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THESIS

ABSTRACT

POSSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF PATIENCE AND ITS  
MANIFESTATIONS IN PASTORAL CARE

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## The incentive of the study

One of the decisive points of this unstoppable journey that I took upon myself was the moment when I met the study entitled „*A harmadik, akivelnemszámoltak*” (transl. “*The third one that wasn’t taken into consideration*”) by Hanneke Meulink-Korf and Aat van Rhijn, published by Exit in 2009, specifically the third chapter: “*A türelemrőlbizakodással*” (transl. “*On patience, with trust*”). Here I have read about patience as a “*questionable*” and “*dubious*” concept, and at the same time about the importance of “*its acknowledgement as a special thing*”. Even more so than before, it became important to examine the concept and phenomenon of patience. It became even clearer – after personally meeting with the author – that I have to address this question not only from a theoretical perspective, but also from the perspective of my pastoral practice. The thesis is the result of this inner motivation. Up until this point the road led me through the realization of just how important the perspectives of “*contextuality*”, of the “*concept*”, and “*ethics*” are, which have been assessed several times from the approximation of patience and pastoral care.

## The purpose of the study

The purpose is to understand and to make those conceptual possibilities understood where patience can be used, to recognize and to give them recognition in pastoral care – where patience is not “*dubious*”.

In order to accomplish this, for the conceptual analysis I use the four dimensions also known in contextual pastoral care. To analyse the phenomenon of patience, I found the interview (pastoral discussion) to be useful in the case studies – after the questionnaire-based and other research methods did not seem to fit the purpose of the study.

For several reasons I consider the thesis to be unfinished, but I succeeded in finding those basic positions, behaviours, spiritual handrails that can be used as “*signposts*” for further exploring this road. I intend to use these “*signposts*” in the case studies.

The thesis is at the same time a research, a process of learning a particular pastoral behaviour, and pastoral practice. Throughout my research I considered it of utmost importance to put the theoretical knowledge into practice in my pastoral activity – all of this by internalising my relationship with the concept and phenomenon of patience into an internal certainty. For reaching this internal certainty I must thank professor MolnárJánosfor his professional and spiritual guidance.

PetreȚuțea’s question of whether we can speak about the possibility of researching religious knowledge and understanding became an important question to me too. The philosopher points towards happiness in his answer, which is when a person is in harmony and reconciled with himself, other people, the surrounding world, and God. Later on, I asked: is the credibility of the harmony possible amidst a person’s life, environment and its challenges – what happens when it

is not possible to reach this harmony? I found the following answer: where this patience is missing, this empty space is “filled” with the patience that cannot replace the missing harmony, but it contains some of this missing harmony, in a special form. Therefore, harmony must exist within patience so that the abovementioned relationship can be maintained between man and God, between man and man. For the sake of this harmony, we need to know the limits and the context of this patience. In pastoral care it is necessary that we are familiar with these contexts, since concepts gain specific meanings in to the specific situations. Not having this professional knowledge might end up with the pastor being overrun by the pastoral case, and might even rule out the possibility of helping in that particular situation.

The conceptual analysis of patience based on four ”relational realities”

In Böszörményi-Nagy Iván’s usage, the term “dimension” signifies a certain level of understanding, and even more. By level of understanding I mean that it is possible for one single word to have more meanings, messages, and senses. However, our research methodology based on the dimensional perspective wishes to encompass not only mental activities, but also spiritual manifestations. Consequently, we do not mean to simply copy and adopt Böszörményi’s perspective on the four-dimensional relational reality, but I have incorporated the methodology of this perspective into our framework, which helped me in analysing the relationship between patience and pastoral care. The point is not solely the exploration of “*phronesis*”, but to discover the “*techne*”, which is the result of several decades worth of experience and new knowledge.

The four-dimensional perspective often used in contextual therapy appears as part of the research methodology in the assessment of patience. This can happen because behind the concept and phenomenon of patience – as I will also reference further on –we find the person, in his relational definiteness that is highlighted by contextual pastoral care. For this exact reason I will assess the tropes of patience in various written sources (as given data), taking into consideration the following relationships: me-you, me-other, me-that. The four-dimensional perspective is a natural part of the dialogues in the second half of the thesis concerning the case studies. These “submersive” examinations last as long as the oxygen lasts in the scuba tank. By this comparison I mean the following: patience can be caught in action in the relational reality where the concept and the signified matter meet in understanding and the possible interpretation. How can this event, phenomenon be “caught in action”? Based on context I approach with questions: in relation to whom or what are the relational forms (that can give the possible form or content of patience) used? This happens now only in the case of the written texts, but can also be observed within the conversations. In the first partour study explores the written sources for researching the concept of patience, and the results that had been obtained are employed in the interviews and case studies.

My presumption is that the ascertainment that “patience is a dubious concept” is dubious: therefore, patience is not a dubious concept. We can ask the question: what other conceptual example can be brought up so that the concept would not be inherently dubious in relation to the

meaning and usage it references? Another question arises: how dubious or motivated would it be to employ only the conceptual approach in pastoral care? On the third or even fourth hand, the concept and wide branching of the concept of doubt would have no end, because doubt inherently suggests rootlessness, uncertainty, malleability, vulnerability. Thus, we are trying to give shape to this endless sense or consciousness of lack of control – and this form is the table used for this exact purpose. The four-dimensional method borrowed from the contextual perspective is needed in the conceptual interpretation, so that we would be able to return to the area of pastoral care with the results, since the study exists for this purpose. The following part will contain a short presentation of the four dimensions that are meant to map out the relational reality through the pastoral care. This relational reality will be presented, its methodological usage for conceptual analysis.

Fact: words (patience)

The contextual perspective refers to the biological endowments, origin – see the importance of the family tree -, age, and other such characteristics and life situations that concern the person undergoing therapy. In our case we refer to the factual dimension – since we are talking about people, and not concepts! – and we understand the data concerning patience, and all the possible primary and secondary meanings that the text suggests, all of this in relation to the actual or supposed person. However, patience can be present not only as the attribute of a person, but it can be present as an attitude, inner freedom, self-destructive or self-preserving force, so on and so forth. In case the data could not be attributed to anything similar, then we suppose the factuality of patience as something that can be attributed to people. Instead of the factual dimension we can also use the word “reality”, but in this case the interpretation of reality can take us in other directions, since not every fact has a direct correspondent in reality, and the other way around. This is why we remained at this usage of the contextual perspective in Hungarian. The questions that can be asked are linear and are of a fact-finding nature: What? Who? Whom? How big? What kind? Where? Until when?

