

SIT FINIS LIBRI, SED NON FINIS QUAERENDI. PRELIMINARY CLARIFICATIONS ON BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *ON CONSIDERATION*

ALEXANDER BAUMGARTEN^{*}

Abstract The present article is an approach to Bernard of Clairvaux's treaty *On Consideration*. Its reading follows the arguments of a thesis according to which this text has a political theology dimension and it could be included in a history on the evolution of the concept "state of exception", as it was defined by Giorgio Agamben. The primary argument is that Bernard, in order to convince Pope Eugene III of the need to resume the crusade, used the patristic concepts of spiritual formation to legitimise the Pope's right to make political decisions above the rules, in the name of the divine inspiration of the one who was formed spiritually.

Keywords Bernard of Clairvaux, the history of the papacy, compunctio, duritia cordis, political theology

The reader of Bernard of Clairvaux's treaty *On Consideration* could be surprised by two aspects. First, by the fact that the title bears a word that, in the text, is used with a very different meaning from the wider sense with which modern languages associate the literal equivalent of the Latin *consideratio*. Although free speech understands *consideration* merely as an act of attention or of taking something into account ("taking something into consideration"), or even as an act of supposition ("let us consider"), the meaning used by Bernard in this treaty implies a theory of subjectivity, of political decision, of redemption theory, of self consciousness and of the relation with the transcendental.

Secondly, the reader may be surprised by the equivocal end in which Bernard asserts that, although that is indeed the end of his book, it is not the end of the issue at hand: "So let

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Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, E-mail: alexbaum7@gmail.com.

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us end the book here, but not the search.¹ We can interpret this end either as a simple form of rhetoric, or as a warning on the imperative that its addressee, Pope Eugene III², meditate on the matter and act upon it, or even as a warning on the very nature of the issue under scrutiny. Regarding the latter, Bernard would consider it to be infinite and it could thus never be completely comprehended thought or written word. Whichever version is correct, we could, in turn, ask ourselves, in the form of preliminary clarifications on the reading of the present version, if the two possible surprises a reader may feel could be connected and whether this connection could be the reading cipher through which we could access the message of this treaty.

In order to outline a resolve to this approach, we shall attempt the following: 1) to identify the literary genre to which the work belongs; 2) to analyse the concepts placed around consideration; 3) to comment on the forms of address used by Bernard (we shall focus particularly on the ones we consider to be rhetorical); 4) to comment on the four definitions of consideration present in the treaty; 5) to discuss the source used by the author for the term *consideratio*; 6) to make certain notes in the original sphere of the term in Bernard's work; 7) to make a comparison between Bernard's consideration and the concept of the necessary political decision in "the state of exception", as it is defined in Karl Schmitt's and Giorgio Agamben's theory on "the state of exception"³. The latter defines the primary thesis of these preliminary clarifications: the novelty of the meaning with which Bernard of Clairvaux invests the Latin term *consideratio*, probably inspired by the Benedictine tradition present in the works of Gregory the Great – it refers to a type of political decision made from an anomic position assumed by the supreme pontiff and the purpose of the Cistercian abbot's treaty is to legitimise this decision in terms comparable with Karl Schmitt's political theology. Undoubtedly, *mutatis mutandis*, since the difference between the two authors resides in the fact that the first considers that the spiritual portrait of the leader is dependent on an ascetic morality based on a few biblical concepts and an already canonical patristic exegesis, concepts which are here applied uniquely, with added political meaning (a pierce to the heart –

¹ The periphrastic conjugation of *quaerendi* also bears the sense of an explanatory genitive (*finis quaerendi*, understood as *ars amandi*), as well as the sense of a duty: the end of what is worthy to be sought.

² Pope Eugene III (1145-1153) was an Italian Cistercian by the name of Bernardo Paganelli, who held a series of previous ecclesiastic positions, but who had not been part of the College of Cardinals. He became pope after the assassination of Lucius II (1144-1145). He initiated the second crusade, he was involved in many political crises between the Curia and the Roman municipality. He was not liked by the Romans and he left the city many times – See Zimmermann (2004), 130-131. It would appear that in his presence, in 1148, Bernardus Silvestris' poem *Cosmographia* was recited for the first time (see M. Lemoine, *Introducere*, in Bernardus Silvestris, *Cosmografia*, transl. by Ana Palanciuc and Florina Ion (Iași: Polirom, 2010), 14).

³ For the two authors, see: K. Schmitt, *Teologia politică*, transl. by L. Stan and L. Turcescu, (Bucharest: Universal-Dalsi, 1996), and G. Agamben, *Starea de excepție (Homo sacer, II, 1)*, transl. by A. Cistelean (Cluj: Idea Design-Print, 2008).

compunctio – and the hardening of the heart – *duritia cordis*), while for the second author, the political decision maker does not have a moral portrait that can be anchored in the ascetic experience.

Such a thesis could seem unique in the context of the works dedicated to this treaty. There is simple information which the aforementioned exegesis repeats, thus creating a minimal *vulgata* in the presentation of the text: it is the philosophical masterpiece of the great Cistercian abbot; it was written during Bernard's final years (d. 1153); it addresses Pope Eugene III, former monk of Clairvaux, it consists of five books written (or dictated) and sent successively; Bernard, as his former abbot, affectionately urges the Pope to adopt the behaviour of a Roman pontiff who would consider exploiting his monk self, which can only be done by considering the aspects that are inner, lower, surrounding and above the person of the pontiff; these aspects configure the "consideration"; the fourth aspect, in the final part of the treaty, represents the basis for a short treaty on Trinitarian theology and Angelology that is implicitly engaged in a polemic with some of Bishop Gilbert of Poitiers' theses.

However, some of these common elements of the exegesis could receive special treatment if they were not considered to be obvious facts that should be assumed by an interpretation as part of a veritable exegetic tradition, but approached as objects of interpretation whose meaning is not yet obvious. For example, it is not self evident that the affectionate exclamations in Bernard's forms of address to Eugene must be accepted as such and that they should not rather be understood as part of a "strategy"⁴ of the author's speech, in which he means to obtain from Eugene that which he pretends to already hold. Similarly, it is not self evident that Bernard means to convince Eugene with the sole purpose of not losing the performance of the ascetic life in the context of his new position and this appeal should be interpreted in the very contents of the text in which Bernard explicitly asks the Pope to resume the crusade, after the Siege of Edessa in 1147. Moreover, in the context of the aforementioned "simple information", the purpose of a new connotation of consideration is not self evident, if we do not make the effort of identifying a deeper level in Bernard's speech. The reason why the pontiff must place his ascetic ego above his duties (expressed though a reminiscence of the Delphic Imperative: "*give yourself back to yourself – reddere te ipsum tibi*" – DC, I, v, 6) is also not self evident – an ascetic ego which the pontiff had developed during his years as a monk, according to Bernard: is this not rather a subjection to the arbitrary decision of a leader who legitimates himself by exercising his own piety?

