unità nel dialogo ecumenico (Eucharist and church. The search for unity in the ecumenical dialogue)*.⁴ The monograph was praised by the Secretary of the Secretariat of the of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome, Pierre Duprey, in a letter to Békés, and it has been considered by many reviewers as a fine fundamental systematic summary.

² For a comprehensive bibliography up to 1994, see: Ádám Somorjai (ed.), *Unum omnes in Christo. In unitatis servitio. Miscellanea Gerardo J. Békés O.S.B. Octogenario dedicata*, vol. 1 (Pannonhalma: Bencés Kiadó, 1995), pp. 63-80.

³ Gerardo J. Békés, 'La successione nella tradizione apostolica. Il problema del rapporto fra la successione del ministero e la paradosis apostolica nel documento', in Giustino Farnedi - Philippe Rouillard, eds., *Il ministero ordinato nel dialogo ecumenico. Riflessioni di teologi cattolici sul documento di Lima 1982. Atti del VII. Convegno di Teologia Sacramentaria 22-24 nov. 1984. Scritti in onore di Gerardo J. Békés* (Roma: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1985), pp. 143-64.

⁴ Gerard J. Békés, *Eucaristia e chiesa. Ricerca dell'unità nel dialogo ecumenico* (Casale Monferrato: Edizione Piemme, 1985).

The Pannonhalma legacy contains full or partial English, French and Spanish translations of the monograph as well as correspondence from the preparatory phase prior to its publication in other languages. However, to my knowledge, Békés's work has not been published in any other language.

The Cult Problem Today

After the first introductory chapter of the book (on the themes of the Christian basis of unity, catholicity, and apostolic conciliarity), Békés looked at liturgical celebration from the perspective of cult, and in particular, he discussed the difficulties of cultic practice that were specific to the secularized societies of the 20th century.⁵ Obviously, his reflection was based on the ecumenical work of the WCC, which had already been exploring the question of cult in the 1930s, yet it was not until the 1960s that the focus of interest was more specifically directed to the comparison of cultic practice within the contemporary context. The guiding principle—mentioned already in the introduction to the book—was that the unity of the Church is expressed through the realisation of three factors: first, apostolic faith and Christian tradition, second, ecclesial organisation, and third, worship with the celebration of the Eucharist at its centre. The latter is of particular importance because it is in the Eucharist that the Paschal mystery of redemption is made present, and it is this presence that creates the ecclesial community as a divine and human communion.

It is, therefore, not surprising that—in addition to the basic themes of faith and church organization—the WCC was engaged in studying the existing cults through which the offering to God is realized as early as 1937. The 1952 meeting in Lund gave the study of cultic practice a Christocentric and pneumatological focus, while at the same time there was a growing emphasis on the cultural, anthropological and psychological dimensions as well. Within this framework, a decade later (1963) in Montreal the differences between the 'Western' and 'Eastern' worlds entered the focus of discussion for the first time when it was recognized that, on the one hand, the cult was taking place in an increasingly secularized ecclesial environment, and, on the other hand, the cult had to find a response to the experience of poverty in archaic religious forms.

However, according to Békés, it also became clear that, despite these differences, the basis of all cultic practices was the memory of the divine redemptive work, which needed to find renewed forms of expression in all ecclesial contexts. Since the period of the early Church

⁵ Gerard J. Békés, *Eucaristia e chiesa*, pp. 31-57.

one of the fundamental elements of the Church's mission had been the *leiturgia*, which both made the divine community a participant in the work of creation and offered praise and worship to God in response to the community thus created. As Békés points out, this is why the relationship between worship and catholicity became a central issue in Uppsala in 1968, since the issue of catholicity drew attention not only to the relationship between God and the human individual, but also to the union between people—and such a union must find expression in worship. Békés reckons that it may be precisely the process of secularization that can help to stimulate the ecclesial community to find a more authentic form of cult.

Of course, as Békés notes at this point that in this process it is important to be aware of the following principles: the problem is not the cult as such, but its traditional forms, since cultic practice always functions as a contradictory sign to the world, while, at the same time, the cult needs to enter into dialogue with the actual 'character' of the world so that the order of divine and human nature can be linked. Békés thinks that the Geneva consultation of 1969 sought to explore the practicalities of this by seeking answers to the questions of how to place the cult at the service of the world as a fundamental expression of solidarity; how liturgy can be both personal and spontaneous while at the same time giving a sense of certainty; how the missionary character of the ecclesial community can be expressed in the cult; and what are the limits of the use of means of telecommunication in the transmission of liturgical acts.