Psychology: the man behind the words (man and patience)

Contextual therapy uses merely the psychological dimension when it does not close off, but it does not specify one single school of psychology that it solely uses in treatments, it does not narrow down the psychological dimension to one single school of psychology. Using and acknowledging the results of psychoanalysis, he uses mainly the theory of object relations. According to Bözörményi-Nagy, the “ego” does not overlap with the “self”, the individual with oneself. Bözörményi used the results of object relations theory from Fairbairn, Melanie Klein D. Winnicott and co., the theory undergoing further development later on. From this perspective we take into account the work of Székely Ilona, and we use the concept of “*relational archetypes*” in accordance with her – this emerging as the result of our first relations, this influencing the “*sound development of one’s personality and later relationships*”. We examine this approach of object relations theory using the results of N. Gregory Hamilton’s study. The tables have a

“*submersive*” function for finding the “*relational archetype*”, which can emerge from given facts, from the relational reality within certain texts. Based on our assumptions, such an archetype that applies to everyone does not exist – it does not exist in the same way the terrain, vegetation, fauna varies on different depths of the ocean, in the same way the composition of water can vary. Using this comparison would suggest that there has to be a common “component” (water, and in our case: patience) that offers a habitat for various life forms. Under the “psychological” dimension we mainly refer to the possible conceptual approach based on the theory of object relations. In other words, we are looking for patience within the human relations, and not in the abstract plane of existence of concepts. We are searching for the “relational archetype of patience” as “*object permanence*”, as the term had been employed by Hamilton in his work on object relations theory. Therefore, using the approach offered by the theory of object relations we examine the relational possibilities between the inner and outer objects of the ego in relation to patience. By using “*ego*” we mean the guiding principle as it was stated by N. G. Hamilton: the “*self*” is the man himself, in his own specific psycho-physiological reality. Based on our assumption, patience is present in the “ego” and the “self”, but it is also there in “you”, “that”, “others” – who and whatever the ego is in a certain relation with, but first and foremost it is present in that relationship itself. One of the questions is the following: how do we approach the presence of the archetype of patience – do we approach from the ego, the relation, from you, that, or from the perspective of some other? In our approach we wish to examine patience from the perspective of this relational reality. In short, we wish to see the basis on which patience works: the motivations, limitations, and the principles altogether. The limitations within which this research method works are set by the “ego” – where we do not wish to elucidate on the “ego”, where we do *not* understand it as a closed, autonomous entity – but in accordance with Bösztörményi-Nagy’s perspective we understand it as heteronomous entity, if you will. The advantage of this is that since the ego is not a closed entity there is room for further development of this perspective, the disadvantage is that on the level of relational reality the ego can easily disappear or fuse with what it comes into contact with. Beside the willingness of the ego to form relations, the development and maintenance of the “ego” as identity poses a constant challenge and duty. On the basis of these challenges and tasks does the identity evolve, as it is inherent and it is the result of relations. Concerning the development of object relations, Hamilton references the results obtained by Mahler’s work group: they divided the process of object relations development into seven phases (autism, symbiosis, separation and individuation, differentiation, practice, reapproachment, object permanence). Based on our assumption, object permanence exists within object relations as a feature suggesting the developmental stage of the relational reality of patience, which can be achieved this way. However, in order to reference this relational reality in its own objectivity, it is necessary to clarify in order to make it tangible in its own presumed reality. To have such an objective grasp, it is indispensable to have a linguistic tool that enables it, the philosophical approach makes it possible to use the linguistically instrumental nature. The philosophical approach is necessary mainly in order to examine what we understand

by the concept of the concept. This is necessary because we cannot omit examining patience as a dubious concept based on the interpretation of the concept.

The name of the psychological dimension as a research method in Böszörményi-Nagy's usage is misleading for us, because we consider that we are not talking only about psychological methods and approaches. The perspective of relational reality designated by Böszörményi-Nagy Iván was determined by philosophers like Marten Buber and Emanuel Levinas. Thus, in the practical use of the object relations theory he approaches certain concepts from a philosophical perspective in the psychiatric therapy. We do not wish to examine the differences and similarities between the psychological and philosophical frameworks, but in the following part we shall touch upon the way in which the "concept" appears in our literature from a philosophical, psychiatric and psychological perspective.

When examining the question of the concept it is unavoidable to use a philosophical terminological toolbox, such as the concepts of nominalism, realism, sensualism, innatism – while of course being extremely careful not to fall into the mistake of solipsism. We agree with the stance of Turnyogi Zoltán concerning the relationship between concepts, words, and people – he stated that words can be the expressive tools, the forms, frameworks of concepts. Undertaking this road, we also agree with the statements of Wilhelm Dilthey about descriptive and analytical psychology: it is impossible to make spiritual manifestations (he mainly refers to experiences) tangible in concepts. We can find the first connection between philosophy and concepts at Socrates, in the dialectic and questioning method associated with him. He is followed by Plato, for whom concepts are the shadows of some higher ideas. Aristotle talks about "*substance*" ("*ousia*"), which is "*the concept of the thing that forms an independent unit*". Among the philosophical schools concerned with concepts we can mention in a chronological order the Stoics, who doubt the possibility that concepts can express the essence of things at all, and in its stead suggest that "*comprehensible perception*" ("*katalepticphantasia*") is innate, "*each man has the ability to differentiate from mistakes*", this being a compass that guides us in the world. We reference St. Augustine because it was in "*enlightenment*" („*illuminatio*") that he saw the "*source of inner recognition*", this also appearing in the form of concepts originating directly from God. The term "*association of ideas*" ("*associatioidearum*") attributed to John Locke (1632-1704) is still used in modern psychology. According to David Hume (1711-1776) we can never know whether our inner perceptions, instantaneous "*impressions*" fit the facts, so he doubts the existence of substance.

