ICONS IN THE THEOLOGY OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE PROBLEM OF IDOLATRY: TOWARDS A TRANSCENDENTAL THEOLOGY OF REVELATION.

BY

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DECLARATION

This Dissertation is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration. It has not been previously presented to any other institution. I agree that this dissertation may be available for reference and photocopy, at the discretion of the college.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my family my wife (Presyvitera) Esther and our children Harrison, Dennis, Michelle Michael Jayden and My Mother Grace. Thank you so much for your support you gave me all through. I also especially dedicate it to the Orthodox family in Kenya where I serve as a priest.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD After Decade

BC Before Christ

OC Orthodox Church

SDA Seventh Day Adventist

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Iconoclasts: Those who are opposed to use of icons

Iconophiles/ Iconodules: Those who support use of icons

Icons: Images used in worshiping places in OC

Latria: Worship which is due to God alone

Dulia: Veneration given to saints in the church

Hyperdulia: Veneration given to Mary mother of God

Theotokos: Name given to Mary mother of God

ABSTRACT

Icons in the Orthodox Church (OC) are highly esteemed due to their role in the revelation of a reality beyond. But at the same time, they are met and treated as idols by members of those denominations which do not use icons. Terming this practice as idol worship, it becomes very hard to members of the OC to practice their faith as expected. It is on this premise that this research is carried out, aimed at presenting this attitude of those denominations that do not use icons as well as presenting the understanding - and the role of icons in the OC. To do this the research will show that the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) perceive icons as idols hence condemn the OC as idolaters. The understanding of the OC is that, icons are symbols that participate in revelation by triggering the mind of the viewer to transcend in order to get a revelation that is beyond. This research is aimed at helping those who accuse them the OC of idolatry, to appreciate the role icons play by stating what exactly they are. By the end of this research, the reader should have a different understanding of what icons are in place of worship hence stopping treating them as idols.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background Issues

Christianity has its origin in Judaism where it has borrowed a lot especially on worship. For example, they both share in believing in the same One God of the Hebrew Scriptures, the God of Abraham who is the God who brought children of Israel out of Egypt and gave them the Decalogue. This is the same God whom Jesus Christ who is the founder of Christianity worshiped. Our interest in this research is in the Decalogue as recorded in the book of exodus. God commanded the Israelites not to make any graven image or likeness of anything that is in heaven or on earth to be His representation here on earth. This prohibition also included of the images of a human being as it was an abomination to have his image as well. Even though the Orthodox Church (OC, since time immemorial is believed to have been using icons or images as a representation of Christ, saints and different biblical events (Jaroslav, 2014: 132–133) (Louth, 2013: 45).

In the eight and ninth and centuries there was a controversy about the use of icons in worship, particularly in Byzantine. This controversy split the Church between supporters and opposers of icons who came to be known as iconodules and iconoclasts. Those who opposed based their argument in the Decalogue, arguing that God had forbidden the Jewish people from using images on worship. They took icons to be idols terming iconodules as idolaters. This led to destruction of icons in churches and persecution of iconodules. The champions of iconoclasts were Emperor Leo III who in 726 AD who took a public stand against use of icons. Hefele argues that by 730 AD emperor Leo III officially prohibited their there usage, leading to persecution of iconodules. This persecution was more severe during the reign of Constantine V, between 741 -775 AD (Noble, 2012: 8) (Hefele, 1896: 395).

Iconophile/ Iconodules based their argument on the incarnation of Christ. Accordingly, through incarnation God revealed Himself through the person of Jesus. Therefore, it became possible to have an icon of Him. This was unlike the Hebrew God whom no one could see Him and live; no image of Him could be made. An ecumenical council was convened around 787 AD in Nicea by Empress Irene to discuss this controversy. The council declared that veneration of icons was an article of faith, hence, they had them being reinstated back to churches (Hefele, 1896: 396)(Jaroslav, 2014: 134).

Even after the Seventh Ecumenical Council had dealt with this problem by reaffirming and restoring icons back, this problem persists today. This is because the use of icons in the Orthodox Church (OC) among other churches that use images/ icons in their places of worship is judged as idolatry. For example, I am an ordained orthodox priest serving in a multidenominational context, where most of those denominations in Kenya do not use icons in their church. Those churches will be represented by the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church.

A fellow student who is a member of this denomination approached me arguing that we are idolaters for having images in church. I, therefore, found it worth to do this research so that I may argue out the understanding of the Orthodox Church (OC) on icons. This will prove that icons are not idols and the homage or veneration given to them is not worship. The research will show that icons are signs or symbols that point or transcend the mind to reveal what is beyond.

1.2 Problem Statement

The use of icons has been met with a double attitude since the inception of Christianity; some opposing while others supporting it. There are evidences of different efforts and approaches from both sides trying to support their stand. The iconophiles in particular, through the Seventh Ecumenical Council are on record trying to solve this problem.

Despite the Seventh Ecumenical Council`s declaration in favor of icon use, this problem still persists. During the reformation, some reformers did not shy away from putting their thoughts about it and through these reformers the 21st century is experiencing the very problem. This signifies that despite the explanations and approaches that were put in place there has not been a satisfying answer to this problem.

In Kenya for instance, many denominations do not use icons in their churches. They see icons as idols, the act of using them as idols worship, those who use them as idol worshipers. They teach their members not to associate with such activities and avoid people who use them.

The Orthodox Church (OC) exists within this context and as supporter of icons; its members are viewed as idols worshipers. It becomes a challenge to them since they live, work and school with people who are members of those other denominations. With their worship being perceived as idol worship, they are avoided and segregated especially on matters about worship.

1.3 The Aim of the Study

This research aimed to show that, associating icons with idolatry still persist despite the efforts put to solve it. The SDA Church is representing iconoclasts of the 21st century by showing the perception of those who do not use icons. It then shows the understanding of the OC by examining the role of icons in transcendental theology of revelation through analyzing their understanding on what icons really are.

1.4 Research Objectives

a. Examined the perception of those denominations that do not use icons represented by SDA Church

b. Analysed the use of icons in the understanding of the OC

c. Examined the role of icons in the OC

1.5 Research Questions

1. How do the denominations that do not use icons perceive this practice?

2. What is the understanding of the OC on icons?

3. What is the role of icons in OC?

1.6 Research Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that if in transcendental methodology foundation dialectical method is used, it will create an understanding of both attitudes towards icons use. It will also show that icons are symbols that participate as mediums of revelation that transcend the mind towards beyondness. This understanding will unblock the previous held notion that might be influencing erroneously the protest or the support of the practice.