The Real Presence in the Lima Document

The third chapter of Békés's systematic monograph deals with the question of Real Presence.⁶ In the wake of the liturgical constitution of the Second Vatican Council (*Sacrosantum concilium*) Békés stresses the fact that in the Eucharistic celebration one does not speak of Real Presence simply in relation to the body and blood of Christ since in the liturgy we celebrate the Real Presence of the whole person of Jesus including his mission and sacrifice (cf. SC 7).

According to Békés, here lies the dynamic meaning of the Eucharist, which is complemented by a synthetic vision in the Lima Document, namely, where the text emphasizes the fact that the Eucharistic celebration becomes a new Easter feast of the covenant, ordained by Christ for his followers in memory of his death and resurrection. In this manner, the Lima Document places the issue of the Eucharist in the context of

⁶ Gerard J. Békés, *Eucaristia e chiesa*, pp. 59-80. At the beginning of this reflection, it is important to note that the work of Max Thurian, the prominent Catholic theologian of the Lima Document, was surprisingly referred to only a few times in Békés's book.

salvation history right at the beginning of the relevant (second) chapter of the document. As Békés notes, through the bread and wine the New Testament work of salvation is commemorated at a commemorative meal where the person of Jesus Christ is made present through the sacramental signs of his self-sacrifice. In the words of the document ‘the eucharist is a sacramental meal which by visible signs communicates to us God’s love in Jesus Christ’ (LD 1). In this sacramental meal, therefore, the real, living and active presence of Christ is realized (cf. LD 13), however, the document also leaves open the question of the extent to which different ecclesial communities associate the Real Presence of Christ with the signs of the bread and wine, and whether this distinction can be reconciled into convergent interpretations.

For Békés, the soteriological aspect is inseparable from the ecclesiological one, which is also expressed in the Lima Document (cf. LD 19–21) when it states that the (sacramental) sacrifice of Christ both actualizes our communion with God and with our fellow human beings and at the same time constitutes the Church as a people consecrated and reconciled to God. He emphasizes the same idea in the volume edited by René Latourelle for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of Vatican II.⁷

The Lima Document traces the liturgical realization of the Real Presence back to two ‘cultic practices’: *anamnesis* and *epiklesis*, the former being a biblical cultic practice, through which the people of Israel remembered their deliverance from Egypt, their own Pascha. Subscribing to Notker Füglistner’s interpretation—which he also mentions in other studies—, Békés understands the concept of *anamnesis* not only as the memory of the chosen people itself, but also as the Lord’s memory of Israel as well as the actualisation of the divine presence and the act of redemption within the framework of this biblical conviction. Békés makes clear that through the act of remembrance, the worshipping community not only looks back to the past, but also experiences redemption in the present – already related to Christ’s redemptive act – and at the same time looks forward with confidence to its ultimate fulfilment, and in this manner the feast of remembrance can also be interpreted as a prophetic sign. The eucharistic *anamnesis* thus signals a covenant being realized, through which is ‘the Church’s effective proclamation of God’s mighty acts and promises’ (LD 7). Békés stresses the fact that, according to the Lima Document, commemoration is not only the content of the eucharist, but also the Word proclaimed, so that ‘each reinforces the other’ (LD 12). Here I can only

⁷ Gerardo J. Békés OSB, ‘The Eucharist Makes the Church. The Ecclesial Dimension of the Sacrament’, in René Latourelle, ed., *Vatican II. Assessment and Perspectives. Twenty-five Years After (1962-1987)*, vol. 2 (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), pp. 347-63.

mention the fact that Békés devoted considerable attention also to the question of the salvific mediating role of the Word and the sacrament.⁸

As regards the other cultic practice, *epiklesis*, Békés highlights the fundamental role of the Holy Spirit in making possible the manifestation of Real Presence, which is realized in the Eucharistic gifts, while at the same time sanctifying the members of the community, who participate in the celebration. At the same time, as the Lima Document has it: ‘the bond between the eucharistic celebration and the mystery of the Triune God reveals the role of the Holy Spirit as that of the One who makes the historical words of Jesus present and alive’ (LD 14).

