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## The Idea of Living in Religious-Philosophical Discourse

**Stowa kluczowe:** życie; poznanie; dyskurs; religia; filozofia.

**Keywords:** life; cognition; discourse; religion; philosophy.

### Introduction

The scientific experience shows that awareness of fragmentation of knowledge about life only strengthens creative intentions of a human, resulting in the formation of a complex cognitive situation, which requires increasingly the study of its multidimensionality and various forms of expression. In today's conditions, there are new possibilities in understanding the essence of all living. Modern scientific discourse gives life a value component (Horban O., Martych R., 2018, p. 93–106). It should be noted that deeper penetration into the mysteries of life only demonstrates new horizons in the field of the immense, reveals its diversity and complexity.

At present, the philosophical and religious discourse on the idea of life as a synthesis of scientific and theological approaches, which are based on a common theoretical and methodological basis, is a subject of scientific interest. The relevance of current study of this issue is also caused by the significant growth in the role of religion in society, and in the context of Christian civilization – the transition to a “new” Christianity, where, in particular, the ideas of thinkers of Eastern patristics take on a specific definition.

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That is why the purpose of our article is to study the origins of the idea of religious-philosophical discourse in the doctrine of living.

## Presentation of the main research

Ancient philosophy had a significant ideological influence on the formation of religious-philosophical discourse on the doctrine of living. The idea of the living in ancient philosophy reveals the basic approaches to understanding the essence of the living in ancient Greek tradition. In antiquity, the question of the emergence and formation of all existing was raised as a search for the primary substance. Different substances were considered the primary substance of all things. Thales considered water and everything that came from it endowed with the properties of life, spiritual. Anaximenes acknowledged the air as the source not only of life, but also of the mental phenomena. Empedocles and others saw the beginning of everything in the interaction of earth, water, air and fire. Over time, a qualitative substrate primary substance was replaced by more abstract understanding of it. The first manifestations of the latter can be found in philosophy of the ancient Greek atomists. However, their thoughts still were influenced by anthropomorphism, because all primary elements were endowed with human qualities and characteristics. For example, fire was identified with the logos-reason (Heraclitus), the first elements were combined and separated through “friendship” and “enmity” (Empedocles) (Якубанис Г., Гёльдерлин Г., 1994, р. 76–77). Thus, in ancient philosophy, the first of two approaches to understanding the essence of living was outlined – the materialistic approach, based on the idea that the living can emerge from the inanimate, the organic – from the inorganic under the influence of natural factors (Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes). Ancient philosophers argued that the origin of the human was very similar to the origin of animals: both formed as a result of the merger and transformation of primary elements into parts and organs that combined into the body under the influence of heat (Democritus). The concept of self-generation of the living from the inanimate developed in this way.

Aristotle's philosophy gave the new expression to this idea: alongside the birth of living creatures from similar ones, he pointed out, their self-generation from inanimate matter had always taken place. The ancient thinker considered entelechy – “life force”, an influencing factor on which all manifestations of life depend, the criterion in distinguishing the living from the inanimate (Аристотель, 1937, р. 33–34). However, Aristotle not only described the world of the living, but also established the tradi-

tion of systemization of its manifestations, in particular, species of animals. The integrity, according to Aristotle, is the main feature of a living organism. At the same time, human is also “endowed with spirit, reason and ability for social life” (Аристотель, 2000, p. 71).

The statement that life was considered to be the result of a divine creative act and therefore all beings were characterized by a special force independent of the material world, which directed all life processes, formed the basis of idealistic views on the problem of finding the primary substance. This concept is traced most clearly in Plato’s philosophy in the idea of the “demiurge” – the creator of the world and all living, who brings the universe and all living beings in it into order. According to Plato, only those beings which have souls acquire the status of living, causing self-motion. Human, according to Plato, makes life special, gives it moral filling.

According to Plato, the Realm of Ideas is regarded as a hierarchy, a kind of pyramid, at the top of which is the idea of ideas, or the idea of the Good, which is actually identical with the Truth, the Beauty and God himself. Plato calls the creator of the world the divine demiurge, the organizer of the world. The demiurge as a structure-forming and functional principle has certain properties: activity, rationality, goodness (Тихолаз А.Г., 2002, p. 221–222).