1.7 Justification of the Study

So long as there are denominations that do not use icons and those that use them, iconoclasm will still persists despite the approaches of solving it since the Seventh Ecumenical Council. This topic has been found worth being researched on since beside the approaches applied before, there is still a gap that makes this problem persist. There is need for an understanding of what icons are and their participation in revelation through transcendentalism has been argued as capable of solving this problem. This methodology has it that man is capable of making an object what it is and what it is not within his minds and therefore objectifying the object to what it is. This means if an icon is gazed at with this understanding, the person who

gazes at it sets the boundary as whether to see the icon as an end by itself or as a pointer to beyond reality (Lonergan, 1972).

1.8 Scope/ Delineation

This research has looked into the perception of those denominations that are against use of icon. Due to their large number which is impossible to be dealt with in this research, the researcher uses SDA Church to represent all others in this category. Then it will look on how the OC understands icons and then examine the role of icons in the OC where the researcher has taken an apologist stand.

1.9 Chapter Arrangement

Chapter one dealt with the introduction, background issue, problem statement, objective, research questions, hypothesis, methodology, justification, delineation and literature review.

Chapter Two dealt with elements of iconoclast in the 21st century by looking into- Greco-Roman use of images, Judaism and the Old Testament prohibition, early church father`s attitude towards icons, the image cult and error of superstition, Emperor Leo III, Constantine V and the Council of Hiereia, John Calvin and Reformation attitude on icons and Ellen G. White and the SDA Church`s stand on the use of icons.

The Third Chapter examines the understanding of icons in the OC by looking through, the background on the use of icons, image use in Judaism, Jesus and the *Mendalyon* of Edessa. It farther discusses the use of symbols use in the early Church, St. John of Damascus: An apology, Empress Irene and the Seventh Ecumenical Council, the OC use of icons, icon as a symbol of revelation and painting of an icon as a symbol.

Chapter Four addresses with methodology and the concept of transcendentalism through transcendental concept, revelation defined, symbols and signs defined, icons as symbols, icons and the word, icons participation in revelation, icon in no icon SDA Church, symbol used in SDA Church, criticism on their position on icons, icons towards transcendental theology of revelation, icons as elements of transcendence, icons as symbol, a mode of revelation, icons in transcendence revelation, conclusion.

Chapter Five dealt with the conclusion through a summary, a logical conclusion, self-criticism and conclusion.

Bibliography shows all the reference books and also those that we came across in this research.

CHAPTER TWO

ELEMENTS OF ICONOCLASTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

2.1 Introduction

During Seventh and Eight centuries, there was a controversy about the use of images/ icons in Christianity. This controversy known as Iconoclast Controversy divide the Church between (Iconoclasts) and (Iconodules / Iconophiles)(Hefele, 1896: 395–396) (Neale, 1847: 124). This chapter gives a background to iconoclast. The main focus is the SDA Church, representing those denominations that are opposed to this practice. It shows how the Greco- Romans and the Jews approached this practice, its adoption in Christianity, and how this brought with it the danger of idolatry in the Church.

There were efforts of cleaning the church off this practice by Emperor Leo and his successors and how, after the Seventh Ecumenical Council this effort continued. John Calvin, one of Reformation fathers, influenced Ellen G. White's teachings that informs the contemporary SDA's iconoclastic stance today (White, 1888: 41).

2. 2 Greco-Romans and the use of images

After the fall of the Greek Empire, the Roman Empire came to power its emperors adopted the use of images. As Gardner (1910: 1–3) argues, by the time Christianity was being established, emperor worship/cult was normalcy in the Roman Empire. For example, Julius Caesar was worshiped and other subsequent emperors. The presence of the Roman emperor, for example, was seen in his image/icon even though he was far away from the people (Elsner, 1998: 135)(Louth, 1990: 22)(Price, 1986: 3–4).

Gardner (1910: 2) and Elsner (2018: 11) share the view that, this was the tradition in the Roman world and, by the time Christianity was being founded, the practice was already been entrenched. Bettany (1890: 52–53) and Elsner (1998: 58–59) state that, the image at this time was believed to carry some aspect of a person`s presence into posterity through the person`s memoria. Through image, for example, Aristocratic conflicts and other functions such as burial of the emperors were resolved through either veneration or breaking of the image of the subject person. If an emperor/empress was evil to his/her subjects, and they did not want to associate themselves with; they would break the image as a sign of disassociation. This was a way of disassociating the emperor with the people. In case an emperor/ Empress had

fallen, his/ her image was removed and replaced with the image of the one who is on the throne.

So here, it was not the image that had a problem with the people, but the person depicted on it. Therefore, what was done to the image was projection of the person depicted on it. The image was the final by itself. According to Tillich (1959: 91), this is the main characteristic of an idol, hence making icons to be idols. White (1888: 41) argues that, this secular practice found its way into the Church with the same understanding. Elsner (2012: 371) reckons that, the icons of the Monophysite bishops were destroyed in Ephesus; they were replaced with those of the bishops who were believed to be canonical.

For Gardner (1910: 13) agrees that, images were representations of the person depicted on them. Anything that was done to the image was being done to the person depicted. This was therefore idol worship which had found its way into the church. So, it is to this practice that the iconoclast based their arguments that icons were being worshiped, they represented same understanding and purpose just like in the secular world (White, 1888: 41).

2.3 Judaism/ Old Testament

According to Hefele, the second commandment of the Decalogue is clear that Jews should not have images representing their God. But by the time Christianity was being established, there was image tolerance among the Jews, a practice which they may have adopted from the time they were in captivity. Hefele (1896: 437) and Bernard (1974: 41) who states that, staunch Jews always saw this as a great sin and a deviation from the Decalogue, which needed to be rectified. During the Maccabean Dynasty, an attempt to rectify this was witnessed since the Maccabean associated this practice with idolatry (Louth, 1990: 65).