The chosen literature is used for interpretation based on the psychological and philosophical dimensions, and based on the hypothesis of this "*archetype*" of patience we categorize, formulate questions. Our starting point: patience is present in various relations as a relational concept, and based on the theory of object relations it can even offer an "*archetype*". Every infant had learned this "*archetype*", they brought it with themselves, and they related to this as fact, reality. However, this "*archetype*" is more than a cognitive imprint learned during infancy, but at the same time it can be a peculiar linguistic medium (in our case it is the Hungarian

language, but this journey can be undertaken in other languages, if one wishes to explore this road of pastoral care). Later on, we shall come back to the conceptual analysis of patience from a psychological and psychiatric perspective. As for the questions, we prioritize the reflexive ones: In what way? How is it? Until when? Where from? Where to? In what direction? From what direction? For whom? From whom? Where are the spiritual resources?

Systems theory: multidirectional relations (patience in human relations)

After the previous two we now have the third dimension, but here we do not have an order, a classification for the assessment of the dimensions. Juxtaposition is by no means a way of ordering, of denoting importance. Here certain transactions happen that people can encounter in society and in their lives. These dimensions, as relational realities are linked. In other words, the person, individual is defined by the facts of their life, and they relate to themselves and the surrounding world according to their own psychological abilities, and at the same time they are in an interplay with the surrounding world. Philosophy helps in pinpointing this interplay – if we remain only in the psychological and philosophical dimensions, we do not take into account the possible interplay between the individual and their environment.

Inasmuch as patience denotes a relational form, it cannot turn away from facts either, not even from psychological definiteness, and at the same time this relational form exceeds the system and finds its life form within, between the individual and their environment. When examining the trope of patience, we ask the following question: how does the conceptual use of patience appear in the reality based on systems theory when we are not looking at patience from a theoretical and philosophical perspective, but when we see patience as the supposed relational reality that can be observed, interpreted within the system (a system that is affected by it, and vice versa)? This is the research of the transactional pattern of patience. In other words, here we are not searching for the archetype of patience, but for its possible and recognizable manifestations within the system. Some questions do not have answers, but answering them is not the main point, since the questions themselves have their value as messages, and they define the future direction of the relationship. In this case circular questions ought to be asked, since they refer to the system itself, or the positioning of patience within this system. In this dimension we also analyse the connection between content and relations. Possible questions: From where? To where? From whom? For whom? For whose sake? From what direction and towards what direction?

Ethics: equity, as a formative principle in human relationships (the legitimacy of patience)

The novelty the contextual perspective brought into therapy was the fact that it took into consideration the factors of equity, righteousness within human relationships based on the ethical relational perspective, taking into consideration what is possible and necessary, placing it all on the scale, balance that is in constant change or in the general registry of an inner court. The ethical dimension deals with the question of responsibility based on the equity, righteousness of giving and receiving, taking into consideration merit for the sake of the well-being of the next

generation. Here ethics does not refer to prescribed norms and their enforcement, but first and foremost it refers to what and how an individual gives and accepts in a relationship given certain situations, certain circumstances – how they accept good and bad, and what ethical concerns can arise from the way in which each other's interests are taken into consideration in this relational reality. When we asked questions about the ethical dimension in our search for the concept of patience, or when we try to interpret the concept of patience – we formulated them from the abovementioned perspective. These questions were formulated from the perspective of equity and righteousness, using that image of man that considers man's deepest motivation in relationships to be the wish to give, moved to give by the principles of equity and righteousness. In this act of giving the following factors play a relevant role: entitlement, commitment, loyalty, also taking into consideration the possibilities and necessities as defining features. The paradigm of “changing balance” suggests that in a living relationship the balance is not static, but dynamic, because giving and accepting keeps the scale in a constant motion. When the scale becomes static the relationship either stopped existing, or it functions unjustly, resulting in unfair relations of superiority and inferiority. Therefore, the following questions can be asked concerning the given word: How is it equitable? How is it righteous concerning the relation? What possibilities does the changing balance have?

When employing the above-mentioned four-dimensional perspective, we start from the following hypothesis: we are unable to unravel the “big secret” of patience in “general” because we approach patience as a relational concept, and as such it changes based on the relation at hand, and only the participants of that relation can validate it. Therefore, we are not looking for the fiction of patience as some theoretical fetish, but we are searching for the manifestations of patience, as it can be seen in the possibility of good relations between people, we aim to pinpoint it in its archetypal form.

Patience is an important fact in the relationships between people. We try to “catch” this relational form “in action” through the theory of object relations, observing this fact that defines the psychological dimension. Beside the first two dimensions, we inquire of the data about patience in the columns for systems theory and “relational ethics”. This also means that in some cases we presume, and in other cases we search in the textual context for the signified persons in the “me-you”, “me-he/she”, “me-that” keywords from Bubber, along with the relations between the inner objects. We take off from the practical approach previously mentioned: in accordance with HézserGábor's approach, a concept can come into existence through dialogue.

Actually, with this description we are presenting the results of our secondary research, the purpose of which is the establishment of the definition for the concept of patience used by us. Böszörményi-Nagy Iván's contextual perspective offers us an example for processing the research results. We chose this method for interpreting the data because the frame will give the shape later on too. At the same time, in his work written about contextual aid he referenced patience as a dubious concept, this also being the motivation behind our study. The data found when consciously “searching” the relevant literature becomes the object of this contextual

analysis, but randomly found data had also been used when it seemed to “fit” the theme of the study.

The scientific features of our work have a double purpose, one being the possibility of self-healing when acquiring knowledge about the concept of patience, revealing the possibilities of patience concerning one’s own life. The other purpose is treatment by means of pastoral care, in the process of meeting the dubious concept of patience in certain situations. In relation to this we also reference the following requirement of pastoral and psychiatric treatment: only those who have healed themselves can treat others, because only they can know how to get over that illness, issue. Remaining at the previous comparison, only that who knows how to swim is able to teach others. I compared the fact-finding accumulation of knowledge with my empirical observations (the four-dimensional table was also useful for this endeavour, where I approached the questions from my empirical, experimental perspective). At the end of the paper, we test the research focused on interpreting problems and exploring various themes with practical application. The practical application will be made available by communicating the case studies and deep interviews. In the paper I use the knowledge acquired in Böszörményi-Nagy Iván’s pastoral school, along with the four-dimensional perspective so as to put the concept of patience within a framework based on these four perspectives. All of this can later be used practically with the easy responsibility that is a prerequisite of contextual pastoral care.