However, my thesis may seem innovative due to the fact that the primary directions of the exegesis of this treaty only refer to two divergent aspects, and our interpretation proposes their merger. One of the usual readings of this text include it in the literary genre of the "mirrors for princes", in which an intellectual figure from a leader's inner circle gives him

⁴ I used the term "strategy" following Morrison, K. F., "Hermeneutics and enigma: Bernard of Clairvaux's *De consideratione*", in *Viator*, 19 (1988), 129, in which the treaty is presented as a succession of paradoxes and hermeneutic techniques of persuasion addressed to Pope Eugene III, which the author of the article compares to the works of Anselm of Havelberg and Gerhoch of Reichensberg.

advice on spiritual formation and even political action⁵. The arguments for this classification are usually the ones that stand out from the text itself: the fact that he addresses the pope and that he criticises the Roman administration. This reading focuses on the *position* held by Eugene III, interpreting the spiritual guide present in the treaty as a general portrait of the good leader.

Another common reading of the treaty, inherited from the way in which it had been read in the Cistercian monastic tradition that followed, interprets this text as a set of guidelines for the inner spiritual formation of a monk (or of subjectivity) in general⁶ that can be connected to other occurrences of consideration in Bernard's works, the most important of which are present in the earlier treaty, *The Steps of Humility and Pride*⁷. This second reading focuses on the *person* of Bernard Paganelli (also known as Pope Eugene III) and suggests that the function of the concept of consideration in the treaty can be understood as separate from the papal position. For our reading that tries to connect the two planes, the *tension* between the person and the position of the pope, explicitly depicted several times in the treaty, is the theoretical place in which the original architecture of consideration can be found, which

⁵ For this reading, see, for example, Gilson, E., *La théologie mystique de Saint Bernard* (Paris: 1934), 156, Lambertini, R., "Mirror of Princes", in H. Lagerlund, *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy* (Dordrecht: Routledge, Springer, 2011), 791 and others. The literary genre of "mirrors for princes" contains an important number of works from the Latin Middle Ages: first of all, the pseudo-Aristotelian Secret of Secrets (see the excellent Romanian translation made and commented by Luciana Cioca, published in the "Biblioteca Medievală" Collection, (Iași: Polirom, 2017)), as well as Sedulius Scotus, *De rectoribus christianis*, John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* (which also references large passages from *On Consideration* in *De ecclesiastica potestate*) etc. Johannes Siani's commentary, published in 1749, fully shows this direction of reading the treaty, and in *Epistula dedicatoria*, he describes the treaty thus: "*in his libris, quasi in speculo veri pontificis effigies ...*"

⁶ For this reading, see, for example, P. Courcelle, *Connais-toi toi-même, De Socrate à Saint Bernard*, (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1974), 270, which included Bernard's treaty in a history of the Socratic "know thyself"; Michel, B., "La considération et l'unitas spiritus", in R. Brague (ed.), *Saint Bernard et la philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993), 109-127, who understood *consideratio* as an instrument in creating a unity of the soul, with no political implications; Kennan, E., "The 'De consideratione' of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the Papacy in the Mid-Twelfth Century: a Review of Scholarship", in *Traditio*, 23 (1967), 73-115, represents an analysis of the hand-written dissemination of the treaty and it concludes that it had been interpreted by the Cistercians predominantly as a set of guidelines for spiritual life (although its position is relatively contradicted by Siani's 1749 commentary, see previous footnote); Lobrichon, G., "Heurs et malheurs du De consideratione, XII-XVIII siècles", in Burton (2012), in Burton, A., Trottmann, C. et al. (eds.), *Bernard of Clairvaux et la pensée des Cisterciens*, Actes du Colloque de Troyes, 28-30 October 2010, *Cîteaux*, special issue, 2012, 317-330, which also notes that the hand-written dissemination of the treaty throughout the following centuries showed the decreasing interest of the papacy for this text and the interest in it as a set of guidelines for monastic life.

⁷ For this reading, see Brague, R., "L'anthropologie de l'humilité", R. Brague (ed.), *Saint Bernard et la philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993), 129-152, especially 136.

essentially depends on both the type of spiritual ascension proposed by Bernard and on the urge to resume the crusade that is expressed explicitly in the text.

Our approach, however, analyses the concept of consideration by showing the context of its configuration, the role it plays in motivating Eugene to remobilise the crusade. We shall analyse this concept based on the way in which it addressed Eugene and based on a feature of the leader, and not that of the common man (which Bernard does not even mention in the treaty). Or: does the theory of consideration have a strictly political basis and, consequently, is it no longer applicable to any common man?

Let us first note the historical context in which the passage from Book II was formulated, in which Bernard tries to convince Eugene of the necessity to resume the crusade. The position of the pope is a position of power that, for decades, continued to assert itself more and more strongly in Europe, as part of a phenomenon of centralising the growing papal power after Gregory VII's reforms from the end of the previous century⁸. After the first crusade (1096-1099), which the Latin west, in the mid-12th century, had every reason to remember as glorious, the Latin world resumed the conquests between 1147–1149 under Eugene III, after the Siege of Edessa, in 1145. The news that Edessa had fallen sparked a series of reactions in the Latin world, and one such reaction was the fact that Pope Eugene III determined Bernard to preach, on 31 March 1146, in the Benedictine monastery from Vézelay in favour of the crusade. If the pope truly was the one who caused the popularisation of his political intention, why does it appear to be the exact opposite in Book II of *On Consideration*, in which Bernard addresses a pope (who was apparently reluctant in this decision) in order to convince him to resume the crusade? Bernard indeed states, in *On Consideration*, II, I, 4, that he means to convince the pope of the need for a third attempt (*monentem tertio*), and his count probably included the first crusade, the Siege of Edessa and this third attempt, namely what later became the Second Crusade.

The relations between Pope Eugene and Bernard are, however, not as simple as we are led to believe from the treaty. In 1135, Paganelli was canonical in Pisa, where he met Bernard. Only three years later, he became a novice at the Clairvaux Abbey, which had been active for 23 years and which, in the monastic Europe of that time, represented a current symbol of the reform of the Benedictine Order, a symbol of the separation from the way in which the monks from Cluny understood the Benedictine ideals and it represented a place of rigorous asceticism. He only spends 1139 in Clairvaux; he spends the following six years in the Roman Curia, as an abbot in the Abbey of Saints Vincent and Anastasius (the future Tre Fontane Abbey, an abbey that had a strategic value to the pontifical power) and he becomes the pope in 1145. Therefore, he spent little time in Clairvaux and the period between 1148-1149 was a relatively distant memory. He became a pope untraditionally (since he was not part of the College of Cardinals) and in this context of tension he asked Bernard to preach in the favour of the military expedition. After the news of the defeat in Edessa (between 1147-1148)

⁸ See Kennan, 77.

had spread, the pope visited Clairvaux twice. Could we believe that a change occurred in the pope's attitude towards the crusade, a change which Bernard opposes in this treaty? Although we can note the change – in that the pope was being urged, and now Bernard is the one being urged –, we cannot make any claims in this respect, since we know of no document that would attest it.

Nevertheless, we can note a certain verbal behaviour of Abbot Bernard towards Eugene, in which the abbot feels the need to emphasise the influence which he has on the new pope, insofar as to publicly claim a substitution between the two ("People are saying that you are not the pope, but I am").⁹ Letters 238-239 are dedicated to this theme, and in *On Consideration*, Bernard reminds Eugene of the love he bears for him, "like a mother". Then, in Letter 250, 4, Bernard describes himself thus: "behold my monstrous life, my burdened conscience. For I am the chimera of my time: neither cleric, nor layman"¹⁰. For Jean Leclercq, this double life represented a problematic combination of the contemplative life and the active life, correlating with a theological foundation¹¹ of the connection between grace and free will. This connection is the very foundation of the concept of consideration, whose definitions show it is neither active life nor contemplative life, but it does not exclude them either.