White (1888: 42–43), among others agree that, some Jews had general tolerance to images, on conversion to Christianity. This represented a notion that images were all accepted in Judaism. But there was a group of Jews who could not tolerate this. They zealously preserved the Decalogue as it was. Even after converting to Christianity, the Jews did not compromise their stand against icon use (White, 1888: 42–43).

2.4 Early Church Fathers, St Clement of Alexandria

The iconoclasts argue that some early Christian fathers were against use of icons. They quoted patriarchs such as Tertulian, Origen and Clement of Alexandria, who termed this

practice as idol worship calling Christians to desist from it. It is due to this that iconoclasts became inimical towards icons by the Seven Century (Lonergan, 1972: 1).

In the book, *The writings of Clement of Alexandria*, translated by, William Wilson 1767. Clement termed this act as folly equating it with what the heathens were doing which was full of superstitions. He argued that to use images in the church was a dishonor directed to God the creator. He further called icons demons and their use demon worship.

He advised Christians to observe one and only image which is perceived by the mind alone and not the physical eyes. This image according to him is God who should be seen only in the minds but not with eyes (Clement of Alexandria, 1767: 55–57)(White, 1888: 50).

2.5 The image cult and superstition

Neale argues that, some activities were associated with image brought about a feeling of superstition associated with icon use. Louth argues further that, in the East, the church hierarchy was not interested in controlling this practice as it was done in the west. Due to this freedom, some individuals began to use icons either as a source of powers just as it was happening in the secular world. This brought confusion between what the pagans were doing and what the church should do with icons. Before this controversy for example, there was what he calls relics and martyr cults where the remains of the martyrs and saints were worshiped(Neale, 1847: 126)(Louth, 2007: 46).

L. W. Bernard agreeing with them gives an example that, some icons from specific saints had power to heal, to this, some clergy men were scratching the said icons, taking that dust to be mixed with Eucharist in order to give healing to the sick. Also there was relic worship- the relics of the said saints were used for healing as well among Christians. People were making processions when visiting these relics or when the said relics were being moved from one place to another (Bernard, 1974: 35).

2.6 Emperor Leo III

Nealea, Bernard and Hefele agree that, the official iconoclast movement was established by Roman Emperor Leo III. Bernard and Hefele associate this to Jews who converted to Christianity but came with the Jewish attitude of anti- icons use that started the iconoclasm controversy through Leo III. Nealea on the other hand believes that, it was Muslims who influenced Leo III. (Neale, 1847: 126) (Bernard, 1974: 49) (Hefele, 1896: 363).

In 726 AD Emperor Leo III directed for destruction of icons, starting with the one of Christ, standing above the imperial palace entrance in Constantinople. This brought chaos among citizens, leading to the death of the soldier who led this action. As a result, iconophiles/ iconodules were persecuted, Patriarch Germanos I, was deposed for refusing to support the Emperor(Louth, 2007: 40–50). This issue had not necessitated a theological discourse before. It is not until the time of Contantine V who took over from Leo III, that this issue was given equal theological attempt in trying to respond to it (Jaroslav, 1974: 90). To do this, a council was convened by Emperor Constantine V; it formulated theological arguments favoring of the iconoclasts as discussed below.

2.7 Constantine V and the Council of Hiereia

When the Council of Hiereia was convened in 754 AD under the leadership of Constantine V, it declared icons as idols and those who supported them as idol worshipers. As a result, supporters of icons were to be punished; icons were to be removed from churches and burned. Some of their arguments in doing this were; that a true image is constabstantial with the one it depicts. Therefore, an icon could not qualify to have this characteristic since icons are simply material things while Christ or the saints being depicted were both human (material) and spiritual. So icons were only capable of depicting the human nature of Christ but could not depict the divine nature. Therefore, those who were supporting use of icons were emphasizing only one nature of Christ which was the Nestorian heresy (Louth, 2007: 55).

The second argument was that, icons were not part of the traditions that were left by the apostles and the early church fathers. To them, this was an innovation which had been developed after the Fourth Century and which had been borrowed from the pagans. They argued that, the early church fathers had resisted this practice from being practiced among Christians. They accused iconodules / iconophiles of idol worshipers. To them, one should not worship the creature but the creator. Iconophiles therefore, were worshipers of matter and not God. It is by these arguments, that total removal and destruction of icons was ordered by Emperor Constantine V(Louth, 2007: 55–56).

It appears that even after this controversy was dealt with by the Seventh Ecumenical Council which declared that, veneration of icons was an article of faith hence they had them reinstated back to churches (Louth, 2007: 62). Still the double attitude continued to exist in the church during and after Reformation.

2.8 John Calvin

John Calvin is one of the key proponents of Fifteenth Century Reformations whose influence continues to be felt in contemporary Church. His contributions have shaped and defined the Protestant theology, specifically on the use of ions. Chapter 12 of his work (Calvin, 2008: 50) sheds light on what came to be known as the Protestantism iconoclasm, he built a most precise and radical position against use of icon.

Posing a question about who can know God, he could not see the human possibility of knowing God by use of matter. God`s transcendence makes Him unknowable beyond our human comprehension. Therefore, this weakness hinders man, from making any representation of God in an image. It is to this premise that he argued against the use of icons among Christians- something which he termed as a gross superstition that deforms human understanding of God and a distortion of worship. Icons to him were idols, those using them idol worshipers. Calvin could not see how icons could represent God, unless they were gods themselves. He saw a big danger in having icons in the church or Christian homes. This is because, when the adoration, which is meant to God is given to God behind the image, people may fail to draw a cut line, then end up bringing God into the image hence worship Him as if He is there. This makes icons fail in the role of revealing God as argued by the iconophiles. The worshiper may not be well trained to know how to separate between the worship given to God and veneration given to icon. This is especially when the worshiper lets the minds and the eyes be wholly engrossed by the icon; If this happens, then the icon becomes an idol. He argues that there is no difference between worshiping an idol, the icon and worshiping God in the icon. To him, all of that is worship, making the use of icons to be idol worship(Calvin, 2008: 51–53).

Here the researcher finds a gap that- the iconophiles (OC) needs to work upon to ensure that their followers do not fall into this trap. The researcher feels that, through the transcendental method that will be applied in this work, this gap will be met. Nevertheless, he agreed that there were images in the Temple as iconophiles had argued which were made through God`s directives. He argued that, they were serving as pointers to spiritual worship.