In the system of views of the Middle Platonists (Numenius, Alcinous, Atticus, etc.), Plato’s ideas and Aristotle’s and Stoics’ doctrines, as well as doctrines of the Neoplatonists about the One and its emanations, Nous, Intellect, Soul, – were united in a syncretic manner.

Emerging in worldview emanations as a specific form of neoplatonism, early Christian discourse conceptualizes the understanding of the living through biblical reminiscences in works of thinkers of the Church Fathers (Горбань О., 2017, p. 84–95). The reflexive field of the early Christian doctrine of the essence of the living is unfolded between two poles: on the one hand, the truths of Revelation, the derogation from which is unacceptable, on the other, the need to know the Creator in the creature, to see a glimpse of the highest form of wisdom in it. In the field of patristic philosophy, orientations change: the authority of Scripture exceeds the value of philosophical texts. These principles impact on early Christian doctrine of living, which reflects the priority of biblical interpretations. In particular, the idea of the origin of the living in the Eastern patristics was comprehended through its biblical interpretation, the first expressed idea of the creation from “nothing”. The creation of the living acts not as a natural act, but as an act of will, which had its own origin. Thus, the idea of the creation of the living in the Bible unfolds, in fact, at two semantic levels: on the one hand, it is included in the process of cosmogenesis as the emergence of

part of the universe, on the other, in a complex system of connections with other elements of the rationally organized world. And as a result of its origin, a living creature is endowed with the ability to change, to move from one state to another. The criterion for defining the living in the Bible is the so-called “spirit of life”. The Bible proposes the definition of the living as the presence in substance of the “spirit of life” given to it by God as a methodological principle, and as the main criterion – the ability to live and continue one’s line. However, over time, Ignatius of Antioch noted that the division of the living into the visible and invisible is identical to the dyad “corporal – spiritual” and may be represented in the concepts of “flesh” and “spirit”, which is contrary to the understanding of the “living” and “Divine”.

In the second half of the fourth century AD, the need to resolve this contradiction caused the intensification of the process of establishing the concepts of the living in the Christian religious-philosophical tradition, each time directing it to greater coherence with the faith. In the context of determining the essence of the living, the most discussed problems in the works of representatives of the Eastern patristics were:

- substantiation of the primacy of the truth of Revelation over sensual-rational knowledge;
- the provision of the emergence of the living as a result of the unconditionally arbitrary creation by God;
- determining the nature of the relationship between God and other living images;
- substantiation of the nonidentity of the concepts of “creation” – “birth”;
- formation of a hierarchical structure of the living;
- the ratio of spiritual and material in non- self-existent living beings, the pre-existence of the soul.

The early Christianity adopted the idea of self-generation from the Bible (a naive story of how bees were born inside a dead lion), which, in turn, borrowed this story from the mystical tales of ancient Egypt and Babylon. Theological authorities of the end of the fourth – the beginning of the fifth centuries, traditionally called the “Fathers of the Church”, combined these tales with doctrines of the Neoplatonists and developed their mystical concept of the origin of life on this basis (Опарин А.И., 1957, p. 15). In general, mystical and therefore irrational Christian dogmas upon which the works of early Christian philosophers are based form the basis of religious-philosophical discourse on the idea of the living. However, the conceptual foundations of the Christian worldview are laid down in the Bible texts.

Biblical creationism, which implies the act of creation as a miraculous birth by the action of the Divine will (Gen. 1:3), is mentioned in the mani-

festation of the material world (Gen. 1). The idea of creation “from nothing” was firstly expressed here in the biblical tradition (2 Macc. 7.28). The creation of the living nature serves as an act of will, not a natural act. Creation is an act that has a beginning, so, because of its origin, the living is a being that is subject to change, to move from one state to another. The emergence of the living through creation is a manifestation of the divine desire for the “only justification of the created” (Лосский В., 1991, p. 155).

In the Bible, the criterion for defining what is living is the so-called “spirit of life” or “living soul”, “breath of life”. Animals, birds (Gen. 1:20; 9:10), fishes (Gen. 1:21), cattle, reptiles, beasts (Gen. 1:24, 25; Gen.9:10), human (Gen. 2:7) belong to the living under this approach. In another fragment, the concept of “being”, which unites “human”, “cattle”, “reptiles”, “birds” (Gen. 7:23), or “each body that moves on earth” – “birds”, “cattle”, “beasts”, “reptiles”, “human”, – appears (Gen. 7:21). According to the Bible, angels are also living creatures (Ecclesiastes 1.5–1.9; 1.14).