If we were to add the long period of time between Paganelli's career as a monk and that of a Roman official, as well as certain information regarding his very short pontificate (1145-1153), about which Harald Zimmermann ironically stated that "who knows what would have happened if Eugene were to follow the Cistercian mystic's command to lead a life in accordance with the apostolic models!¹²", a pontificate in which cultivating the recommended ascetic models was not a priority, we believe that we must focus not on the love felt by the abbot, but on the fact that he felt the need to express it. If this observation is correct, we can understand Bernard's appeal to Eugene as a desire to make the pope return to a state that is present rather in the abbot's projections of the pope. Furthermore, he uses the expression of this love in order to assign a greater importance to monastic life than the secular life. He writes in the terms of a nostalgia for monastic life felt while assuming an ecclesiastic position: Eugene

⁹ Letter 239, in *Patrologia latina*, vol. 182, line 431a: "*Aiunt non vos esse papam, sed me*". The idea of this substitution is also present in Michel, B., "La considération et l'unitas spiritus", in R. BRAGUE (ed.), *Saint Bernard et la philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993), 582, but he understands it as relevant only to the spiritual fulfilment of Bernard himself, who projected himself onto the pope, not to the pope's actions, as the present study argues.

¹⁰ Letter 250, 4, in *Patrologia latina*, vol. 182, line 451a: "*Clamat ad vos mea monstruosa vita, mea aerumnosa conscientia. Ego enim quaedam chimaera mei saeculi: nec clericum gero, nec laicum*".

¹¹ Leclercq, J., "Bernard de Clairvaux. Philosophie de l'action et pratique de la contemplation au prisme de la considération", in Tottmann, C. (ed.), *Vie active et vie contemplative au Moyen Age et au seuil de la Renaissance*, ed. Ch. Tottmann, École Française de Rome, 2009, 355-358.

¹² Zimmermann, H., *Papalitatea în Evul Mediu, o istorie a pontifilor romani din perspectiva istoriografiei*, transl. by A. Dincă, (Iași: Polirom, 2004), 131.

was “torn from the embraces of your Rachel”¹³ - I, I, 1 (*alias* from the Clairvaux Abbey, as Iohannes Siani¹⁴ interprets it in 1749, and the analogy is subtly formulated in the terms of the *Song of Songs*, Bernard’s main work). However, this “tear” is not completely historically accurate, since he had left Clairvaux long before. Moreover, this nostalgia for monastic life in relation with the ecclesiastic position cannot be considered *ad hoc* by the author, it is a very common Benedictine *topos* (which is also present in the works of Gregory the Great and Peter Damian¹⁵, for instance). Here, however, paradoxically in relation with the already traditional form of this nostalgia and probably as Bernard’s innovation, the papal position is presented to Eugene not only as a the place where one “falls” out of being a monk, but rather as the ultimate purpose of assuming the papal position:

“True, you sit on Peter’s seat. What of that? Though you walk on the wings of the wind, you will never outstrip my affection. (...) I am sure that the change in your circumstances *has come to you* (emphasis added, A.B.): it has not been sought by you; and I am no less certain that your promotion has left you what you were before, though something be added thereto. I will, accordingly, admonish you, not as a schoolmaster, but as a mother” (OC, Prologue)

This inversion is meant to point out the intention of the treaty: he means to use the demands of ascetic life in order to place them in the context of the decisional legitimacy of the Roman pontiff. The contents of the primacy of ascetic life represents a “self” of the monk that must be discovered and that is in opposition with the assumed position, but it is also in the constant danger of being forgotten. This “self” is defined through a Latin wordplay, in the rhetorical style used throughout the treaty, that abundantly appeals to such resonances, as a form of security and of belonging to oneself: “ubi tutus, ubi tuus?”. Thus, the primacy of ascetic life over the ecclesiastic position leads Bernard to discovering the fundamental tension between the person and the position.

The author describes these symptoms in connection to two basic terms of the ascetic spiritual experience that are thus used, perhaps for the first time in their history, a political

¹³ All English translations of passages from *On Consideration* are cited from the edition Saint Bernard, *On Consideration*, transl. by George Lewis M.A. (London, Edinburgh, New York and Toronto: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1908):

https://archive.org/stream/bernarddeclirvau00bernunft/bernarddeclirvau00bernunft_djvu.txt

¹⁴ Sianni, J., *In libros S. Bernardi abbatidis De consideratione commentarii critici, morales, politici*, Romae, 1749, *Epistula dedicatoria*, no page numbering.

¹⁵ See Grigore cel Mare, *Dialoguri, Prol.*, 5, transl. by C. Horotan, ed. A. Baumgarten, (Iași: Polirom, 2017), 31; Petrus Damianus, *Despre omnipotența divină, Prolog*, 1. transl. by F. Ion, ed. A. Baumgarten (Iași: Polirom, 2014), 55. In the cited passage, Peter Damian’s words are very explicit: the one who believes himself to be both monk and a servant of the Curia is mistaken (*et monachum esse, et curiae deservire*).

sense. On the one hand, the soul engulfed by the position loses its person because it suffers “the hardness of the heart” (*duritia cordis*). *Sklerokardia* (the Greek term for the hardness of the heart) is a biblical term¹⁶ with a long history of use in moral theology, but one that here is used to define the inability of the soul that assumed a position to keep its self-sufficiency, to assume fear (*timor* is “the beginning of wisdom” in a passage of the Old Testament to which the text alludes¹⁷), or to understand the things past, present and future. Could we truly deduce that the soul suffering from *duritia cordis* can no longer understand the individual due to the universality of the laws that govern the sphere of its position? It is very likely, as long as its opposite, consideration, is also an act of knowing the individuals, as we shall further see. In any case, Bernard associates here *duritia cordis* with the negligence that arises from the careless habit (I, I, 1: *per consuetudinem in incuriam*) and through “the enfeebling of the mind” (I, II, 3: *evisceratio mentis*). We must note the fact that the transformation of the careless habit (also named *consuetudo*, as well as *assiduitas*) into the inaccuracy of the mind that is no longer able to intuit the truth is also a Benedictine theme that can be attested, by example, to Gerard of Csanád, in the *Prologue of The Hymn of the Three Young Men Dedicated to Isingrim the Master*¹⁸.