He differentiated these from what iconophiles were citing, by arguing that, spiritual worship did not necessitate physical activities to be done such as paying of homages, bowing before them or burning incense before them as iconophiles were doing. These activities made them idols hence endangering true worship (Calvin, 2008: 53).

2.9 The Teaching of Ellen G. White on Icons in the SDA Church

Ellen G. White is regarded as one of the four founders of and influential in the SDA Church. Her theology eminently shaped the SDA Church, even on the place and use of icons in worship categorically viewing them as idolatry (White, 1888: 50).

She was born in America when the church was facing many challenges due to the aftermath of Enlightenment. Movements of revival and awakening came forth among many denominations especially the Protestants. She was born of Baptist parent and attended this church as a child. Later with her parent, they joined Millenites Advent Movement which was promoting the doctrine of the soonest coming of Christ on earth. In fact, the movement was precise in teaching that Christ was to return on 22 October 1844, (White, 1888; 298; 2011; 45-47).

This made her alongside her parents, be expelled from the Baptist church hence became full followers of the Millenites advent movement. After the great disappointment when Christ failed to return as they were expecting, this movement split into three groups with each trying to explain what had happened with the failed return of Christ. White and some other members joined what was called the Sabbatalian advent. They believed and explained that Christ was not to return as it had been expected earlier but rather that day Christ was to move in to the heavenly sanctuary to finish His last duties before returning, therefore Christ did that on that date, 22/10/1844. This group later changed to its present name, SDA Church (2011; 47- 48).

White (1888: 41- 43) discusses the historical development of icon use. She focused especially on the Fourth Century during the time of Emperor Constantine the Great arguing that, during this time, a group of people joined the church from paganism. As they were joining, they came together with pagan worship. Here, she refers to the use of icons which was already being practiced by the pagans as we saw earlier in this chapter. This compelled those who were true believers (the iconoclast) to fight against this practice. Their efforts and boldness made them be termed and declared as heretics by those who were supporting this practice whom she refers as the half pagans. The iconophiles developed un-biblical doctrines termed as holy traditions, an act which to her was an abomination and falsehood, idolatry disguised as sacred.

She further decried the harm this coast the true church. In order to convert pagans, a substitute for idol worship was developed; massaging those converting from paganism, among those practices was the use of icons which was to her, purely pagan and idolatry. She

alludes to the superstition that was rife among the iconodules/iconophiles using relics as earlier discussed in this chapter (White, 1888: 45). She condemned the Seventh Ecumenical Council which ratified icons foe use churches; it was used to declare and establish a system of idol worship. This council acting as an agent of Satan, removed from the law of God the second commandment that forbids idol worship. The Decalogue was and is not to be replaced by any human laws of whatever nature. They were unchanging even with the coming of Christ, since He did not come to change the law(White, 1888: 53, 262).

White however lauded the contributions of Reformation patriarchs as eminent Heralds of Biblical truth. She speaks admirably the likes of Quoting people like Wycliffe, John Huss, John Calvin and Martin Luther, among others (White, 1888: 285–299).

Ellen White stands out as great iconoclast of her time. She taught that icons were idols and those that used them, idolaters. When she founded the SDA Church, among her core teachings was teaching against use of icons, just as that fellow student of mine reacted.

As a sum-up, this chapter looked into the elements of iconoclasm in Twenty first Century. We have traced the use of images from the Greco-Roman world and it's prohibition in Judaism. These are pointers that during the inception of it in Christianity, according to iconoclasts, this practice carried the same meaning it had in the secular world. This caused it`s rejection by early church fathers. The image cult and superstition have been brought to show how icons were worshiped in the church. Emperor Leo III and his successors carried the official efforts of cleaning the church off this error though they were condemned by the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

It has shown the persistence of this effort after the declaration of the Seventh Ecumenical Council through reformers especially John Calvin. Ellen White even though did not live in our time, her teaching against this practice still influence the SDA Church which has been used as the representative of iconoclasm in Twenty First Century.

CHAPTER THREE

UNDERSTANDING ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE USE OF ICONS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will introduce the understanding of the OC in use of icons as symbol of revelation. Since Christianity did not start in a vacuum, this chapter will show evidence of how other religions before Christianity used images/icons. This will help the reader to appreciate that this practice was adopted from other religions, just like many other practices we have in Christianity today. To do this, the researcher will look into image use in the Greco- Roman world. Since Christianity is rooted in Judaism, despite the injunction against use of images as representation of God as recorded in the Decalogue, the chapter will show that there were images which were used as revelation of God in Judaism as it is recorded in the Old Testament.

This will connect us to the time during the inception of Christianity. The chapter shows that this practice was there during Jesus Christ`s life on earth. The first known Christian icon was made by Christ himself in the witness of his apostles according to Holy Traditions. The chapter will further show how the early church fathers supported this practice in the midst of opposition from those who were against them. It will bring us to the Eight Century when a debate was held in support of icons. At this point, the chapter will look into St John of Damascus`- Apology against those who were opposing this practice. The declaration of the Seventh Ecumenical Council will follow. It will close by showing the OC and her use of icons. This will be a continuation of the approaches that have been done in support of this practice by iconophiles of all time. It will show the understanding and use of them today in the OC.

3. 2 Background of Icon/ Image use

Before Christianity, images were used by different religions in the world, As Gardner (1910:3) and (Gregorious, 1898:1) stated that Art expressed religious ideas, so were the communities where early Christianity got its converts from. The Greeks for examples are said to have images and statutes of their kings elevated in their streets and important buildings including shrines and temples. These images were believed to signify the presence of the king depicted in them. Bettany (1890: 375) and (Elsner, 2018: 9-10) as well argue that, by the year

600BC, Greek gods were being depicted as human beings as a way of making them present to the world. This also signified a connection between them and people here on earth.

This developed into imperial cult, the image of the emperor`s image became an object of veneration among the Greeks. In the expansion of Roman Empire, its generals interacted with worshiping living rulers as gods, a common practice among the Greeks. Even though it was not fully accepted in Roman world, some generals accepted to be honored this way by the Greeks(Elsner, 2018: 11). This was later accepted by emperors. The presence of the Roman emperor was seen in his image even though he was far removed from the people (Elsner, 1998: 58).