The living, according to biblical tradition, was the product of divine creation. Accordingly, the cognition of its essence as living by its nature, but noting its derivative nature from the divine Providence at the same time, according to researcher S. Holovashchenko, is carried out through the cognition of the Bible – interpretation of its meanings (Головащенко С.И., 2001, p. 312). The nature of the living gives grounds to consider it, firstly, as part of the rationally organized world, and, secondly, in the indivisible process of cosmogenesis. According to the Hexameron, the unfolding of the world was carried out according to God’s plan, which was marked by an internal logic and a clear sequence. The living appears, emerges after the external, formal world-making, and inhabits it, defining “concentric circles of being in the center of which human stands as their potential completion” (Лосский В., 1991, p. 292). Among the external factors (light, darkness, earth (land), water), the biblical texts distinguish one – the earth. According to V. Lossky, geocentrism is manifested in the fact that the mysteries of divine housebuilding are carried out on earth and are included in earthly history; earth, like a magnet, unites elements of the universe around it, preventing them from diffusing in the boundless cosmic worlds; earth, after all, became human flesh (Лосский В., 1991, p. 292). Obedient to the Logos, this Earth is involved in the creation of much of the living.

On the third day, when, according to biblical tradition, a dry land emerges from the water, it is told to create plants – the first form of life. It is not God Himself who creates plants, but He commands earth: “and so will earth create grasses and trees”, because earth is already able to create and feed the living.

On the fifth day, the Word creates fishes and birds: water, moisture (as an element) is commanded to make them. This establishes an interesting approaching between floating and flying creatures (the outer forms of which are actually similar), between water and air, the general properties of fluidity and moisture. It is clearly seen here that this is not a cosmogony in the modern sense of this term, but some other vision of existence and its hierarchy. It is a vision for which the mystery of form, the “secondary qualities” of the sensitive world, that appeal to speculative depths, to the “logoses” of creation, are decisive. So, we can talk about two triads of creation. The first triad that unfolds in the first three days is concerned primarily with acts of separation of light from darkness, water from land, that is, the structuring of the world establishes. The second triad, which lasts from the fourth to the sixth day, includes the creation of what fills the world with its own life (luminaries, fishes and birds, animals and the human).

On the sixth day, earth (as an element), in turn, is ordered again – to create animals. But further in the biblical descriptions of the same day another term appears – the term “creation”, which is of conceptual importance because it determines the mode of origin. Saint Isaac the Syrian points to some mystery that exists in creation, distinguishing the humanity of divine activity: while creating plants and animals, God commands matter – earth – to create them through consecutive orders, He creates the highest living beings – humans and angels – by Himself. He creates angelic spirits “in silence” – out of time, as Saint Basil the Great thinks. The same is the creation of a human: God does not command, but says to Himself, “Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness” (Gen. 1.26). That is, the creation is not an act of nature, but an act of will that is well-considered and free. It is a transition from nothingness to being. In this sense, it is the exclusive property of God, the Divine Trinity.

It should be noted that the ancient philosophy did not know the concept of “creation” in this sense of the term. Plato’s demiurge is not a god-creator, but rather an architect of the universe. “To be” for Hellen’s thought meant “to be in some order”. Therefore, the biblical religious discourse overcame the ancient philosophical tradition with the help of the idea of creation “from nothing”.

By His orders, God arranges the parts of the living, causing them to be. But angels and humans cannot be literally considered parts because they are integral personal beings. And because a human as a person embodies integrity, the human is even more complete, richer, more meaningful than angelic spirits. Therefore, the first hierarchy of living beings in Christian religious discourse occurs in the mode of origin: the lower be-

ings are created by the order of God, and the higher ones are the creations of God Himself.

However, the description of creation is not limited to one story from the first chapter of Genesis about the creation of the world. In the second chapter, another act of creation unfolds, set out in completely different terms. Without identifying the causes of the two variants and comparing them (the Bible critics have paid enough attention to this), we should pay attention to their ontological meanings.