Besides this symptom of the hardening of the heart, a man lost in his own position is deprived of a process that is fundamental to spiritual life, the “compunction of the heart” (*compunctio*), which played an important role in Gregory the Great’s *Dialogue* in which he

¹⁶ For a history of this term, I received an exceptional bibliographical list compiled by hieromonk Agapie Corbu, who generously and knowledgeably answered all of my questions. I am grateful to him and I shall reproduce the list here: Deut., 10, 16, Jer., 4, 4 (the idea appears in both passages as an urge to purify the soul analogical with the strictly ritualistic Brit Milah); Sir. 16, 10, Prov., 17, 20, Prov., 28, 14, Ps., 94, 8 and 12-13, Ezec., 11, 9, Ez., 3, 7, Mt., 19, 8, Mc., 10, 5 and 16, 14 (in which the evangelist associates the hardening of the heart with the absence of faith), Fap., 28, 27, and for the development in the Greek tradition: Macarie Egipteanul, *Omilia* 40, Avva Isaia, *Cuvinte ascetice* I, 44, Marcu Ascetel, *Despre legea duhovnicească*, c. 148 (Romanian translation in *Filocalia*, vol. 1). Chiril de Schitopolis, *Viața Sfântului Ioan Isihastul* c. 23, 219, 5 (Romanian translation, *Viețile pustnicilor Palestinei*, bilingual edition, ed. Sfântul Nectarie, Arad, 2013, 444); Isaac Sirul, *Cuvântul* 30, 508, r. 12; *Cuvântul* 5, 301, r. 386, *Cuvântul* 30, 508, r. 10 (the references are to the critical edition of the Greek text, αββα ισαακ του συρου, λογοι ασκητηκοι, ιερα μονη βηρων, αγιον ορος, 2014); Ioan Scărarul, *Scara*, *Cuvântul* IV, 50; XIV, 32; XXVI A, 29; XXVI A, 59; XXVII B, 8. (Romanian translation in *Filocalia*, vol. 9). Simeon Noul Teolog, *Centurii*, III, 23 (SC 51, 86-87). I am also grateful to Georgiana Huian for drawing my attention to an interesting passage from Augustine, *Confesiuni*, VII, 2, 1, in which Augustine uses an expression similar to the one under scrutiny (*incrassatus corde*) and he shows how the “hardened heart” makes it impossible for the ego to access its self. We can obviously identify in the Augustinian approach of this biblical idea a possible source for Bernard, since the Cistercian actually repeats the idea: that the hardened heart blocks the access to self-knowledge.

¹⁷ Sir., 1, 16: *initium sapientiae timor Domini*, in which we could identify a slight allusion to OC, I, ii, 3.

¹⁸ See Gerardus din Cenad, *Deliberarea asupra imnului celor trei tineri*, *Prolog*, transl. by Marius Ivașcu, ed. Claudiu Mesaroș (Iași: Polirom), in press.

listed its categories¹⁹. *Compunctio* is repentance, remorse, care for the future, spasm of the soul that drives away its self-assurance, an exercise in humility etc. It corresponds with the patristic term *katanyxis*, a very common term in the medieval spiritual tradition (which only prudence and the lack of speculative courage prevent us to think of it as a much more morally emphasised medieval archetype of the Cartesian *dubito*) and it is the opposite of Paul's vice of science that "puffs up"²⁰. Both the hardening of the heart and the absence of compunction lead to the abuse of the position itself, which proves that they cause the judiciary and political favouritism (for instance, *acceptio personarum*, an important judiciary category in Gratian and in the entire later moral theology – see *OC*, II, XIV, 23).

In the context of this excess of actions required by the pontifical position, consideration (*OC*, I, V, 6) appears to be strictly connected to the hardening of the heart and to compunction. To devote oneself to consideration is to avoid the hardening of the heart (as Bernard already suggested, by associating *consideratio* with *humilitas* in *The Steps of Humility and Pride*) and to assume compunction, which causes *pietas* (*OC*, I, II, 3). However, both consideration and the hardening of the heart receive descriptions which show the structure of a hermeneutic sphere of the construction of their meanings, which is also present in the description of Bernard's affective participation in the spiritual life of Eugene. Here are three passages of the text that show this similarity:

Well, then, where shall I begin? I prefer to begin with your occupations, because it is in these that I most chiefly share your sorrow. *Share, I say, for I take it for granted that you have sorrow* (emphasis added A.B.); otherwise I ought rather to have said I sorrow, since where there is no sorrow one cannot share it. Accordingly, if you grieve, I grieve with you; if you do not, still I grieve, and deeply, because I know that the member which is past feeling is all the farther from health, and that the sick man who is unconscious of his sickness is in the more dangerous condition (*OC*, I, I, 1).

Do you ask whither? I reply, to a hard heart. Do not further ask what that means; if you have not greatly feared it, it is yours already. That heart alone is hard which does not shudder at itself for not feeling its hardness. (*OC*, I, II, 2)

And first of all consider the word. <consideration> (*OC*, II, 2, 5)

The three passages have a common element, which a simple logic would declare to be a petition on principle, since it defines something through itself. In each case, Bernard tells

¹⁹ Grigore cel Mare, *Dialoguri*, III, xxxiv, ed. cit., 280 sqq.

²⁰ 1 Cor., 8, 1: *scientia inflat, caritas vero aedificat*.

Eugene that he cannot understand the concept (passion, hardening or consideration, respectively) if he had not already experienced it. The only way out of this paradoxical situation is described in the first passage, by invoking a theme that can be associated with the beginning of Boethius' *De consolazione Philosophiae*: the first step in healing is acknowledging the illness. However, this paradoxical pedagogy, characteristic to spiritual initiation, shows the presence (perhaps a latent presence, although Bernard does not say so directly) within the interlocutor of the virtue that the master cultivates: Eugene suffers in order to be pitied, he cannot understand the hardening of the heart if it had already been hardened and he must use consideration in order to understand what consideration is. The author of the treaty does not seem to be preoccupied by the logical difficulty of this pedagogy, but rather by the double position of the relation between the two: Bernard and Eugene are united (through "motherly" love) in the three aspects, but they are separate, since each aspect must have been previously present in Eugene's soul in order for it to be later communicated to Bernard.

This ambivalent aspect is extremely useful in the economy of the discourse, as we shall see further on, in order for Bernard to be able to establish the decision maker responsible with the crusade. This implication is as of yet invisible, but it gradually becomes clearer, as the meaning of consideration becomes clearer, as does the means through which it creates a balance between Eugene's person (the monastic self) and the papal position. The first step in this direction is indicating the contents of this clarification, borrowed from a passage from Augustine²¹:

„Cum ergo quattuor sint diligenda, unum quod supra nos est, alterum quod nos sumus, tertium quod iuxta nos est, quartum quod infra nos est.” (De doctrina christiana, I, xxiii, 22)

"te, quae sub te, quae circa te, quae supra te sunt - yourself, things below you, things around you, and things above you – OC, II, iii, 6".

Therefore, what for Augustine is merely a rule of love and of man's place in the world, for Bernard, in Pope Eugene's behaviour it is consideration. The analogy with Augustine goes further, since the passage from *De doctrina Christiana* continues – it invokes the need to know these four dimensions in order to eliminate self love and to block the desire to dominate others (paragraph XXIII, the following one from Augustine's text). The observation seems important, since Bernard also claims in his theory of consideration the consequence that pope, if he were to practice consideration correctly, becomes free of this desire. Nonetheless, Bernard's text in which he advises Eugene to be an administrator rather than a commander (since the pope had not lost the consciousness of transcendence and the exercise of humility) no longer follows Augustine's vocabulary in the passage from *De doctrina Christiana* (in which

²¹ The similarity was identified by Leclercq, J. *Recueil d'études sur saint Bernard et ses écrits*, III (col. Storia e letteratura, 114), Rome 1969, 120 and resumed as a commonplace of the exegesis on this treaty.