Kleiner (2010: 48) contends that, the first Roman emperor to be elevated to divine status was Julias Caesar. His son Octivian Augustus established a cult, built a temple in which deified Caesar was worshiped. The image of the emperor was carried on a procession around the city at imperial festivals. Gradually, emperors believed to be sons of gods attracted worship just like it was among the Greeks as we saw in Chapter two (Meyerdorff, 1978: 7–10)

3. 3 Judaism/ Old Testament

Iconophiles argued that, the Ten Commandments clearly dissuaded Judaism from having images representing their God. Such prohibition was not to be against creating images of other living things. As Baynes (1951: 97–99) argues, it was only against an image of God's representation. White (1888: 42) and (Louth, 2007: 42) cite as examples, images of the Cherubim, Seraphim, the ark of covenant and the bronze serpent. These were made through divine instructions from God Himself. In Solomon`s Temple were images of lion, Cherubim and oxen but there was strictly no image representation of God.

3. 4 Jesus and the Mendalion of Edessa

Cannon and Vollrath (2002: 3)argue that, the first ever Christian icon to exist in the OC traditions is the cloth that bears the face of Christ (*Mendylion* of Edessa) also known us, the *Archieropoita* which means, not made with hands of man. Fred Tradigo agrees that, this is the first ever known icon which is said to have been made by Christ himself. It was given to the ailing King Abga of Edessa who had requested for Christ to visit and heal him. But he had requested that if Christ will not be able to go in person, He Christ, to send his image to this king, he believed that it would heal him. When Christ was not able to go to Edessa, he wiped his face with a piece of cloth and his image was imprint in that piece of cloth. It was taken to the king and the king was healed instantly (Tradigo, 2006: 6).

Tradigo further argues that, another very important icon of interest is that of the mother of God (Theotokos) with the child in her arms. This icon is attributed to St Luke the Evangelist who painted it and presented it to Mary during her life time. After the iconoclast controversy of the Seventh and Eight Centuries, the OC has carried out this practice to this day. They dedicate the Sunday before the great lent (Sunday of Orthodoxy) as a day to celebrate the triumph of iconophiles when icons were restored back. During this Sunday, they walk in processions carrying icons while singing hymns (Tradigo, 2006: 6–7).

3. 5 Early Church

Due to persecutions which the early church faced, they invented symbols in order to hide from the authority which was persecuting them. Among them as G. Ferguson argues, were the images of fish, the lamb, and the ship among others (Ferguson, 1961: 8,20). Hefele (Hefele, 1896: 242) and (Percival, 1900: 87) state that, the image of Christ developed from that of a fish and a lamb to that of human through a declaration of a council of Quinisext. In its canon number 82, it prohibited depiction of Christ in any other form especially in the form of an animal. Cozma (2017: 23) argues further that, it stated that Christ must be depicted in human form since it is through His incarnation that we are saved. Also it is through His human form that we are able to apprehend the depth of the humility of the word of God. This calls us to remembrance of His life in the flesh, His passion and redemptive death.

3. 6 St John of Damascus Apology

It was the Seventh Ecumenical Council's Declaration that gave this issue an all different approach theologically. For this council to make it`s declaration, it relied mostly on the immense work of St. John of Damascus. In the book; *St John Damascus on Holy Images t*ranslated by Mary H. Allies printed in 1898 by Thomas Baker London, we get the following.

As one of the major proponents of iconophile, St John of Damascus lived from 675-749 AD. When the controversy against icons came up, he took it upon him to defend the church which he believed was under attack within Byzantine. As an outsider from Byzantine, he was under protection of the caliphate in Damascus which was away from the persecution(John of Damascus, 1898: 3).

St. John of Damascus as he is referred to in the OC, developed theological discourses or arguments to defend icons. He began this by showing that Christianity was (John of Damascus, 1898: 1)of the prohibition against idols. God is a spirit, cannot be seen and nobody can understand or comprehend this God, he therefore agreed here with the iconoclast

that no one can claim to have seen God and therefore to draw his image. With this, he agreed with his opponents by citing those passages that show how God had forbade making and worship of idols hence distanced himself from idol worshiping. But as an iconophiles, he did not try to run away from the fact of icons usage among Christians (Louth, 2007a: 62–64)

He argued that his opponents erred for not knowing the scripture well. It is not possible for one to know God without His physical expression. Since God is immaterial, humanity needed something visible to help them understand and believe in God. God in dealing with man, has always used physical expressions to make man understand He since it is impossible to know God without his physical expressions. For this reason, Christ became the natural physical image of the Father being Constabstantial with the father in every way, except that he was begotten of the father. Traditionally, the son of any father is his natural image; therefore, it is only through Christ the image of the father, that we are able to know God. In the Old Testament, God being incorporeal and uncircumscribed was never depicted. But since he was seen clothed in the flesh through Christ, then Christians can make the image of God whom we see (John of Damascus, 1898: 16).

He brought various examples from the Old Testament to prove his point on God revealing Himself through physical expressions, for example, the use of Cherubim, the bronze serpent in the wilderness, the ark of covenant, and the temple, and the burning bush. Even though the Old Testament had prohibited the use of images, all these were images that were used to point to God though they were not God themselves. Therefore to him, the injunctions that were given to the Jews were given because they were prone to idolatry which could come from those who were surrounding them. About the same prohibitions being observed in Christianity, he argued that, they were expected to help Christians to avoid superstitious errors as were done by others (John of Damascus, 1898: 5-7,12).

To John of Damascus, icons served the same purpose as those images that were commanded by God to be made. Unless people decided to worship the Serpent, or the Seraphim, or the Cross, those images remained harmless to people as they continued to point to beyondness. This is the same approach an icon is approached with. For instance, the serpent in the wilderness was not the source of healing by itself, God who was behind the serpent, was the source of healing, yet they were to gaze to the serpent. Accordingly, icons are materials that reveal and make visible things which are hidden and which are immaterial in nature (John of Damascus, 1898: 16).

Icons were venerated and processions were made with people turning out in large numbers to witness this. So this to iconoclasts, was equated to worship which was similar to what was given to pagan`s icons. As he has argued above, icons are material that reveal, making visible spiritual things which are hidden. What an iconophiles sees with his eyes is what he venerates but not as God (John of Damascus, 1898: 16).