While the first story assimilates a human with other terrestrial beings in one universal blessing and emphasizes their anthropocosmic natural unity, the second story defines clearly the place of the human. It provides a completely different perspective: the human appears to us not only as the apex of creation, but also as its very principle. The animal world in the second story appears after the human and in relation to it, so that the human is no longer lonely and has a “helper appropriate to it”. Adam gives the names of the animals that God brings to him, because the world was created by God to be perfected by human. The person knows the living beings from the inside, enters their secrets, manages them. Thus, in this second story of human creation, it acts as an image of the terrestrial cosmos, and terrestrial nature – as an extension of its corporality.

Each biblical story of creation is a parable. The parable acted as a specific feature of the interpretation and understanding of the world. Its symbolic interpretation of reality was the epistemological factor of thinking, its certain method and form. Therefore, the first literary genres contained in the Bible (epos, parables, prophecies, apocalypics etc.) essentially conceal the “interline” sense, use allegorical and symbolic means of expression.

The biblical discourse as sacred is symbolized, it transmits the perception of animals and plants in mythical-symbolic terms, using both symbolic and allegorical means of expression. The symbol in such a text is considered a means of “saying that cannot be said”, “measuring that cannot be measurable”, “when the words and images of finite being express and convey the mystery of being eternal in the language of earthly perceptions” (Головащенко С.І., 2001, p. 215). The interpretation of reality through the symbol helped to understand the alogical dogmas that could not be expressed on a verbal level. Therefore, a peculiar feature of early Christian religious-philosophical discourse was a vision of reality through visual images, which helped to explain the ideas, dogmas, phenomena of life difficult to understand.

The following hierarchy of the living as the distinction between plants and animals appears in the third book of Kings, when King Solomon,

having received wisdom and great intelligence, told parables and songs about trees, animals, birds, reptiles and fishes (Third Book of Kings 4.33, 4.34). Apart from the abovementioned division into plant and animal life, everything in the Bible is divided into physical and spiritual. The spiritual is the soul of a human and angels, the corporeal is animals and people (Архимандрит Никифор, 2006, p. 60). As we can see, in this case, plants remained outside the biblical classification of the living. Plants that are considered alive in the modern scientific sense are not such in the biblical text, they were created for human and animal (beasts, birds, reptiles) consumption (Gen. 1:29–30), that is, the source of life for all living beings. However, plants became the first form of life, and in their description the Bible indicated a way of being alive – the ability to live and continue one's line.

The essence of the living is revealed in the symbolic content of biblical texts. Even the names of animals in a symbolic sense implies considering the particular characteristics of a particular animal. For example, a bull implies anger, a turtledove – chastity, a dove – a shrine, a smart sheep – a human. Maximus the Confessor interprets the biblical “Sheep Pasture” as a rational beginning of the soul (Исповедник Максим, 2008, p. 45). Birds generally mean vainglory, arrogance, pride; terrestrial beasts – a passion for silver, which is different according to the character of different animals.

It should be noted that the provision of the six-day creation of the world laid many questions before educated philosophers and theologians of ancient wisdom, so “already ancient Jewish commentators of the Bible Aristobulus and Philo of Alexandria appealed to an allegorical interpretation. They believed that “the world was created instantly” and the number six, denoting the number of days of creation, is simply a symbol” (Крывелев И. А., 1968., p. 77). This approach was not just a measured one, but a necessary one for conversion to the Christian faith: it was necessary to rationalize the answers to all questions of the neophytes. The Catechetical School of Alexandria inherited not only the method of allegorical interpretation, but also most of the interpretations given by Philo. In particular, the Alexandrian Fathers of the Church accepted the doctrine of instant creation. “No creation,” Athanasius the Great categorically states, “is older than another: all families are created at once, with the same order” (Афанасий Александрийский, 1902, p. 341). The convenience of such a decision is determined by the fact that “It is not necessary to ask here what was earlier and what is later. In the light of the allegorical approach, any biblical character could easily be transformed into an abstract idea, any story could turn out not to be a story of specific events,



but only an expression of God's guidance to people" (Крывелев И. А., 1982, p. 213).