Augustine said: *qui sibi naturaliter pares sunt ... dominari affectat* – in the cited edition, 82). In fact, while mentioning the Augustinian implication of the four dimensions of love/consideration in avoiding arrogance and dominating people, Bernard uses a different vocabulary that is, in our opinion, borrowed from another Augustinian work:

... do not aim at lording it over other men, lest all unrighteousness gain dominion over you. But I have already pressed this upon you more than enough in discussing who you are. Yet I add this much; for I dread no poison for you, no sword more than the “lust of dominion” (*libidinem dominandi*) (*OC*, III, 1, 2)

We added the quotation marks to the expression *libido dominandi* because, although no edition of the treaty *On Consideration* marks this fact, it could be considered to be a paraphrase of a passage from the *Prologue of De civitate Dei*, where this concept appears in a context that judges pagan Roman history and counts as one of the explanations for the general meaning of the entire Augustinian treaty:

I must also speak of the earthly city – the city which when it seeks dominion (*ipsa ei dominandi libido dominatur*), even though the peoples are its slaves, is itself under the dominion of its very lust for domination, we must not remain silent about any of this assumed work’s meanings and we have the opportunity to speak.

Augustine thus announces an intension that is important to the structure of the treaty: he means to construct a critique of the pagan Roman history that, in the author’s opinion, enters the paradox of being dominated by the lust for domination through a subtle dialectic of the wish to dominate that Augustine deciphers in his treaty. Regarding the Romans, he states that this paradox comes from believing in the false gods (namely, defeated and defunct) whom Aeneas had transported from Troy for the foundation of Rome and about whom the Romans refused to accept the reality of their lack of life from the very beginning²². This exercise of becoming aware of a hidden fact from the founding of the city is curative for the people of Rome and it can only be done, according to Augustine, by this Christian means. There is a tempting answer to the question: why does Bernard call on this Augustinian text, showing that overlooking consideration leads to lust for domination? The answer may lie in the reconstruction of Bernard’s reading of Augustine, by indicating the passages from *On Consideration* that refer to the same people of Rome who identify as “everything around” Eugene and as an obstacle to consideration, a temptation for political abuse and a hardening of the pope’s heart. The terms in which Bernard-the-monk criticises the citizens of Rome and

²² Augustin, *Despre cetatea lui Dumnezeu*, I, 3.

the Papal Curia are very harsh and they cumulate the plethora of vices. However, the fact that he uses an Augustinian term here shows that this critique is part of an effort to mend a situation that Bernard understands as archetypal, a situation which requires Bernard to advocate for an ascetic reform of the whole of Christianity and of the Roman Curia particularly, just as Augustine advocates for making Rome Christian.

Thus, these are the instances in which consideration functions: ascetic virtues, vices based on arrogance, their political conversion and the idea that the monastic self is above the assumed position in a four-party context that ensures balance and authenticity for the pope: if were to practice consideration, he would avoid arrogance and the desire to dominate, since he would thus recognise the existence of those above him, he would not allow himself to become completely absorbed by the needs of his position (demanded by those around him), he would have a particular understanding for those below him (and he would thus avoid the hardening of the heart and the bias towards some people) and he would be able to access his self, obtained through spiritual exercise. The four dimensions of consideration are interconnected: a clear evidence of this fact is represented by the wonderful passage from *On Consideration*, III, IV, 14, in which Bernard refers to the pope's "image" (*species*). Here, the polysematism of the word *species* (aspect, image, view, species etc.) offers a continuity from the image that reveals the truth to the degrading copy-image of the truth. This continuity moderately legitimises the Roman pomp (if it were an expression of the pope's previous face), and it is present in the writings of one of the most well-known critics of ecclesiastic opulence of the 12th century.

In spite of this scheme, it is yet still unclear what consideration truly is and how Bernard uses it to urge Eugene to resume the crusade. We have intentionally exploited this lack of clarity in the present paper in order to reconstruct Bernard's endeavour: he gives lacunar indications and vague descriptions in the first occurrences of the term and the definitions only occasionally ensue after the use of the term.

Consideration thus appears as a guarantee of the spiritual authenticity of the monk that became pope in the face of the danger posed by the position. This is why Bernard places it in an intermediary area between the active and the contemplative life, but he discerns it from both. We must note that this is a real contribution to the long history of the distinction between the active and the contemplative life. It is not a form of practical rationality (*If you give all your life and all your wisdom to action, and nothing to consideration, do I praise you?* – OC, I, V, 6), neither is it prudence (listed among the virtues, but it excludes consideration: I, VIII, 11). It is not contemplative rationality either (*I do not wish it to be regarded as exactly synonymous with contemplation, because the latter is concerned with the certainty of things, the former more fitly with their investigation* – OC, I, II, 5). Furthermore, it is not merely an intermediary, but a unifying factor of perceiving the world²³, a means to use contemplation in

²³ DC, II, ix, 18: "*summa imaque consocians*".

the daily life without abandoning the pure exercise of contemplation, thus consideration is exercised per se:

The former books, although they bear the title On Consideration, have very much in them relating to action, inasmuch as they teach or admonish that some things should be not only considered, but also done. (*OC*, V, I, 1).

The text thus contains four definitions of consideration and their commentary could perhaps clarify the way in which consideration functions in the four-party context established by Bernard. The first connects the traditional definition of the philosophy, from Alcinous to Cicero, but that Bernard seems to take directly from Cassiodorus' *Institutions*²⁴. It is interesting how Seneca, in his Letters to Lucilius, also associates "knowing the human and the divine" (*humana divinaque simul tractant*) with the suppression of the distinction between the practical and the contemplative life and, as we well know, Seneca was a very popular author at that time. Moreover, it is well-known definition in the 12th century that Hugh of Saint Victor, in *Didascalicon*²⁵, also mentions. This, in fact, implies a commendation of the traditional philosophy that led to the knowledge of the human and divine things, acknowledged several times in the treaty under scrutiny, as opposed to the differentiation from the Parisian logic and dialectic against which Bernard pleaded many times. We thus have this first definition, on the verge of transmitting one of the ancient definitions of philosophy:

First of all, consideration purifies the very fountain, that is the mind, from which it springs. Then it governs the affections, directs our actions, corrects excesses, softens the manners, adorns and regulates the life, and, lastly, bestows the knowledge of things divine and human alike – *postremo divinarum pariter et humanarum rerum scientiam confert* (*OC*, I, VIII, 9).

The second definition regards consideration in the terms of an intentional knowledge, it builds the phenomenon of knowledge but it exclusively describes the map of the subject focused on things. An ancestor of intentionalism? The term *intensa*, translated here by "intense" is imperfectly depicted, since it signifies both intensity and tendency, and as a passive principle, it invokes the existence of an author that provokes this act of tendency towards the truth, but that does not replace the access to truth (that remains part of contemplation). As such, the proximal genre of consideration is *cogitatio*, and the difference is *intensa*, namely a reflection on things. It could not have been any other way, since

²⁴ See Cassiodorus, *Institutiones*, II, 3, 5. For the sources: Alcinous, *Didaskalicos*, Cicero, *De officiis*, I, 153 and II, 6, as well as *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, II, 15, I. 35-36.

²⁵ See Hugo of Saint Victor, *Didascalicon*, II, 1, transl. L. Maftei, ed. D. Poirel (Iași: Polirom, 2013), 109.

consideration eliminates the hardening of the heart and thus allows access to knowledge, no matter what position one occupies:

contemplation may be defined as the soul's true unerring intuition, or as the unhesitating apprehension of truth. But consideration is thought earnestly directed to research, or the application of the mind to the search for truth – *consideratio autem intensa ad investigandum cogitatio, vel intentio animi vestigantis verum*. (OC, II, II, 5).