To solve this, St John differentiated between the worship given to God and the veneration given to saints, in order to remove any confusion. The worship that is due to God alone is called (*Latria*) and the veneration given to the sacred things like icons is called (*hyperdulia*), while that given to Mary mother of God is *Dulia*. These degrees are applied in order to differentiate and help people from idolatry. Referring to the scripture, he showed how these were applied. For instance, saint veneration, *(hyperdulia*) was practiced in the Old Testament. In his argument on this, he cited acts like that of Abraham bowing down to the sons of *Emmor* who sold him the cave to bury his dead one. Jacob also bowed down to Esau, Joshua bowed down to an Angel, as well as Daniel who venerated an Angel. So as they did without falling into the error of idolatry, so we Christians are doing it while remaining truthful to God. The Christian churches should be adorned with images inside them. Referring to the temple, he argued that it was well adorned with images of animals like the lion and lamb. Inside the church, also is better to adorn it with the image of Christ, that one of the Virgin and those of the saints than those of plants and animals (John of Damascus, 1898: 3).

On the nature of the icon he argued that, they should not be of the same substance with the prototype. This was an argument of the iconoclasts who had argued that for an icon to represent Christ, it was a must for it to be of the same substance with Christ. To the iconoclasts, icons failed to be of the same substance with their prototype, therefore, they did not qualify in their purpose of revealing (John of Damascus, 1898: 9).

To this, he argued that the likeness or image of something is different from the prototype. An image is a model, a likeness or a figure of something showing in itself what it depicts. Thus, what is depicted is always not like its prototype in every way. He gave an example of Jesus Christ who is the image of God thus; He is in every way, of the same substance with the father except in that the father is the begetter and the son the begotten. So Christ being the image of God the father is begotten while the father is the begetter. As per this argument, being the begotten one does not hinder his Godliness in any way and likewise the icon by

being different from the prototype does not disqualify it from revealing the prototype by pointing to it (John of Damascus, 1898: 10).

About icons of the saints being used in the church, he supported their use by equating Saints with solders of Christ. And just as the earthly king cannot be separated from their soldiers, it is befitting for Christ also not to be separated from His soldiers. The icons of the saints are appropriate to be used in the church since they are the solders of Christ. He termed this as a good way of honoring God by not separating Him from His friends. These are the very people, who participated in His suffering for our salvation, separating them from Him is an injustice (John of Damascus, 1898: 17,21).

The iconoclast had argued that this practice was adopted from the pagans and that those who were supporting it were guilty of not adhering to the laws of God. St John of Damascus argued that, even his opponents had failed in this too. The Iconoclasts for example, were not practicing circumcision. Christianity also had adopted a lot from other people practices. He gave as an example, how our church fathers turned idol temples into churches. They were bringing down the idol statues and elevated the one for Christ and that practice was seen as good and acceptable. It is on this premise that even the icons use should be accepted just like those other practices in Christianity (Ouspensky et al. 1982: 27).

About the church fathers quoted opposing this practice, John of Damascus argued that, materials which were supporting this argument were fictitious; they had the names of persons who never wrote them. He questioned for example, the work of Epiphanious who is said to have objected this practice. To this he wondered how Ephipanious was opposed to them, yet the church he was serving is said to have been full of icons. To him, people used his name but all evidences shows that he was a supporter of icons. He however seems disagree that there people who were opposed to this practice. He quoted St Gregory the theologian who had argued about those individuals who had tried to stop this practice. In his argument, he stated that no single individual can change the tradition of the whole church alone since this was the work of a church Council (John of Damascus, 1898: 29–30). To this, the researcher has found that there existed a double attitude towards this practice among Christians of all times, and therefore the church fathers were never exempted from this division. Therefore we cannot dismiss them as fictitious.

3. 6. Irene and the 7th Council /the Triumphant of Iconophiles

After the death of Constantine V in 775AD, his son Leo IV took over and like his father he continued with the policy against icons. According to Nelea, he rather died in 780 AD and was succeeded by his 10 year old son Constantine VI, who reigned together with his mother Empress Irene (Neale, 1847: 130). Louth argues that, it is Empress Irene who was a supporter of Icons that convened an ecumenical synod in 787 AD at Nicaea which restored icons. This synod condemned the iconoclasts and also declared that veneration of icons was an article of faith hence they had them reinstated back to churches (Louth, 2007: 63–63)

3. 8 The Orthodox Church

According to C. E Clemet 1899, icons are images or pictures that are used for prayers which through the holy traditions and historical evidence, the Orthodox Church believes that they were in use since the early church time as we have seen. Due to this, the Orthodox Church argues that this practice existed during Jesus' time and the immediate time after his life on earth. It is well known that during Christ' time the image use was so flourishing within the Roman Empire(Clement, 1899: 11)(Ouspensky et al., 1982: 25).

The above authors state further that, entering an OC, one is met with a wall called iconostasis which separates the main church (nave), from the sanctuary or the holy alter. On this wall are icons hanged in a particular manner. These icons are arranged from the middle door, also known as the holy door. The first icon is that of Christ the savior, which is on the right side immediately from the main door, then that of Mary the mother of God on the left side of the main door, then the one of saint John the Baptist on the right next to that of Christ, then the one of the patron Saint of that particular church on the left next to the one of Mary, then followed by other saints or biblical events. On the small doors called northern and southern doors which lead in to the Altar mostly are hanged the icons of Archangel Gabriel and Michael respectively (Clement, 1899: 134)(Ouspensky et al., 1982: 23).

Tradigo (Anon, n.d.: 6), on the top of the church inside, especially those churches with a doom there is the icon of Christ the king also known as the *Pantocratolar*. Next from the top are those of the angels, then the prophets of the Old Testament and then the other saints in that order .In an orthodox Christian's home, the faithful are encouraged to have a prayer corner and in this corner they hug some icons like the one for Christ, the one for Mary and the patron saints whom members are named after. If a prayer corner is not available, then

they hug those icons on the wall of their house. In offices and business premises also they also are encourage to hang them as well.