On the issue of Real Presence, Békés briefly reviews contemporary findings of the ecumenical dialogue. The Accra Document of 1974, which prepared the way for the Lima Document, already spoke of the Eucharist in the soteriological and Trinitarian context described above, and although it did not discuss in detail the controversial issues of the Real Presence and the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, it did affirm the ‘permanence’ of the Presence in the bread and wine after the communion of the Eucharist. The 1971 Windsor Statement also included this confession of faith, but the document, signed by Catholic and Anglican theologians, avoided the use of the term *transsubstantiatio*.

According to Békés, the document issued by the Catholic-Lutheran Joint Commission in 1978 was insightful in articulating the divergent positions on the above-mentioned issues, while at the same time placing the emphasis of the joint statement primarily on convergent interpretations. The Lima Document followed this perspective and did not use the Catholic term for the realization of the presence: it explained the Eucharist primarily in terms of its soteriological and ecclesiological meaning and did not address its ontological reality. At the same time, as pointed out by Békés, it follows here the insights of the Dominican theologian Paul-Laurent Carle, post-Tridentine Catholic theology cannot dispense with an examination of the ontological status/nature of the Eucharist, without which faith in the Real Presence cannot be articulated adequately. Békés, however, is of the opinion that it may be helpful in the ecumenical dialogue to interpret the Eucharist with the help of categories taken from the sphere of interpersonal relationships (see, for example, Alexander Gerken’s approach) or the sign of realisation (see Piet Schoonenberg’s attempt). These interpretations were also taken up by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Mysterium fidei* (as complementary models for the interpretation of the doctrine of *transsubstantiatio*).

⁸ Gerardo J. Békés, ‘Parola e sacramento. Il rapporto tra due fattori nella partecipazione alla salvezza’, *Ecclesia orans* 3 (1991), pp. 261-76. In this study, Békés engages with Karl Rahner’s insights, and in another related paper he quotes Walter Kasper’s reflections.

The Rediscovered Dimensions of the Eucharist

The fourth chapter of *Eucaristia e chiesa* is central in that it offers an insightful synthetic summary of the rediscovered dimensions of the Eucharist, which, according to Békés, are partly the fruit of the ecumenical dialogue⁹. In the first place, Békés discusses the Christological dimension which, according to him, in post-Tridentine Catholic theology tended to become Christomonism. The essence of this, in Békés's interpretation, is the assumed 'supremacy' of the following four aspects over all others: (1) the Eucharist was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper, (2) the priest presents the sacrifice *in persona Christi*, at which the Real Presence of Christ is celebrated, and which is realized through *transsubstantiatio*, (3) furthermore, the sacrifice of the cross becomes sacramentally present in the Eucharist, in which (4) Christ as priest and sacrifice stands before the celebrating community. Békés does not, of course, deny the significance of all this, but in his view Tridentine theological effort to formulate Catholic doctrine as an unquestionable response to Luther's ideas has for centuries relegated to the background in an unfortunate manner many other dimensions of the Eucharist, such as: the Eucharist as mystery, the Trinitarian aspect or eschatological perspective of the Eucharist, and the Church as a divine-human community formed by the Eucharist.

Békés formulates four further dimensions of the Eucharist, which he believes are also present in the Lima Document. First, the soteriological dimension that has already been mentioned in connection with the *anamnesis*: at the commemorative meal of the people of the new covenant, we remember the entire life and redemptive work of Christ, while at the same time God remembers his people in the light of his promises. However, God's promises do not solely concern their fulfilment in the past, for they also direct the attention of the celebrating community towards the future, towards what is yet to be fulfilled (cf. LD 6–7).

Second, I have already spoken of the pneumatological-sacramental dimension, which highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in making the reality of Christ present in the Eucharist since it is the creative power of the Father at work with the Holy Spirit that makes the words of the Eucharist effective in the liturgical celebration. It is for this reason that Christ is present not in a purely spiritual way, but in a sacramental way through the visible reality of the eucharistic elements (cf. LD 13–14). In Békés's understanding of the Eucharist, it is this dimension, alongside the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, that is most emphasised in the Lima Document. Such an emphasis is also related to the fact that the

⁹ Gerard J. Békés, *Eucaristia e chiesa*, pp. 81–100.

question of *transsubstantiatio* was not addressed in the text, whereas the bilateral documents sometimes disagreed on this issue.