The third definition presents consideration in the context of individual redemption and is connected to one of the more called upon neotestamentary passages by the Medieval Latin epistemologies, Romans 1:20:

Consideration thus employed is a returning home. That is a higher and worthier use of things present, when, according to the wisdom of Paul, *the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made*. – Sic considerare, repatriare est. Sublimior iste praesentium ac dignior usus rerum, cum iuxta sapientiam Pauli, *invisibilia Dei, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciuntur* – (OC, V, I, 1).

Here, consideration uses the distinction between the one who is on the path (*peregrinus*, in the Prologue of *De doctrina Christiana*, or *viator*, in the university terminology of the following centuries) and the one who is “in the land of the Father” (*in patria*, in the terminology of the same Augustinian passage that here corresponds with Bernard's verb *repatriare*). However, the juxtaposition with the passage from Romans is truly surprising: only the passive participle “*intellecta*” from the passage from Paul could correspond with consideration. Therefore, it is an effort to understand the invisible divine things within the things of creation (as opposed to contemplation, which could only seek them as divine, or to practical thinking, which could only focus on things, without seeking *invisibilia Dei*).

The fourth definition refers to the perception of the self, of the inner life of the consciousness, and consideration here could focus on the optimal positioning of the self in the world and on a form of autarchy of the self:

Hence it is that to reach them Consideration does not seek the medium of the senses: it perceives them immediately, and is self-percipient. That is the best sort of vision when you lack nothing, when you have your heart's desire, and find contentment in yourself. (OC, V, I, 1)

We are thus faced with the exploitation of a traditional definition of philosophy, of an intentionalist orientation, a classification within the structure of redemption and a form of

apperceptive autarchy, all comprised by consideration. All of these contribute to establishing a new concept, one that is different from contemplation and practice, which are said to be partially implied. The specific exercise of consideration takes place in the field it shares with contemplation, but to which it specifically relates and which represents the object of Book V: the world of the divine. However, Bernard fully uses the concept in the field of political decisions. He often connects consideration to the art of moderation and to establishing the middle grounds, in the spirit of a venerable ancient tradition: the user of consideration can admit the ancient precept of “nothing in excess” and can always use moderation in his actions, since he holds the standard of moderation (DC, I, VIII, 9-11), in correlation especially with the “estimative” consideration from Book V²⁶. However, the right moderation is here the name of the pope’s political decision. He must establish whether and when the crusade would resume. Here, Bernard seems to remember that he had distanced himself from Eugene in the passages in which he demanded consideration in order to understand what consideration is, passion in order to provoke sympathy and an absence of the hardening of the heart in order to avoid it. Simultaneous with the plea for the crusade, Bernard discretely removes himself from his own discourse by placing Eugene in his stead through the force of a transfer of responsibility with an obvious rhetorical charge:

What do you suppose our forces would make of me if at my exhortation they were again to go up, and again be over come? Are they likely to listen to me if I were to advise them for the third time to march, and resume the work in which once and again they have been frustrated? And yet the Israelites, taking no account of their double disappointment, obeyed for the third time, and were then victorious. But we shall perhaps be asked, How are to know that the word has gone forth from the Lord? What signs do you work, that we may believe you? It is not for me to answer these questions; I must spare my modesty. Do you answer for me, and for yourself, according as you have heard and seen, or, at all events, according as God has given you inspiration. (...) It is not consistent with my humility to tell you that such and such things should be done. (OC, II, 1, 3-4)

In the case of this transfer of legitimacy we could invoke a theological legitimacy from the work of Bernard, since he is the one who, as Jean-Luc Marion²⁷ already pointed out, originally interpreted the dogma of the man who is an image and a divine resemblance from

²⁶ For this correlation with the estimate consideration, see Michel, 588, as well as Leclercq, 368, according to whom the Bernardian consideration is an act of establishing moderation.

²⁷ Marion, J.-L., “L’image de la liberté”, in R. BRAGUE (ed.), *Saint Bernard et la philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993), 49 and especially 58 sqq. One of the most important passages from Bernard’s work discussed in the present study is from *Despre har și liberul arbitru*, IX, 28 (see ed. Leclercq-Rochais, III, 185-186).

the viewpoint of free will, which attests the nature of the divine image of man. If the divine image attests freedom, we could deduce that the appeal to what we regard as Eugene's monastic self is an appeal to his divine image, in the name of which we could invoke his free will, in which Bernard's suggestion is relieved of the responsibility of action.

Only Eugene can now establish, alone with himself and with the terrible instrument of consideration, whether the idea of a crusade is "from the Lord" (Or, as Karl F. Morrison suggests, we are faced with a "hermeneutic gap" between the two, through which Bernard suggests, by cultivating certain paradoxes for Eugene, in order to stir his emotions, that God could forgive the pope for his sins, no matter how unsuccessful the crusade may be²⁸). This last passage from the treaty shows that the construction of this concept led Bernard to the portrait of a leader who can be classified into four categories – the divine nature above him can inspire him, the features of his position are around him, his subjects and the universe is below him and within him there is a self that is exercised monastically, in the virtue of humility, of compunction and which thus has the prerogatives of the one who establishes the right moderation and the law. The pope's actions are thus coherent with this four-party dimension and they unite the contemplative experience with the practical one through consideration. We must also note the coherence of the unity between the two "traditional" lifestyles in the recommendations made by Bernard to the Templars in *In Praise of the New Knighthood (De laude novae militia)* in that they should unite their practical lives with the contemplative lives by choosing Bethania as the place of spiritual geography of this unity²⁹. The similarity between the behaviour desired by Bernard for Eugene and the one desired in the case of the Templars is obvious.

Bernard thus places Eugene, after he was "equipped" with all of these virtues, in a situation in which no law can no longer help him, since the decision to assume the crusade does not imply the application of a universal principle of law that would be available to Eugene. He is now the measurer, the law maker who is inevitably in an anomic position in which only the exercise of consideration could support him. Moreover, exempt from *libido dominandi* by consideration, he is the possessor of two swords (one of which is material and he could only use it by delegation), and the possessor of a *plenitudo potestatis* – in this treaty, the pope is presented at length as the instance that manages exceptionality before the law: this idea is proven by Book III, Chapter II (6-12), in which Bernard treats the abuse of *appelationes*

²⁸ Morrison, 138. Out of the entire exegesis on the treaty to which I had access, this article signed by K. F. Morrison seems to be the most similar to our interpretation. The article does not speak of the transfer of the responsibility under scrutiny and the theological circumstances in which it takes place, but it notes the rhetorical nature Bernard's discourse and it understands that the torrent of paradoxes to which Eugene was exposed was persuasive in nature.

²⁹ See *Despre elogiul noii cavalerii*, 13, in *Patrologia latină*, 182, col. 939a-b: „*castellum Mariae et Marthae, in quo Lazarus est resuscitatus (...) Hoc ergo in loco breviter intimatum sufficiat, quod quidem nec studium bonae actionis, nec otium sanctae contemplationis, nec lacrymae poenitentis extra Bethaniam accepta esse poterunt illi etc.*”

to the Roman Curia – the appeal is represented by the solicitation of an anomic and exceptional decision, against a judiciary instance, or at least an instance that could act in case the enforcement of the law is temporarily blocked. Bernard criticises the abuse of *appellationes*, but he recognises the papal prerogative to judge.