Annually, the Sunday before great lent also known as the Sunday of Orthodoxy, on every year is one of the greatest feasts day to the OC. This day is dedicated as the day the Orthodox Church celebrates the return of icons back to use after the Eighth Century controversy. On this day, Orthodox Christians worldwide walk in procession carrying icons and chanting hymns of victory (Jaroslav, 2014: 134)

3. 9 Icons the Symbols of Revelation

The purpose of icons in the Orthodox Church as (Ouspensky et al. 1982: 23) argues is that, icons work as windows to heaven- which opens to the observer, to see the glory of heaven. They direct or point to the heavenly mysteries behind them, revealing these mysteries to those who look at them (Ouspensky et al., 1982: 23).

Agreeing with this, Pope John Paul II argues that, icons hold a similar position with the scripture whereby, as the scripture is the revelation of God, so are orthodox icons. They have been revealed by God to reveal His mysteries to us, just as the scripture has (Pope John, 1999: 14–15). Strezova (2013: 236–237) argues that, icons play a pedagogical role in teaching and preaching the Gospel in that, man has always wanted something visual to accompany the words. Also, just as the scripture is read by the literate people, icons become the book of the illiterate people who cannot read. Apostolache (2017) agreeing with this argue that, this is an approach that has been in use since the early church days when the catacombs were decorated with Christian symbols.

Evdokimov (2011: 86) uses the historical approach where historical events of redemption through Christ are presented. This is achieved by transcending one to the historical events and time when those events happened. This is more evident especially with the icons that depict biblical events. These icons are arranged in an eventrological order and therefore can teach about those events. Example of such icons of events are, the annunciation of the birth of Christ, the birth of Christ, dedication to the temple, the baptism of Christ, the entry to Jerusalem, the last supper, the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension of Christ. If they can be arranged in that order, one observing them is able to learn from them (Didron 1851: 252)(Ouspensky et al. 1982: 38–39). This is achieved by transcending one to the historical events and time when those events happened.

In as much as these take the transcendental approach, the researcher finds a gap in that they do not demonstrate how the observer can set the boundary on which far to transcend. As we have seen in chapter two, the iconoclasts trace their arguments on what was done in Greco Roman time. This is a time when images were used as a real representation of the prototype and were seen the end by themselves. On this premise then, the researcher has adopted Lonergan transcendentalism which calls the man as the objectifier of the object. Through the method of history (Experienced experience) that requires a previous teaching on the background information of an object that is the strength of this method (Muellar, 1984: 12–22). He believes that if right information about them and how they are used is historically provided to the observer then they observer will make a sound decision about this problem.

3. 10 How to Paint an Icon as a Symbol

Unlike other images or pictures that are painted present every detail of an event or a person who is depicted, an icon takes a very different principle. Ouspensky et al. (1982: 36–37) argue that, icon writing does not use the three-dimensional space; it uses what they refer to as a plain of reality where beauty that captivates the eyes of the viewer is reduced and replaced by that of spirituality. In an icon of a Martyr for example, the sufferings of the martyr are not shown, but the endurance at the event of martyrdom. In an event like baptism, even if the baptized is a grownup they are depicted as a child. This is to show the entry into a new life of the person or the rebirth and by so doing, the icons point to the reality behind.

This chapter was to introduce us the OC and use of icons. It has given a historical background of this practice tracing it from other religions that had influenced Christianity during her inception. It has then shown how this practice is believed by iconophiles, to have been there during Christ time and the time immediately after him, especially during persecution. The church fathers were in support of it and it has brought the main supporter of this practice during the great controversy of iconoclasm who is St John of Damascus and the Seventh Ecumenical Council. It has highlighted on the OC in her understanding of icons through various approaches used to explain icons. It has concluded by briefly showing the principle of iconography which makes icons to be different from paints.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE METHODOLOGY AND THE CONCEPT OF TRANSCENDENTALISM

4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the transcendental concept and how this is achieved through icons. The emphasis will be on the role of human beings as the subject that objectifies the object. Man being the subject of objectification. This chapter will look into how man using the experienced experience (history method) can transcend.

It will also introduce revelation showing how God can use different modes to reveal Himself to man. Through revelation, we shall see how the transcendental methodology uses icons to give a revelation through the elevation of minds.

After revelation, it will introduce us to the meaning of symbols and signs. It will show us the levels and categories of symbols and signs, and how they can be used as means of revelation by transcending of the minds.

The chapter will then bring the main arguments on the icons as symbols and how they are used in revelation and their role in transcending one mind to beyondness. By proving to us their roles as symbols in transcendence and revelation, it will show how as symbols they point to beyondness without being worshiped as idols. This section will also show us the role of icons in revelation as a complement of the word.

The chapter will bring out the criticism of the SDA Church in their use of icons. It will start by showing the main argument against use of them, and then introduce us to the symbols used by the SDA Church. It will demonstrate that the SDA Church uses symbols, just like the OC does and that their position against use of icons is contradicting. It will conclude by showing how icons are used in the transcendental theology of revelation.

4.1.1 Transcendental Concept

John Macquarrie who is an existentialist philosopher uses the word existence to mean transcendence (Macquarrie, 1977: 60). Existentialists believe that the world`s knowledge exists in segments, discontinuity and incompleteness. Therefore, to have full knowledge, man has to seek and join those segments or fill in those gaps for continuity. On this premise, therefore, it can be argued that, transcendentalism is a philosophical method or a way and a process which human being through the mind transcends beyond what is available and joins it

with what is beyond him or her. It is also the capacity of seeing beyond what can be perceived with our senses, for instance, eyes and ears.

According to (Lonergan, 1972:1), it is the activity or process used by man in order to gain knowledge through self-consciousness. This implies that man is able to creatively rise above this normal life (segment) and look beyond what is perceivable or immanent, setting focus on what is hidden beyond. This method places man as the one who objectifies any object, therefore giving it the status it occupies. This is to say therefore, whether an icon is an idol or not, depend on the mind of the observer of that icon. He or she sets the boundaries or not set them hence making that object to be the ultimate thing or not.

Macquarrie (1972: 3) states that, for this methodology to work, it looks into the functionality of the human mind as the arena in which the whole process begins and ends taking human being as the subject. Macquarie farther concedes that, to transcend, human being does not depend on the law of nature that is outside of him, but rather uses what is inside of him (Macquarrie, 1972: 5).What is inside human beings is the spirit that allows them to transcend. This spirit, according to (Lonergan, 1972: 1), is the mind where it works through the basic pattern of its operation employed in cognitive process. It is through this that man reflects and by so doing, objectifies himself and through this objectification, he sets the boundaries or decide what he is and what he want to be come as self-knowledge. Both scholars put man as the one who sets the boundaries on which level he should transcend to (Nyaundi, 2015: 1–2; Muellar, 1984: 8–9).