As we can see, the biblical discourse offered presence in substance of the "spirit of life" given to it by God as a methodological principle of defining the living, and as the main criterion – the ability to live and continue one's line. In the philosophy and theology of the Church Fathers, this approach found continuation.

Clement of Alexandria (p. 150 – 211/212), the author of the first universal theoretical theological system, believes that the Logos creates, organizes the whole world. On the other hand, by deepening the understanding of the Logos-Son, the creative beginning of the world and the living was intensified. Following the biblical division of living substances into physical and spiritual, Clement of Alexandria emphasizes on their identical essence – they are created, and therefore their way of life is the same – to contemplate and maintain moderation and restraint. As we can see, the gnostic and moral-ethical orientation of the early Christian religious-philosophical discourse is evident. For Clement of Alexandria, science is a tool auxiliary to faith, and true "gnosis" includes necessarily the achieving of the highest moral perfection.

The second prominent representative of the Catechetical School of Alexandria was Origen of Alexandria (p. 185 – 253/254). Origen was one of the eminent Christian thinkers who had an influence on the whole of the Christian philosophy of the third-fourth centuries, including the development of patristic anthropology. Many things in Origen's theory caused doubts among church authority (in particular, just as in the teachings of the Neoplatonists, the Nous is always born of the One, in Origen's teaching, the second hypostasis of the divine Trinity is constantly born of the first), which led to condemnation of his views under Emperor Justinian (553).

Origen, being a disciple of Clement of Alexandria, inherits the concept of the Logos and the emergence of all living things from the Logos, which gives a variable character to the "corporeal nature" and provides a transition from one entity (nature) to another, creating genera and species in the hierarchy of the living. Different souls find place for themselves in the body, and the soul in the body is the moving cause of the living organism. Bodily life is the most honorable. Living creatures also have a distribution by the type of movement: ones are those that act on innate unconditioned reflexes or on acquired conditional reflexes (animals); others are those who have a mind and control their actions consciously (people).

Available matter always exists with qualitative characteristics and is used to "create any forms and species" of plants and animals (Ориген,

1993, p. 107). Origen pays special attention to the continuity of the existence of a corporeal nature, which “has the ability to transform variously”, forming “various genera” and species of living organization. Any nutrients that a person consumes are transformed into a substance of the body (Ориген, 1993, p. 106). With this statement Origen foresaw the study of the idea of physiological processes in the living, which was revealed in further teachings of Gregory of Nyssa, Nemesis of Emess, John Damascene.

The classification basis for the distinction of the living by Origen is the division of “mental nature” according to the varieties of “corporeal nature” (Ориген, 1993, p. 325–326). In Origen’s theological system, it is emphasized that all intelligent beings together form a single hierarchy of existence, a place in which depends on the degree of their moral perfection.

The significant contribution to the formation of religious-philosophical discourse on the idea of the living was made by Gregory of Nyssa (335–394). In his reflections on the organization of the living, Gregory of Nyssa relied on works of Saint Basil the Great, in particular, supplemented his work “Hexameron”, where he revealed the nature of human and to some extent outlined the understanding of the living (Нисский Григорий, 1995, p. 7–8).

Among his ideas about the living, the dogma of creation appears as a traditional tribute (Нисский Григорий, 2003, p. 117). The thinker divides things existent into visible and invisible world. In the visible world, all beings take a certain place. Everything living belongs to the visible world, it is between heaven and earth (Нисский Григорий, 1995, p. 10). According to Gregory of Nyssa, the living is the adornment of the world. Thus, plants and cattle, sky and air, floating and flying animals adorn the earth (Нисский Григорий, 1995, p. 12). In addition, the Holy Father divides living beings into verbal (human) and silent (animals) (Нисский Григорий, 1862, p. 187). The human is master of the living world and has a dual nature: divine and animal (Нисский Григорий, 1995, p. 14). Due to the divine nature, in human the primacy belongs to the Nous, but at the same time because of belonging to the animal nature, communication and natural similarity to silent beings are inherent to human. One of the defining attributes of the similarity of the living, according to the theologian, is the sexual distinction between male and female beings, which implies a similar mode of reproduction (Нисский Григорий, 1995, p. 59). Similar is the need to eat to support the life of the body. A human is also distinguished by the fact that it is endowed with the ability to perceive “things by sight and hearing”, as well as by “understanding”. The most defining attribute the human is the Mind, which through the sensory organs perceives the visible (sight) and understands the spoken (hearing) (Нисский

Григорий, 1995, p. 62). Upright posture distinguishes the human from the “other animal”, it, according to Gregory of Nyssa, gives it the right to “rule” and elevates its “royal dignity”, it is a sign of socialization, which distinguishes it from the rest of living beings (Нисский Григорий, 1995, p. 21).