We must also note the originality of the four definitions of consideration. The meaning assigned by Bernard in this treaty is recognised as one that is at least particular in relation with the common use of the term, more than a century after the text had been written. Thomas Aquinas, in *Summa theologiae*, IIa IIae, q. 180, a. 3, notes this unusual feature and compares it to the meaning assigned by Richard of Saint Victor, who was contemporary with Bernard, to the term *meditatio*³⁰. It is possible that Thomas' intuition may have been correct, since Bernard himself used *meditatio* in the sense of *consideratio* in a place in his work³¹.

In his search for a precise source that Bernard could have used for his term, in 1992, Jürgen Miethke³² identified this term in Gregory the Great, *Regula pastoralis*, I, 1-2. This respective work truly contains the association with humility, but it is made in the context in which Pope Gregory offered his bishops a set of action rules³³. During that same year, Bruno Michel also attempts to identify the source of consideration in the work of Pope Gregory, referencing the *Homilies on Ezechiel*³⁴. Without referencing these studies, the following year, Rémi Brague proposes a very different hypothesis that places the origin of this term in Calcidius' *Commentary* on Plato's *Timaeus* dialogue³⁵. Following these statements, Calcidius truly asserts:

³⁰ See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, IIa IIae, q. 180, a. 3, transl. by C. Bejan (Iași: Polirom, 2016): according to Richard of Saint-Victor, reflection seems to refer to the examination of large number of things, out of which one must identify a simple, unique truth. This is why, through reflection one can also understand the perceptions of the senses, in order to know certain effects; the imaginations and the discourses of reason, or anything that can lead to knowing the truth. However, according to Augustine in *On the Trinity*, XIV, any current function of the intellect can be regarded as reflection. In fact, meditation seems to belong to the process of reason that begins from certain principles and leads to the contemplation on a certain truth. According to Bernard, consideration would have the same purpose. But, according to the Philosopher, in *On the Soul*, II, any function of the intellect can be regarded as *consideratio*. Contemplation, however, implies the simple intuition of truth. This is why Richard stated that contemplation is the insightful and free gaze of the soul towards the things that are meant to be seen; yet, meditation is the gaze of the soul preoccupied with searching for the truth; reflection is the guardian of the soul inclined to wander.

³¹ *DC*, II, vi, 13: "Age ergo, puta tempus putationis adesse, si tamen meditationis praeivit".

³² See J. Miethke, in AA.VV., *Colloque de Lyon-Cîteaux-Dijon: Bernard de Clairvaux. Histoire, mentalités, spiritualités* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1992), 498.

³³ See Grigore cel Mare, *Regula pastorală*, I, 1-2.

³⁴ Michel, 584, citing Grigore cel Mare, *Omiliile la Ezechiel*, (t. 2, C. Morel edition, SC vol. 360, n. 3, 250).

³⁵ Brague, R., "L'anthropologie de l'humilité", R. Brague (ed.), *Saint Bernard et la philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2003), 182.

For the function of philosophy as a whole is discernibly twofold, consideration and action: consideration, so called because of continuous contemplation of divine and immortal things; and action, which is its oversight and preservation of mortal affairs proceeds according to the deliberation of the rational soul. Now, vision is necessary to both types of function but to consider the first instance³⁶.

The hypothesis may be seductive, but the exegete no longer follows this course, since the passage from Calcidius comments on *Timaeus*, 46e-47a, in which Plato eulogises vision as a divine gift that aided in the occurrence of philosophy – through sight, man could notice the circular movements of stars and could apply them to the revolutions of our own thoughts, since they are related. If this hypothesis were correct, then Bernard's consideration would pinpoint the Platonist source of philosophy. However, Plato's works do not contain any specialised term, only the verb *idein* (here, meaning "to see"), and the fact that Calcidius' Latin commentary contains the term *consideratio*, in our opinion, points rather to the etymological meaning of this Latin word, which refers to scouring the stars, while the Platonist passage refers strictly to seeing the astral circular movement³⁷.

³⁶ "Duplex namque totius philosophiae spectatur officium, consideratio et item actus, consideratio quidem ob assiduam contemplationem rerum divinarum et immortalium nominata, actus vero, qui iuxta rationabilis animae deliberationem progreditur in tuendis conservandisque rebus mortalibus. Utrique autem officiorum generi visus est necessarius, ac primum considerationi." I did not have access to the Waszink edition of this commentary, cited by the author, but I could verify the passage in the recent edition by Claudio Moreschini: Calcidio, *Commentario al „Timeo” di Platone*, testo latino a fronte, a cura di Claudio Moreschini et al., ed. Bompiani, Milano, 2003, 546, paragr. CCLXIV. English translation from Calcidius, *On Plato's Timaeus*, edited and translated by John Magee (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Harvard University Press, 2016), 536.

³⁷ Rémi Brague did not seem to revisit this first thesis either, since, in 2003, he wrote another article on Bernard's "consideration", where he made a connection between *consideratio* and the presence of humility described in *The steps of humility and pride*, I, 2 and he suggested that the idea originated from Gregory the Great, but in the famous passage of the *Dialogues*, II, XXXV, 3, seeing the divine eye placed above the world, that sees everything, from which the human eye differs through the fact that it sees the world incompletely (and should therefore "consider" it), Brague, 141-142, he notes that Bernard, while commenting of the passage from Gregory, connects the idea of humility to the possibility of consideration. (*Sermones de diversis*, IX, 1, in PL 183, col 565d). It is also true that Bernard, while writing *On Consideration*, could have been thinking of the *Dialogues* (in the footnotes, we compared a passage from each of the two texts: *Dialogues*, III, xxviii, 3 : „in hac terra in qua nos vivimus finem suum mundus iam non nuntiat, sed ostendit – (the world on which we live no longer hints at its end, it shows it forth) pe acest pământ pe care locuim lumea nu îşi vesteşte sfârşitul, ci deja îl înfăţişează”, transl. by C. Horotan (Iaşi: Polirom, 2017), 303, with the passage from *DC*, I, x, 13 "non instant iam, sed exstan – (not only are they on their way, they are already here) nu doar că stau să vină, chiar sunt prezente", since both speak of the replacement of the imminence with the presence of the end). However, Brague's second

Therefore, if we were to consider the source from Calcidius less plausible, we could still identify a source in Gregory's writings, inasmuch as he uses the term to offer practical advice to the bishops. We could perhaps add a short passage from Augustine's *Sermon 15*, in which consideration represents an inclination towards the divine that is censored its transcendental nature:

For he holds the glory forever and ever. For us there is consideration, admiration, tremble, exclamation, since we have no pervasion³⁸.

But neither the passages from Gregory nor the one from Augustine, much less the one from Calcidius state almost anything of the speculative force of the four definitions given by Bernard. Could we conclude, at least for the moment, on the complete originality of the Bernardian theory, constructed ad hoc, in order to convince Eugene III of the exceptional importance of resuming the crusade? This question could be answered favourably if we were to follow how the portrait based on the monastic self (gained by Eugene during the year he spent in Clairvaux, or at least rhetorically invoked by Bernard as Eugene's spiritual inheritance) places the personal moral decision above the law and inspires it to become the basis of the *plenitudo potestatis* mentioned in the text. For Bernard, as a writer, *consideratio* is thus a term borrowed from the Latin vocabulary used by Gregory, but invested by Bernard with new meanings.