For the sake of formulating the concept, we first use the method of compilation, when we examine various data referring to the same thing, but gathered from different sources. For the object and purpose of our study this data was collected in a table, then various cognitive elements were assessed in comparison with each other, based on the dimensions of the contextual perspective, previously mentioned – this is how the data got to be interpreted. Afterwards we highlighted the useful elements, this contributing to formulating the concept of patience used in our study.

The concept and phenomenon of patience – based on three academic works

I took off from the hypothesis that patience is a credibly practicable attitude, it is possible to clearly employ this concept during conversations, in this sense as a non-suspicious (or non-dubious) concept. By the concept of patience I mean that genuine and acceptable attitude, where by the illusory or real surrendering of self-interest even the possibility of self-assertion can become questionable, but when practicing patience there are various resources that can be used. Therefore, my research method is oriented in two directions: theoretical and practical.

In the theoretical approach I examined the meaning of the concept of patience in the texts that were relevant from the perspective of their themes and subjects – pinpointing why they were chosen for the study, after the examination a conclusion had been drawn in each case, and keywords were given. For the purpose of interpreting the concept of patience, I formulated four questions during the conceptual examination. These questions refer to the facts, the spiritual

attitude towards the facts, their systems theory approach, and finally the moral-relational attitude. In each case I thought of the living person behind the concept of patience, who practices or dismisses that particular attitude that “became evident” from the textual context.

During the conceptualisation it was important to “grasp” the concept in one’s own first language, so that it would help in our approach, so that what we mean by the use of the word “patience”, especially during the process of pastoral care can be defined in a most accurate manner. This is the subject of the research, what I have learned about, and what I shall present in the second part of the study via the case studies. Carefully tiptoeing on the borders of linguistic philosophy, I agreed with the information written in the study called “*Nyelviségésmegismerés*” (transl. “*Linguistics and cognition*”), especially with the idea that I also experienced: that conceptuality and cognition is bound to language. This is why I considered it important to explore the meaning of the concept of patience specifically in the Hungarian language by analysing some texts that can also be employed in contextual pastoral care.

I “dug down” until the birth of the word – according to the literary sources used for this study –, when in the Hungarian language the word “patience” first acquired cognitive substance. I got more and more convinced of the fact that the improper use and interpretation of words can create confusion. It is possible that the message of the word had been completely forgotten or changed by now, therefore I asked the following question upon examining the philosophical works: can our “patience” be such a word? Afterwards I brought a few examples of conceptual changes from written theological sources.

Beside all of this I have also learned that even today there are a lot of unsolved secrets concerning the relationship between message and linguistics. This problem can be brought into correlation with the Pentecost story, with the coming of the Holy Ghost, when everyone could hear Peter speaking in their own mother language. This is where I recognized the point: the question of knowing, understanding, and using one’s mother language in the process of pastoral care, so that everyone can hear the message of the gospel in their own language! The spiritual understanding is also necessary beside this understanding of one’s mother language, and I consider this spiritual understanding the gift of the Holy Ghost.

I agree with the stance of Zsirai Miklós concerning this “*life*” of language: we cannot lose sight of the fact that whatever we do – in the process of conceptualizing patience –, it is meant to help dialogue in a given situation, and we do not mean to construe any fiction, any ideal construct. Therefore, the common search for the concept, phenomenon, possibilities of patience can lead to constructive dialogue. All of this is not all that self-evident, since spoken words have their own mood, which can be quite defining in personal dialogues, and which cannot be seen when reading written texts, even if the author used some suggestive signs, indicators.

After the conceptual analysis I introduced the information obtained into a table, which contributed to the accumulation of knowledge, leading me to the conceptual definition of

patience based on the given texts. I considered the definition relevant so as to be able to position the concept within its own relations, so that I can recognize it later on during the live conversations in certain situations. The conceptual meanings of patience we discovered can provide sure grips we can employ when searching for the possible interpretation of a certain type of patience we are looking for.

The data processed during the search for the meaning of this word was made up of the printed texts that made reference to patience, or where the word appeared. We submerged into the meaning of the concept from a historical perspective on the Hungarian word, then using biblical and theological dictionaries. Afterwards, when using the concept, we examined a few written works from the age of Reformation and later on. A quick and short outlook was offered on the way the concept of patience was used in Hungarian legislation.

Considering the definition of the concept of patience employed in this study important, it also became unavoidable to dismiss the linguistic limitations and the possibilities offered by linguistic expression. In the process of familiarisation with the concept it proved helpful to get acquainted with the English philosophical literature on patience (this still being an ongoing process). Beside this the conceptual examination proved to be helpful even in the Romanian language use, along with the attention given to the use of the concept within the Scripture. There was a study written in Dutch, using the Dutch word "*geduld*", meaning patience. Sadly, I do not have the possibility of examining the relationship between the concept of patience and the Dutch word "*geduld*". Therefore, we only focus on the analysis of the concept in Hungarian, where patience can easily be mistaken with something else that is similar, close to patience, yet it still is not patience (for example, the words "töredelem, türemlés, türet", all of them being similar to patience). The difference between the Dutch words inspired me to pay attention to such conceptual differences.

Therefore, I examined the conceptual framework of word "patience" in Hungarian sources, in order to define it in the most accurate manner for the sake of pastoral care, for my own and the sake of those people who undertake this journey of finding the conceptual interpretations that can be the basis for building a concept that contributes to an enriching dialogue. When examining patience, I tried to focus both on the meaning and the phenomena. In this process I discovered the wondrous world that is the beginning and story of this concept. I tried to look into the context for the phenomena behind the formal elements of the text, and if this could not be done, I made assumptions. Since this thesis is written in Hungarian, it should be self-evident that I also research the peculiar depths of the Hungarian language when approaching the word "patience" - all of this for the sake of an exact way to approach patience in pastoral care, so that this concept and phenomenon can be understood and experienced. In 2020, in Hungarian we can call this "conceptual thing": patience. Obviously, I could not study these sources in an exhaustive manner (however, this was not even the purpose), but upon presenting the results of this research I believe that I can contribute to approaching it, to the use of the concept and phenomenon of patience. One of the uses was actually forgetting oneself in the practice of patience during the research, I had the chance of experiencing various phenomena, and it all contributed to

constructing a flexible and recognizable inner certainty about the concept and phenomenon of patience.