Third, the major issue of the ecclesiological-liturgical dimension in Békés's interpretation consists in the question of where exactly the Real Presence is realized, what is the *locus proprius* of the eucharistic celebration? Point 19 of the document stresses that it is 'in the Eucharist that the community of God's people is fully manifested' (LD 19). All this presupposes the idea that the source of church life is the eucharistic feast in which the unity of the participants in Christ is realized at a particular location. Moreover, as the Lima document makes clear, this realised community is an expansive community which both transforms the members of the community internally and connects the Christian community in solidarity to the suffering experienced in the world (cf. LD 20–21).

Despite the lack of references to the results of the Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue—especially the Munich Document of 1982—as a critic of Békés's work has rightly pointed out,¹⁰ it is precisely in the context of the ecclesiological dimension that the effects of the dialogue can be pinpointed in his thought. This becomes even clearer in the light of the fact that Békés admittedly came to the study of ecumenism from the perspective of conciliar ecclesiology and he wrote his first article on this topic in English.¹¹ Given this fact, it is rather surprising that I found no reference—either in the published works or in the manuscript material—to Henri de Lubac, whose work is seminal with regard to the Roman Catholic interpretation of the eucharistic ecclesiology.

Fourth, there is the Trinitarian and cosmic-eschatological dimension of the Eucharist, which I have also mentioned above. It is in the Eucharist, in the great thanksgiving to the Father, that Christ unites the faithful to himself, in which the Church makes her supplications on behalf of the entire created world (cf. LD 3–4, 7).

Context and Reception in Hungary

If we examine the ecumenical theological significance of the eucharistic doctrine of the Lima Document's during the forty years which have elapsed since then, we find that Békés' insights, although with different emphases, are significantly in line with current evaluations. Notably, scholars today generally emphasise that the Lima Document's teaching on the Eucharist, following the structure of the Apostles' Creed and the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, is Trinitarian (thanksgiving

¹⁰ See, Petro B. T. Bilaniuk, 'Eucaristia e chiesa. Ricerca dell'unità nel dialogo ecumenico', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 1 (1988), p. 123.

¹¹ Gerard J. Békés, 'The growing awareness of the *Una Sancta*: convergencies in ecumenical ecclesiology', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 4 (1979), pp. 691–704.

to the Father, remembrance of Christ, invocation of the Spirit), ecclesiological and eschatological.¹² A recent survey, just like the work of Békés, identifies the ecclesiological, pneumatological and eschatological dimensions as parts of a renewed approach to the Eucharist.¹³ There is also an interesting coincidence: in the same year when Békés's work appeared (1985), Walter Kasper's study¹⁴ was published on the various aspects of the Eucharist, in which Kasper discussed essentially the same dimensions (the Eucharist as the testament of Jesus, *anamnesis*, gift of grace, *epiklesis*, communion, eschatological sign, and the summation of the mystery of salvation). The main difference between the two works, however, is that while Békés based his reflections on the results of the ecumenical dialogue up to the time, Kasper gave a summary account of the currents of specifically Catholic theology in his study.

At the end of my reflection, I should briefly comment on the reception of the Lima Document in Békés's homeland, Hungary, and on the way he himself contributed to the reception process. Very soon after the appearance of the Lima Document the first Hungarian translation of the document was published in a Protestant theological journal, and in 1986 it was republished in an amended version. In the same journal issue, theologians belonging to the Hungarian Reformed, Lutheran and Baptist churches published their views on the document. According to them, the strengths of the second chapter were the multifaceted and rich approach to the origin of the Eucharist, the strong biblical grounding of the document, and the emphasis on the socio-ethical implications of the Eucharistic banquet. Nonetheless, according to the representatives of the three aforementioned churches, the Lima Document did not sufficiently emphasise the primacy of the sacrifice of Christ and the active presence of Christ (over the ministers of the Church), and it did not sufficiently explain the relationship between *anamnesis* and *epiklesis* in the Eucharistic banquet.

In his 1988 response, Békés integrated the ideas of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity concerning the document, and commented on three main points in response to the questions posed by his Protestant colleagues. First, he argued that the divine gift (Christ's sacrifice) should be clearly distinguished from the act of worship of the faithful, since the latter is the acceptance of the divine gift.

¹² See, for example, Geoffrey Wainwright, 'Any Advance on "BEM"? The Lima Text at Twenty-Five', *Studia Liturgica* 1 (2007), pp. 1-29, see: pp. 2-5.