The hierarchical sequence of the living, according to the thinker, is manifested in the teaching about the “life force”, where all living nature was created sequentially from simpler to more complex (Нисский Григорий, 1995, 23). The human has two natures (essences): created and non-created (Нисский Григорий, 2003, p. 79), as a “verbal” being, it has a language that performs the function of expressing thoughts, guided by the mind. It is characterized by the sensual properties of hearing, sight, taste, smell, touch, which provide empirical knowledge of things (Нисский Григорий, 1995, с. 28–29). By stating that the human has the capacity for renewal for further achieving the infinity of self-improvement on the path of its spiritual ascension, Gregory of Nyssa made a significant contribution to the development of Christian theology and philosophical knowledge.

The mystical biblical tradition of knowing the living was developed by Maximus the Confessor (580–662). Following the tradition of writing of monastic asceticism “about the creative beginning and the cause of all living things” (Ларше Ж.-К., 2004, p. 87), he believed that “everything existing is brought into being from nothing” (Исповедник Максим, 2004, p. 300). Maximus the Confessor divides the existing living into visible and invisible (Исповедник Максим, 2007, p. 133), corporeal and incorporeal. The characteristics of corporeal are compression, expansion, separation, everything else that does not have such features, is incorporeal, to which the soul belongs (Исповедник Максим, 2007, p. 109). The living as “everything born” is characterized by the property of motion (Исповедник Максим, 2007, p. 114). And all living beings receive “life movement” from the “soul”. Thus, some living bodies are set in motion by the intelligent soul (human), others (animals) – by unreasonable soul, others (plants) – by senseless one (Исповедник Максим, 2004, p. 174). Maximus the Confessor identifies the “forces” inherent in souls (Исповедник Максим, 2004, p. 174). Some of them “provide life, others the growth inherent in plants, and animals have the capacity for imagination and have desires”. At the same time, a human is characterized by the ability to think and understand.

In the knowledge of the origin of the living, in the opinion of Maximus the Confessor, it is necessary to proceed from the fact that everything is created by the divine mindset and the study and knowledge of it is “beyond the human mind” (Исповедник Максим, 2004, p. 186).

The generalization of early Christian religious-philosophical discourse on the idea of the living occurred in the work of Saint John of Damascus (675–753). The thinker outlined the general content of the vision of nature typical for that time, including the system of views about the living. Thus, according to him, all existing beings by their origin belong to created or non-created. Created beings have the ability to “change” (evolve in the process of life) (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 8). John Damascene divides all living things into thinking entities (angels, souls and spirits); verbal (human) and unreasonable (animals) (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 9–22). The appearance of the living excludes the possibility of its accidental occurrence (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 9–10). Damascene distinguishes the “primary hypostasis for any species” (unborn) from which “they could be born” (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 13). A human, having the same nature that is inherent in all living things, “is subject to birth, decay, reproduction, endowed with the body, sex is inherent to the human: male or female” (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 26). It has the prudence attained by the mind, “by force, appearance or image, temper, temperament, dignity, behavior” (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 35), the same applies to the other living (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 36).

According to the biblical tradition, John Damascene states that living beings were first born in water (Gen. 1.20). Plants appeared first, they were born by the earth, which then “gave birth to animals, small and large, whales, dragons, fishes floating in the water, birds feathered”. Thus, according to the thinker, “through birds, water, earth and air come together because they arose from water, live on earth, and fly in the air” (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 105). The origin of amphibians, animals and livestock is explained similarly. All this was “born for home use” by earth (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 109). By purpose animals are divided into: for food (deer, sheep, goats), for service (camels, oxen, horses), for entertainment (monkeys, parrots). A similar division is applied to plants. Some of them bear fruit, others are used for food, others are used for pleasure, and others are used to treat diseases. All species of fauna and flora were created for human needs (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 109). The human, having an incorporeal, immortal soul (living entity), has a mind and intelligence (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 121), acts with the help of the “organic body”, and through will can be subject to change (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 122).