The other direction of my research method is – as it had been previously mentioned – practical, where the phenomenon itself was examined. Here I noted those case studies, in which I was looking for the conceptual interpretation of patience and its practice along with all those people who helped me on this research. While during the theoretical research we encountered the difficulty posed by the easily mistaken nature of making presumptions when examining the source material, the practical research placed us in front of ethical dilemmas. In these cases, the thing standing before the research goals was human equity. During the research done on books (as tools and sources), these were considered as human creations.

In the case of practical research, I employed case studies where the person him- or herself became the source and determinant of the “study”: the person, their spirit, their life, their attitude, and any other possibility, condition posed by human existence. When approaching people, we cannot dismiss the human factors, and we cannot relate to a person in the same way we relate to a book, where we can leaf through the content with no moral difficulties. The ethical difficulties that might arise by “leafing” through the books concern the interpretation and their usage. With the occasion of human interactions this “leafing” is double-edged, since in the best-case scenario the person being questioned is also leafing through the interviewer, questioner, even if not literally via questions, but through the metacommunication that is present behind the answers (as we had previously mentioned it).

This mental-spiritual “submersion” happens for the purpose of remaining on the surface and it presupposes trust not only for the researcher, but also for the people following the research. This “procedure” is similar to swimming: when the swimmer experiences the buoyancy of the water, he will then be able to stay on the surface and will not drown in the depths – since he will take in air before submerging, and letting it out while he still is swimming underwater. In this comparison patience is a conceptual medium in which we “swim” and in order not to drown in this “dubious” depth, so we need to learn of that particular quality of the water that offers us the possibility of swimming. If we want to spend more time underwater, then we need an oxygen tank and other equipment. The contents of the oxygen tank are also finite, and it can be used safely underwater only up to a certain point. In this sense, we also need patience for the study of patience, and using the previous comparison, this refers to the contents of the oxygen tank, which can be pinpointed in the constraints of the study. The oxygen tank is the table that will be used further on for delving into the oceanic depths of patience. In order to understand the surface of patience we need this “submersion” in the cases in which this submersion becomes relevant. For example, this might happen when we would like to see the beauty in the depth or when we wish to treat some surface symptom (for example when we wish to examine the underwater part of water lilies for the purpose of treating a possible illness of the plant), this being harder without submerging into the secrets of the depth.

Therefore, based on the previous comparison, the tables employed in this study can be considered such oxygen tanks that can be used for submerging into the wide and deep ocean that is the concept of patience – but this lasts as long as there is oxygen in the tank, and the proper diving rules are respected. These tables help in processing the data from the relational perspectives. More questions arise besides the comparison of “submerging”, namely: where should it take place, on which part of the ocean, and why? For this we have the following answer: where patience is the object of the study as a relational reality. Therefore, our research method does not start from the very beginning and does not mean to research these beginnings, but it does not exclude them. Agreeing with the perspective of DeczkiSarolta, we take off based on the principle of “*starting in the middle*”, where the “*question of truth (veritas) is pushed aside by the worry for certainty (vertitudo)*”. We take into consideration the difference between truth and truthfulness! In my view, patience is a relational concept, where it can be pinpointed in the relationship of the ego and the surrounding world, when a certain tension exists between the ego and itself, between the ego and the outside world, resulting from an inner pair of opposites (see later on the inner questions of good and bad within the theory of object relations) and from the activity of the outside world directed towards the inner one. Beside this stance we render the concept of dimension within this research method as a way of storing data on multiple levels.

I consider the written texts as data and information. For ordering and interpreting these I employ the four-dimensional perspective known and used in contextual therapy by Böszörményi-Nagy Iván. This gives the basic stance of this research, my “decoding reading”, which points towards the perspective of relational reality that can be employed when dealing with the concept and phenomenon of patience. What do I actually mean by this four-dimensional perspective? A sort of data-communicating and processing method, which will be discussed in more detail further on. The patience analysed in my terms is not a static concept, but it is part of a phenomenon that can be examined from the perspective of events, situations, processes. Despite all of this, it is still necessary to define a framework, a form, through which our subject becomes approachable. Based on my observations and experiences, patience can be experienced and, in this manner, also interpreted, explained. I followed the direction set within the book “*Bevezetés a hermeneutikába*” (transl. “*Introduction to hermeneutics*”) by VeressKároly, the direction referring to understanding, interpretation, and making something understood.

Based on my current knowledge, the roots of the four-dimensional model employed in this study go back as far as the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when John Cassian formulates the “*tenets of the four layers of meaning*”, and the following interpretations were found:

1. “Literal, or historical meaning (sensusliteralis, sensushistoricus)
2. Spiritual meaning (sensusspiritualis, sensusmysticus)
3. Moral meaning (sensustropologicus)
4. Inspirational meaning (sensusanagogicus)”

I do not intend to delve into the historical antecedents of this four-tiered research method, nor into the issue of interpretation and understanding – this was merely a reference to the beginnings of the four-tiered method of interpretation employed in my research.

With these conceptual research methods, after each longer text I bring forth the definition of patience based on the concepts and relations that were discovered, and finally I make references back to the text with keywords. The use of keywords is present not only in the conceptual analysis, but also in the case studies. This provides handrails in the comparison between the phenomena (context and other structural elements) and the concept. Beside the conceptual meanings analysed in different texts, the research is also based on three big words from the philosophical literature on the concept of patience, and these shall be presented in the following part. The first work focuses on facts, searching for an answer concerning the conceptual structure of patience, while the second and third study is relevant from the perspective of systems theory. In the case of the philosophical works, I took into consideration the work of Viktor Frankl entitled “*Az orvosilelkigondozás*” (“*The Doctor and the Soul*”), where he pinpoints the common point between therapy and theology, namely that of being in the service of people. This work was not presented in such depths not only because of the thematic constraints of the thesis, but also because the information stated in the work of Frankl was also pinpointed and employed to a certain degree. Similarly, many other works on the psychological dimension could have been presented, which approach from the perspective of object relations in order to aid human relations (we find information about these in the literature at the end of the paper) – but the use of these perspectives can also be followed through the conceptual research method and the case studies. As long as the ethical dimension goes, even here we could have also mentioned more literature on contextuality, both from Böszörményi-Nagy Iván and other literature dealing with contextuality. I did not consider it important to present these, because it would have not been relevant based on the title of the study. The scientific approach of the mentioned philosophical works and case studies was important for the conceptual and phenomenal examination for pastoral care. This is why those specialized books were presented.