Thus, it is presented as the pontiff's qualification in the situation of exceptionality, which could be compared to the modern doctrine on the state of exception. By making a prudent comparison with this doctrine, we can note that Giorgio Agamben defines the state of exception as the case of a political action that can no longer apply the rules of law, but that becomes a source of law: "the legal form of that which can have no legal form"³⁹. The issue of the crusade is in such a situation, for Eugene: he must decide, inspired by God⁴⁰, but not by

hypothesis, in spite of being as seductive as the first, is merely unlikely, since, following Brague's reference to Gregory and to Bernard's cited sermon, we can note the fact that the passage from Gregory does not contain the term *consideratio* per se, and neither does Bernard's sermon. In spite of Brague's interpretation, it is interesting how the author, at 142, sustains that humility unveils the practical dimension of the self, of the "en situation d'urgence" action, without explaining the nature of this urgency and without indicating its deeply anomic characteristic.

³⁸ Approximate English translation of Augustin, *Sermones*, 15, 10-11: *ipsi gloria in saecula saeculorum. Nobis consideratio, admiratio, tremor, exclamatio, quia nulla penetratio*.

³⁹ Agamben, 7: if exceptional measures are the fruit of political crisis situations and must thus be understood in the political field, not in the judiciary-constitutional field, they are in the paradoxical situation of being judiciary measures that cannot be understood in the field of law and the state of exception appears to be the legal form of that which cannot have a legal form.

⁴⁰ Bernard himself writes, in *DC*, II, i, 3: "*tibi inspiraverit Deus*". We could consider to be a rhetorical effect the fact that the following paragraph presents the passage as a collateral of the discourse, even if it could represent its central text.

applying the existing rules of law. The fact that we can understand, in these terms, the issue for which Bernard had to offer a solution (and which he solves by using Eugene's monastic self), can be sustained by the fact that the theory on the "state of exception" was attested (by Agamben himself⁴¹) in the *Decretum Gratiani* (written around 1150, thus contemporary with Bernard). In *Decretum*, I, D.48 and in III, D.1, chapter 2, there is an expression characteristic to the Roman Law, *necessitatem legem non habet* ("necessity has no law"), on which the Gloss comments: "If something is done out of necessity, it is done illicitly, since what is not licit in law necessity makes licit. Likewise necessity has no law"⁴². Bernard did not necessarily know this passage from the Gloss that was probably written later, but it suffices to note the fact that the ideas on the state of emergency (*necessitas*) from the Roman Law were in circulation at that time, in order to be able to correlate it with what be observed in Bernard's procedure in this treaty.

Nonetheless, another aspect represents a radical difference from this doctrine. The entire structure of Book V, and especially its ending demonstrates as much. Without Book V, we would only be faced with the portrait of a discretionary political leader who invokes his alleged ascetic experience and divine inspiration in order to act arbitrarily. But his submission to a hierarchy created by the religious experience changes the situation⁴³. Compiled somewhat separately, as a personal field of exercising consideration and its maximum proximity to contemplation, Book V discusses the issue of the nature of the Trinity and offers more explanations on the definition of God. This preoccupation should not come as a surprise in the intellectual environment of the 12th century: the insistent repetition of the question *quid est Deus?*, followed by different definitions is a situation similar to the procedures from Alain de Lille's *Rules of Theology*, or, no matter how different the Cistercian ascetism may be from these philosophical-hermetical sources, the famous definitions for the divine from *The Book of the 24 Philosophers*.

However, Bernard's originality in this context resides in the fact that, out of all these definitions, he preponderantly uses the one given by Anselm of Canterbury in *Prologion*, 2, according to which God is "*id quo maius cogitari nequit*". Thanks to this definition, the four dimensions of human consideration can correspond with the four divine "simensions", expressed as length, width, height and depth. All of these dimensions are, of course, used metaphorically, filtered by the Anselmian definition in order to signify the divine infinity. From

⁴¹ Agamben, 27.

⁴² Gloss of Decree, I, 48: "*si propter necessitatem aliquid fit, illud licite fit: quia quod non est licitum in lege, necessitas facit licitum. Item, necessitas legem non habet*", from Agamben, 27. English translation from Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, transl. by Kevin Attell (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 24.

⁴³ The same interpretation is present in Couloubaritsis, L., *Histoire de la philosophie ancienne et médiévales. Figures illustres* (Paris: Grasset, 1988), 1094 and 1107: the treaty's centre of gravity resides in the theological doctrine of Book V and it practices an original henological method, by giving unity to the world and to actions through the relation with the divine nature.

the viewpoint of a consideration of “those above”, the use of this definition offers consideration both a spiritual and an infinite dimension. Moreover, the entire tone of the final chapters is obliged to several chapters from *Proslogion*, although the exegesis has of yet put little emphasis on this approach. Chapter 19 of Anselm’s treaty in particular seems to be one of the sources of the treaty’s ending. Anselm described the turnover in which the human mind that attempts to contain the divine nature is in the end contained by it (*nihil enim te continet, sed tu contines omnia*⁴⁴). By this turnover he understands the only form of cohabitation possible between the soul and the transcendence. In his turn, Bernard uses the same idea in order to show how the infinite consideration of the divine takes place: even if we were to contain in our minds the one in which we are contained – *si forte vel sic apprehendamus, in quo apprehensi sumus* (OC, V, XIII, 27), only a few sentences after having mentioned the “sharpness of the mind (*acies mentis*)”, referring to the fragility of the human mind that has not yet been divinely inspired: Anselm also used this well-known Augustinian expression⁴⁵ with the same narrow meaning in the *Prologue* of *Proslogion*: “the sharpness of my mind always wanders (*acies mentis omnino fugeret*)”. If the central term of the treaty under scrutiny was, in these final paragraphs, invested with the sense of an infinite search, we could also answer the initial question by approaching the possible meaning of the final syntagm of the treaty: we can understand this syntagm in convergence with this infinite dimension of consideration itself. Of course, Bernard introduces the allusion to the infinity of the theme is his treaty by speaking of prayer. From the very beginning of Book V, he announces that its subject is consideration in its proper meaning, namely that of an intense gaze towards the divine, and the prayer invoked in the end cannot be foreign to this consideration. The author’s words are unclear on whether he sees in it a part of consideration or its continuity, but we can conclude that, if the theme can be thought of as infinite, then consideration of things above, together with the prayer they address, is the infinite source of all four dimensions of consideration.

Translated from the Romanian by Anca Chiorean

⁴⁴ See Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, in *Opera omnia*, ed. F. S. Schmitt (Edinburg: 1946), vol. I, 115, l. 15, transl. by A. Baumgarten (Cluj: Apostrof, 1996), 40.

⁴⁵ In its numerous occurrences in Augustine’s work, this expression appears here with a neutral sense, referring to the faculties of knowledge (for example, *Confessions*, III, 5), while in Anselm and in Bernard, it appears as referring to the faculty that feels powerless in knowledge if it is not inspired by the divine.