John Damascene cites similarities among all created living beings (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 123). The commonality of human with the unspiritual is that their bodies consist, as he considers, of the four elements. The same is with plants, but in addition, they have similar proper-

ties, namely: they feed and grow, generate seeds and give birth. With animals (Damascene calls them “unreasonable”), the common manifests itself in all of the above, as well as in the existence of “desire”, namely, the presence of emotions (anger, desire), feelings and ability to move according to internal motives.

According to Damascene, the living powers are inherent in the living and are divided into: mental (dependent on the will), vegetable or nutritious (provide nourishment, growth of the organism and reproduction), animal (force of seed formation, power of birth) (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 126–127). The thinker distinguishes four kinds of life: the divine, the vegetable (nourishing), the sensual and the intelligent. Plant life is characterized by nutrition, growth, reproduction; the sensual life is characterized by response to natural attraction; the intelligent and prudent life characterized by free movement (considered actions), a desire that is innate in all people (Иоанн Дамаскин, 2007, p. 231).

As a result of spiritual-religious searches by the Church Fathers, the view of emergence of the living as one of the stages of cosmogenesis was affirmed in the religious-philosophical discourse (Horban O., Martych R., 2017, p. 93–103). The concept of “creation” became conceptual because it outlined the mode of origin. God as Eternal Life was proclaimed as the cause and creator of all living things. The origin of the living was associated with the beginning, which implied the transition from non-existence into existence, namely, removability, fluidity, movement. At the heart of the hierarchy was the graduality, the organization from lower to higher, from simpler to more complex.

## Conclusions

The prominent features of early Christian religious-philosophical discourse on the questions of the living were creationism and theocentrism as principles of hierarchical ordering and subordinationism as the doctrine of the inequality of components of the hierarchy depending on the degrees of moral perfection.

The Eastern patristics, which laid the foundations of Christian theology, on the one hand, made a synthesis of ancient philosophy and Christianity, on the other, became a retranslator of their ideas in the further development of spiritual culture, the humanistic effect of which is still felt. The Fathers of the Eastern Church supported and affirmed the ideas of the value of the living as the creation of God, a trembling attitude toward it, adoring any manifestation of life, giving it spiritual and moral dimensions.

Early Christian understanding of the living was often based on such form of irrationalism as mysticism, which in some cases intertwined with elements of rationalism. Such kind of thinking makes it possible to convey the relationship of the unknown (transcendent) with the earthly (real) existence. The mystical form of perception of the outside world opened the way to the understanding of theological truths. The whole process of knowing the living was determined by the belief in the transcendental, and the notion of the living, its organization in general was based on the biblical picture of the world.

## IDEA ŻYCIA W DYSKURSIE RELIGIJNO-FILOZOFICZNYM

### (STRESZCZENIE)

W artykule autorzy rozważają genezę idei życia w dyskursie religijno-filozoficznym. Na podstawie analizy antycznej myśli filozoficznej i związanych z nią poglądów wczesnych myślicieli chrześcijańskich dochodzą do wniosku, że idea życia w dyskursie religijno-filozoficznym została oparta na zasadach kreacjonizmu, teocentryzmu i podporządkowania. Ponadto, zauważają, że wczesna chrześcijańska filozofia wypracowała rozumienie życia jako Bożego stworzenia, a w przypadku życia ludzkiego nadała mu charakter moralno-duchowy i obrazujący sposób istnienia Stwórcy.

## THE IDEA OF LIVING IN RELIGIOUS-PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE

### (SUMMARY)

The article investigates the origins of the idea of religious-philosophical discourse in the doctrine of the living. Based on the analysis of ancient philosophical thought and the subsequent, based on it, views of early Christian thinkers, a perspective is formed on the idea of the living as a special type of religious-philosophical discourse based on the principles of creationism, theocentrism and subordinationism. It is concluded that early Christian religious philosophy supported and affirmed the ideas of the value of the living as the creation of God, a trembling attitude toward it, adoring any manifestation of life, giving it spiritual and moral dimensions.

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