Rainer Forst: “Toleration in conflict”

At the very beginning of his work, he states that he wishes to approach patience as a “normative dependent concept”. In this manner he sets out the road in a certain direction, where patience is not an unchanging, independent concept, that is accommodated by various other variables, but patience itself changes according to certain norms. In other words: patience by itself is not a purpose, but a tool for reaching a higher purpose.

The book of Rainer Forst discusses the issue of patience in two big parts. In the first part (eight chapters) he approaches from a historical perspective through the duality of power and ethics. For our purposes the first chapter is the most relevant one, where he deals with the concept and concepts of patience. In the second chapter he examines patience from the historical relations of antiquity and the middle ages, and in the third chapter he examines the concept of patience

during the historical age of humanism and the Reformation. In the fourth chapter he approaches the topic from the perspective of religion and pluralism, taking into consideration peculiar political and personal aspects, and here he also takes into consideration the problem of scepticism and resistance. In the fifth chapter he touches upon the questions of the revolution from the perspective of natural law, stressing the themes of liberalism and freedom of thought. The sixth chapter presents the pros and cons of the issue during the age of Enlightenment. The seventh chapter deals with patience in modern times, and in the eighth chapter he returns to the history of the concept of patience by presenting the possible paths of patience, touching upon the question of validating patience.

In the second big part of his book, he approaches the theory of patience in four consequent chapters. In this way he devotes the ninth chapter to the validation of patience, the following chapter to the finiteness of the possibilities, chances of patience. The eleventh chapter presents the virtue of patience, and the last chapter presents the patient society. This work was relevant for the systematic model of the concept of patience it presented, this was both defining and necessary for the purpose of our study. Here it became clear for me that the concept of patience does not exist without the conflictual context, and it is an attitude in which the person practicing patience cannot give up on their own identity, selfhood. The model for the structure of the concept of patience by Rainer Forst appears in other works, and it also brought useful knowledge for my work too. However, the study of the structure of the concept of patience cannot end with this, but it provides a starting point, perspective that helps in other issues arising concerning this conceptual meaning with the arguments, helping even with facilitating dialogue.

We can find many similar features in Donald A. Carson's work entitled "*Intolerance of tolerance*", but in my opinion it takes a different direction than Forst through the validation of his theological perspective. Therefore, D. A. Carson approaches the concept of patience from a theological perspective, defining the duality of the old and new concept of patience, where he discussed the old patience as "*the norm of patience*". While the purpose of D. A. Carson's work is that of approaching the concept of "*patience enduring difficulties*" from the perspective of Christian identity, the academic approach of Rainer Forst is not subordinated to any religious perspective, instead it intends to give a taste of various perspectives. He mainly examines patience from normative perspectives, referencing the defined constant.

Don A. Carson: "The intolerance of tolerance"

The author puts into contrast two different concepts of patience. He discusses the "*impatience of patience*" through eight chapters. This refers to the limits of patience, the main reason for this being the contradicting interpretation and practice of various concepts of patience. This work has a relevant role in pointing out the direction of our study, because it shows that different concepts of patience can exist, and it shows the value of the concept of patience employed by the author.

His study contains notes on the names, objects, and Scriptural locations. In the following section we shall reference patience in the order it appears within the chapters of his book. In this book patience does not appear in stories that are defined by the system in which they materialize. The sources of the stories can be found in the footnotes, also referencing various online sources among many others. In the prologue he states that this book is made up of lectures created for university presentations, completed with a previously written work of his.

Presenting the changing face of patience, he references such absurdities as the hotness of cold, the blackness of white, and so on. The question of patience became as popular on the West as apple pie did in America in the 1950's, completing with the statement that "*sometimes even patience can be impatient*". On several occasions, he approaches the old and new interpretation of patience, pinpointing their conflicting nature through various examples. When dealing with the interpretation of old patience he references one of Voltaire's axioms from 1775, which presents patience as the result of our humanity, since there are no people without imperfections.

In his book he elaborates on the drawbacks of the interpretations of the concept of patience of his age. According to the author, his work presents the dubious and non-dubious concept of patience with rich examples. The book ends with a reference to the Acts of the Apostles 5,41 as a warning, that we are able to share something apostolic among us, so that siblings would not disown one another.

Michael Waltzer: "On toleration"

This work written on tolerance was published in 1997 at Yale University, and it became relevant for researching the concept of patience because of the fact that it does not approach the matter from a philosophical perspective, but it approaches the topic from the perspective of relational reality. If we read the book through the lens of the third dimension of contextual pastoral care, which is the systems theory approach, then this contributes to the social-societal-religious and cultural orientation. The book was useful because I could examine the relevant affirmations concerning my conceptual research of patience. After reading the book, this relevance was found in the affirmations that help interpret patience according to the systems theory. In order to approach the concept of patience I will position these parts with the help of a diagram referencing the relations within a group, and among various groups. In this way the concept of patience is examined from the perspective of group dynamics. My purpose is not that of going into the depths of the details. The work contains five big chapters, complemented by the preface, introduction, prologue, and other notes and appendices. The author starts with a few lines, personal in tone – due to his Jewish origins – and considers himself "*the objection to patience*". In the introduction he discusses the possible methods of talking about patience. Later on, he pinpoints – according to his own views – the way in which the harmony of co-existence can be achieved among groups that have different cultures, histories, identities. The author states that patience does not have a universal concept. From this perspective, indeed, the concept does become "dubious"! At the same time, he questions the instrumental nature of the concept of

patience. This also carries the danger that the concept could become relative, mentioning the arguments behind the “dubious” character of patience. In his work he also deals with the idea that the practice of patience is given as far as one can see themselves in the position of the other person, and as long as they are able to recognize the differences that are at the same time reasons and possibilities of practicing patience. It is through European, North American, and Middle Eastern societal structures and political power-wielding that he reaches the insight that patience based on familiarity, intimacy and commitment has its own limits. As I had previously suggested, the statements about the concept of patience will be made in the following part on the entirety of the book.