¹³ Paul McPartlan, 'Eucharist', in Geoffrey Wainwright and Paul McPartlan, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Ecumenical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), pp. 257-74, see: pp. 261-64.

¹⁴ Walter Kasper, 'Einheit und Vielfalt der Aspekte der Eucharistie. Zur neuerlichen Diskussion um Grundgestalt und Grundsinn der Eucharistie', *Communio. Internationale katholische Zeitschrift* 3 (1985), pp. 196-215. The article appeared in English in the 1989 edited volume *Theology and church*.

Second, the essential question is how this gift is to be present in the sacramental signs, to which question the document satisfactorily and correctly answers that it is to be present through *anamnesis* and *epiklesis*, which, according to Békés, is the only viable way of interpreting the Eucharist ecumenically. As a third point, he also pointed out the challenge that the document poses to the Catholic community, namely, that they should break away from the already mentioned Christo-monistic approach to the Eucharist in order to open the way for a more soteriological interpretation. Unfortunately, apart from this brief dialogue, no comprehensive evaluation of the Lima Document has been published in Hungarian to date, although the document was first presented in a brief commentary in 1985, while a more in-depth evaluation of the eucharistic interpretation of the document was published in 2002.

Conclusion

In this survey, I have examined the importance of Békés's major book concerning ecumenism. If one would like to capture the main thrust of Békés's argument, I think that there are three aspects to consider. The first achievement of his book is that it provides a synthesis of an ecumenical theology of the Eucharist that relies on the work of the WCC carried out over several decades, including fundamental issues, such as, the problem of worship in the 20th century. Second, this study presents the 'eucharistic theology' of the Lima Document not in isolation, but in dialogue with the relevant bilateral ecumenical documents, even though his work curiously lacks reflection on the developments in Orthodox theology. Third, Békés rediscovered and retrieved dimensions of eucharistic theology, which are of value not only for the ecumenical dialogue but also for Catholic theology, in particular. And all this is in line with the intention of the Lima Document, namely, that the main road to unity for each ecclesial community leads by the renewal of their teaching and practice concerning the Eucharist (cf. LD 28) and that an increase in mutual understanding can lead first and foremost to 'a greater measure of eucharistic communion' (LD 33).¹⁵ I suggest that in Békés's work these intentions of the document were realised.

The impact of the book is shown by the fact that Luca Bianchi's recent study on the results of the dialogue between the Catholic-Orthodox Theological Commission and the WCC on the Eucharist not only quotes Békés's work, but also draws on the Hungarian

¹⁵ The following study has drawn my attention to these aspects: Hans-Georg Link, 'The Lima Process. After Thirty Years', *The Ecumenical Review* 3 (2013), pp. 352-67, see: pp. 362-63.

theologian's conclusions at several points in the final reflection.¹⁶ Unfortunately, if we turn to Luca Ferracci's very recent review of the Lima Document, we find no reference to Békés's work on the subject—which is partly understandable, since the book is about the process leading to the document—although Ferracci does refer at several points to the discussions at Saint Anselm in the 1970s and 1980s, some of which were organised by the Hungarian Benedictine himself.¹⁷

Békés had an exceptional opportunity, in contrast to the situation in Hungary at the time, to join the international theological discourse and actively shape it through his own distinctive contribution. I suggest that in his scholarly output he managed to create a remarkable synthesis of the theology of the Eucharist in the context of the ecumenical dialogue. The reception of his legacy still needs to be developed in his own country where his theological work has perhaps received less attention because of his emigration. This brief overview not only commemorates the work of Békés, but should also provide an insight into the work of theologians in the socialist countries between 1945 and 1990. Békés was able to translate the painful experience of emigration (some of it at least) into a prolific theological oeuvre, despite its outward modesty. The theological legacy of Békés is relevant even in our day. It has as its background the harmonious common existence of various Christian denominations in Hungary, a country at the crossroads of the Eastern and the Western Christian traditions as well as Catholic and Protestant forms of Christianity. One of the most prominent centres of present-day Hungarian ecumenism is the Archabbey of Pannonhalma, Békés's own home monastery. Hopefully the rediscovery of his legacy will contribute to a better understanding of the past and the future of the ecumenical movement.

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¹⁶ Luca Bianchi, *Eucaristia ed ecumenismo. Pasqua di tutti i cristiani* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2007).

¹⁷ Luca Ferracci, *Battesimo, eucaristia, ministero. Genesi e destino di un documento ecumenico* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2021).