The “pastoral case” as a “study method” for the phenomenon of patience

In this research I did not undertake the endeavour to offer a universal definition for the concept of “pastoral case” – the purpose is only that of approaching patience from the perspective of pastoral care. My main purpose is achieving genuine meetings and dialogue in the practice of pastoral care based on context and trust. By genuine meeting I mean that qualitative meeting between two people where both of them are present as subjects (and not objects). On the occasion of these meetings, we can build upon trust and acknowledgement in the process of mending relations. The purpose of the pastoral case is that of mending relations, which can happen with the self-assertion of the pastor, based on the needs and possibilities offered on the changing scale of equity. In contextual pastoral care – if we can call this method of aiding as such – the concept of the pastoral case is most closely related to the concept of “circumstance”, “life situation”. In other words, “circumstances” are analogous to what we understand in this study under the term “pastoral case”. We approach the pastoral cases as life situations, circumstances by employing the results from the field of religious psychology – knowing that the rich perspectives of religious psychology necessitate self-discipline. In accordance with Vergote Antoine’s convictions, we also agree with the following: “only then can we interpret the observed religious attitudes and behaviours from a psychological perspective when we see them as conflict-resolving processes”.

The starting point of the structural element of the concept of patience is the philosophical and linguistic basis that deals with some aspects of the structural elements of the concept (mentioned in the first part of the study): difficulties, burdens, conflicts. The conceptual approach of the pastoral case itself starts from conflict, which is embedded in a specific and particular life situation. Recognizing the conflicts is sometimes not evident through the process of pastoral care. In order to achieve this recognition, we formulate hypotheses than can later on be tested. It can happen that the participants of the pastoral case name their difficulties (in some cases they name these difficulties mistakenly, despite their best efforts). After awareness is raised of the conflict, our main question will be the following: what can we do with these difficulties? Pastoral care does not name these difficulties, burdens and does not offer solutions for them, even if there is an idea about the possible solution to the problem. This idea, hypothesis is merely the pastor’s “material” with which he works, which he tests based on the attitude of the subject of pastoral

care, and the results can be employed or dismissed by the subject. Without meaning to be absolutely thorough, we can simply talk about such “material” as a possibility, attitude in matters where patience is concerned. The enumeration does not mean to suggest a temporal order, just stated possible perspectives that can be employed towards the conflict, difficulty. It is never the pastor that “knows” these conflicts, here is merely the one who can take these away, a part of the relational reality. Searching for the possibility of taking away the conflicts we take into account certain perspectives, and that is why we place the conflict in the living relational system, making possible the sharing of a burden based on the principle of equity.

This means that what is important is not naming the conflict, not typing, not researching the concepts of “difficulties”, ”burdens”, but the purpose is finding their reasons. Throughout the pastoral care the point is not that of defining the difficulties, but focusing on by whom and how they can be taken away, supported. We are therefore researching who are the ones suffering the conflict, who are burden by, or deal with the difficulties together, who the participants of the conflict are. Of course, this common bearing of the burden does not happen in equal measure among the participants, but it is important that the pastor shows that a person does not have to bear their own burden all by themselves, there are other participants, and we can look for the common resources for bearing the burden. It is more important to find the resources for bearing the burdens than to assess the weight of the burden. It is those who bear the burden that have to find the resources for bearing them – it is only them who can find these resources. The pastor can just be of help in the acquisition of this knowledge and helping them find the resources. There are various methods to search for these resources. One of the main features of contextual and trust-based pastoral care is the way questions are formulated in an equitable and righteous manner for bearing burdens – answering these questions would help the people find their own possibilities by taking into consideration their own needs. This process helps self-assertion, and at the same time it is based on the principle of equity and righteousness, and the people can settle the issue based on a certain “internal judgment”, where each “point” is noted in a “general ledger” known by everyone – and we can search together and see what can be gained from these difficulties. This approach necessitates a reversed way of thinking about the difficulties, in opposition to how we usually deal with such issues. As outsiders we might even question the legitimacy of the matter of “what one can gain from bearing the burden”, but one of the methods of bearing the burden might itself be this search for the gain. This can be a resource in the same sense we can say that Good Friday can be the condition for Easter. On the other hand, many other useful results can be gained from this assessment, these can even be validated or dismissed by practice, we can explore what it means to practice patience in a given situation, or if completely dismissing patience might be what is needed in a certain situation.

The conceptual approach of patience does not happen based on the principle of exclusivity. Therefore, patience is not a concept that can have only one object, but it can have more. Practicing patience might not be the solution to bearing the burdens in every situation, and the patient approach might not be the right and useful one in every situation. If the possibility exists,

the object of patience might be changed, but this requires a courageous decision and coherence. In some cases, this might mean a complete break from the object of patience, and changing it to a different form. Some principles of approaching the conflict are the following: to analyse together what the burden and bearing it means for each. This can encourage the possibility of having a dialogue. When discussing burdens, the pastor can help direct the attention towards the fact that the people bearing a burden have to be open to their fellows also bearing burdens. Using the concepts of contextual therapy, we can presumably find a “*current account*”, “*destructive entitlement*”, or other “*unsettled accounts*” behind the conflict. The concepts in quotation marks are some of the basic concepts of the contextual therapy developed by Bösztörményi Nagy-Iván. The abovementioned concepts are merely examples for the relational realities that can hide behind the difficulties of burden-bearing. The pastor analyses his personal relation to the conflict at hand and treats the conflict according to his multidirectional commitment, while also bearing in mind that he also lives in a multidirectional relational system. The theory of multidirectional relations also has its origins in contextual therapy. In this case it directs the attention towards the way in which the pastor is summoned in relation to a particular case of patience, and what instruments he has in order to provide help. After all of this, the definition of the pastoral case is the following: such a conflict-burdened circumstance, where the pastor (who genuinely practices his religion) is involved in the issue and can contribute to the process of conflict-solving.

The abovementioned perspectives provide the basis for the methods employed in the case studies; this is where pastoral care meets these research methods. In the following section the interpretation and practical “elements” of the pastoral case are listed:

- a) *The person*, who is not an “abstract concept”, but a living person by divine creation, with his own possibilities and necessities. Given his creation he is a “relational being” who is capable of giving and accepting. When they cannot live with these abilities of theirs, then relational difficulties might arise, and sometimes even inner obstacles may appear. These obstacles can overturn their spiritual peace. It is due to these obstacles and difficulties that they need help, this is why they come to be the “*subject of the pastoral case*” (and not the object!)
- b) The disruption of the balance or its immobility on the scale between giving and accepting is the reason behind the difficulties people face in relation with themselves, with their fellows, with the world, and with God. In short, the disturbance in the relational reality gives the object of the pastoral cases. This is the difficulty, burden that a person bears. Under this weight a person can either strengthen up, or even perish. The aid offered for bearing this burden is the pastoral care.
- c) Beside the subject and object of the pastoral case, there is another feature, or component: the pastor himself. Despite the fact that pastoral cases still remain “cases” even without the pastor, but without this component they remain unexamined and possibly even helpless, but without the outside perspective of the pastor on the difficulties we cannot call these pastoral cases. We approach this issue in a similar way to any other human-

related issue: a poem without the Reader is still a poem, but the reader is still needed to read it, listen to it – in other words, the “Other” person is still needed. The “Other” person is the pastor, who is by the side of the burden-bearer, and the case becomes a pastoral case via the person finding help in the pastor.

- d) Beside the subjects and objects of the pastoral case we have the pastoral “science”. Both the person needing help and the helper are humans, and as such they are creations of God. The fourth feature of the pastoral cases is the science with which we approach these cases, the way we note them, and the helping methods. We will not elaborate on the scientific quality of pastoral care, but we shall note that where something is examined, science must be present. After all of this, let us also note that in this science we must not forget the element that settles contradictions within, nor the distinctive feature of human creation.

The responsibility of pastoral care, its ethical practice demands that in the study of pastoral cases there must not be “*experimental subjects*”, and that we do not see humans as “*objects*” that can be subjected to all kinds of unknown “research” methods, since this would pose many dangers to a person and their environment. But before moving on to the pastoral case as a helping activity, we would like to summarise the scientific research methods employed in the case studies. In many aspects the statements of scientific research methods match what we understand under pastoral case studies. We shall mark these common points as we progress through our presentation. The acknowledgement or dismissal of the scientific quality of case studies can vary according to the perspectives of the researchers. Various, different interpretations exist of the concept of case studies themselves, and there is a variety of different methods for building up case studies, along with the fact that the definition can also vary: what is considered to be part of a case study, where and how we can employ them. In the thesis I present the scientific quality of case studies, their methods, types, and other features based on three works from the relevant literature. The works dealing with the methodology of case studies present us with a wide array of information even on the scientific basis of case studies. By pastoral case studies we mean life situations, stories, encounters, dialogue. These three works did not present the transcendental perspective. Despite the fact that this bit of information is missing, these studies provide relevant knowledge about the principle-based approach, the use of the methods, and the ethical questions that might arise in the process.

In the following part we shall deal with those three relevant works that helped in analysing patience on a scientific basis.

GolnhoferErzsébet - the directives of the work „Az esettanulmány” („The case study”)

The conceptual definition of case studies formulated by GolnhoferErzsébet is relevant in the case of my study, because it approaches from the perspective of the individual and the phenomenon. Beside the direction of the definition, this work is also important because beside the conceptual approach towards the definition, the author pinpoints the fact that case studies originate from

*“healing/medical sciences, and from various other human services”*. At the same time, she clearly differentiates the term from other similar concepts, such as case discussions, case presentations, case interpretation. Case descriptions have their origin in the birth of psychoanalysis in psychology, and as such they can be associated with Sigmund Freud’s name, who illustrated the new method through cases. We can encounter the concept of case studies also in anthropology, religious psychology, ethnography, pedagogy, psychology, medical, legal and manager training. According to the author, case studies can be used both in teaching and research, and both in exploratory and interpretative research. Case descriptions represent a widely accepted scientific approach that can be employed in scientific and methodological disputes, having the following characteristics: openness, naturalness, and the interpretative feature that arises from the communication taking place between researcher and researched.

The suggestions of Gary Thomas concerning the method of case studies

In order to approach the concept and phenomenon of patience based on the perspective of pastoral care we needed to examine the scientific knowledge on case studies offered by the work of Gary Thomas. I encountered another side of the case study research method, where I attained the tools for testing the results of the theoretical approach. The “testing” of the case study method first of all refers to the conceptual structure of patience, where I examined the structural elements of the concept that we found.

Beside the scientific examination I took into account the human and transcendental factors that the author also references in his work. As for the question of the scientific quality of the case studies, his answer is a certain “yes”. In accordance with this, I tried to employ the case studies as the chance of making a scientific approach possible. The author references Einstein’s affirmations concerning the scientific quality, that this is not defined by the method, but by intuitive thinking and the demonstrative reasoning behind the answers. Science does not have a *“shibboleth”* to use as a coat hanger where one can just hang their worn things. The author motivates his opinions in accordance with his colleagues, this completing the various procedural methods within the case studies. This was important for me too – despite its apparent contradiction – and I also approached the method of the case study from this perspective.

Svend Brinkmann and Steinar Kvale, the use of the interview as a method of qualitative examination

Getting familiar with the work of Svend and Steinar was important for the sake of learning about the qualitative research method, which is based on the formulation of questions, search for answers, and finally on the personal discussions. Preparing the interviews, their course, and the methods for formulating questions all helped me in participating in, and noting the pastoral case studies. On the first hand I gained professional knowledge about such questioning, which can influence the direction of the answer, and on the other hand it was important to recognize the difference between pastoral conversations and various types of interviews (fact-finding, concept-

clearing, or of some other nature). Therefore, my purpose is not that of acquiring the ability of conducting professional interviews, but to use the features of the interviews that can be used in the pastoral conversations and in the case studies.

In the introduction of the thesis, I already referenced the fact that we can really reach the inner worlds and lives of the people through conversations, as we disclose experiences, feelings, attitudes. I was searching for the know-how of this conversation, which in some cases can be something simpler, and more difficult in others. The thesis strengthened some of my previous knowledge, in particular that the form of the discussion is defined by its purpose and intention, and the method of the interview emerges during the interaction of the interviewer and interviewee. Between the two people talking based on common interest an “*inter-change of views*” can take place in the process.

It was also important for me to internalize the fact that the interview is not a conversation between people standing on the same ground, since the rhythm and direction of the interview is controlled by the researcher as he asks and expects answers. This is how I gained insight about the phenomenological research method, as the disclosure of experience, about hermeneutical interpretation (based on experience), and about discourse, all of this being relevant in the creation of a new societal world. These methods – as I had experienced – already define the direction and purpose of the study. Paying attention to these helped me in examining my pastoral perspective from more directions, becoming more sensitive to the method of interviewing and to the questions of ethical conduct. After applying the abovementioned conceptual examination and case study, the thesis presents nine case studies.

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