This is what makes this methodology a deliberate or intentional process where a person intends, and as far as he intends is then able to become or to know. Thus, knowledge is learnt as far as the subject wants to learn it. To learn then, is a deliberate move where the subject must make their move, otherwise, there is no knew knowledge that can be revealed. Macquarie (1977: 62–63) argues that, human being freely uses his capabilities to set boundaries to what extent he should transcend through self-reflection. It is further argued that, for human being to encounter the mysteries of God, he must visit the historical experiences, either personal or those of others. This is where the history method applies, because man's life revolves around historical events of his ancestors that shape his life. By so doing, one is said to transcend or go beyond the current events, time and space and connect with time, events and space that belong to the past through which, one grasps meaning of life

today. This is the experienced experience which was used in this research (Lonergan, 1972: 1).

4.1.2 Revelation Defined

According to Loius Berkhof, revelation is a word that is coined from a Latin word, revelatio, which refers to the process of availing something, to reveal something and, or the process through which God communicates His will to human beings. Through revelation, God makes himself and his will known to human beings in an active manner. In the New Testament the word for revelation is *apokalupto* which signifies the act of removing of a veil or a cover, so that that which is behind or under that cover is seen. It also refers to the process of making something manifest or exposing it to be seen or to be known (Berkhof, 1939: 23).

Revelation of God, therefore, can be said to be that process through which God willingly and actively participates to make Himself or His will known to human being. This means that, whatever He does, He does it voluntarily and intentionally. This process is based on three assumptions. First, there is a personal God who actively communicates knowledge to human being. Secondly, that there are facts, truths and events which cannot be known without divine revelation. Thirdly, there are rational beings to whom the revelation is made and who are capable of appropriating it (Berkhof, 1939: 24–26; Muellar, 1984: 10).

Agreeing with this argument is John Calvin, concurs that, God being invisible has always availed Himself in order to be visibly present within His creation. His presence causes Him to be involved in the world`s activities through what is referred to as natural revelation. This can however be unrealized by human being due to sins that create a gap that hinders him from knowing God. The purpose of revelation is for God to create a growing relationship of love with humankind. In His willingness to create that relationship, God has used the very mediums which are known to mankind like, speech, gestures, letters, images, visions and dreams among others (Calvin, 2008: 51).

In the Old Testament for example, God revealed himself through the voice without allowing anyone to see His face. In the New Testament whoever, God revealed His face through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It is on these premises, Scholars argue that, God was not personified in the Old Testament and that is why it was not possible to depict Him in an Image. But through incarnation, of Jesus Christ, God is embodied in a human body which could be presented in an image (Bolocan, 2008: 25; John of Damascus, 1898: 6).

4.1. 3 Symbols and Sighs Defined

The term symbol is coined from the ancient Greek word *simballein.* It refers to the act of uniting, merging, joining or intertwining two separate things (Parmentier, 2015: 3–6). It was used to show a half broken dice or as (Macquarrue, 1972: 67) argues, the segments of any object which was calling its other absent half that was or is to be reconnected with it again. That is to say, a symbol points to something which is hidden and which ought to be reconnected to the one already perceived. A symbol takes the form of words, sounds, gestures or visual images which are used to convey ideas. Symbols are of two levels. The first level is the transcendental level which goes beyond the material physical reality that we encounter. The second level is the immanent or material level which refers to what we encounter as the reality; it discusses issues of methodology, the relation of theology to other (Wilson & Taylor, 2015: 10).

Symbols are of three types as argued here. The first type is that of person symbols. In this category we have persons such as Moses, David, and Jesus who represented a nation to God or God to a nation. The second category is of objective symbols. These are objects such as ark, the bronze serpent, the wine and bread, things that can be touched. The last category is the acted symbols, these are the actions conducted that move beyond the immediate context of the action, examples include circumcision, scapegoat, baptism and the lord`s Supper among many others. Any symbol therefore, should fall in any of these three categories. In this work our symbol being the icons, fall under the category object symbols (Parmentier, 2015: 8–9).

The term sign comes from the Greek word *semeion*, which refers to pointing or drawing attention to something. Paul Tillich on signs argued that, signs are connections in the system of communication representing significations in the context of meaning. As an element of communication, it is intended to represent or stand for something other than itself. Signs point beyond themselves as he argues further, and they do not participate in the reality which they point to (Wilson & Taylor, 2015: 10).

Signs and symbols appear differently as we have seen. However, they are at the same time inseparable and cannot be put to opposite. It is due to this fact that they are mostly used interchangeably as it will be the case in this work (Parmentier, 2015: 6; Tillich, 1959: 29).

4.2 Icons as Symbols

As iconophiles argued out, icons point behind, revealing what is hidden behind them. It is this ability therefore, that makes them qualify to be used as symbols in places of worship in the OC. Man has desired not only to hear words from his creator, but also to see, therefore in both Old Testament and the New Testament, we have evidences of symbols in forms of, visions, miracles and images / icons which were used to accompany the word. They took the three categories of symbols as we have already seen. In both Testaments, we have person symbols like Moses and Jesus Christ, objective symbols like the bronze serpent, the bread in the wilderness, acted symbols like circumcision and baptism etc. All these symbols provided things which are visual and that which could raise the minds (transcend) of man from the reality and point beyond them, for man to see things which were hidden and which could help him understand his God (Voll, 2014: 3).

According to (Evdokimov, 1996: 23), iconography of the OC represents / reveals events from history of redemption through Christ. It transcends one to the heavenly atmosphere by showing new skies and new land regenerated by divine grace. Looking on the icon, one's sight is sanctified, and his mind rose to the knowledge of God. This is done because the mind transcends the icon itself. Lloyd (2013: 1)argues that, icons are physical materials of divine presence, what she calls (otherworldly). They are windows through which we look into the unchanging divine reality. This is due to their mystically connectedness to their prototypes. She further argues that, as open windows to heaven, they are presentation of the transcendental reality, spiritual immanence in the material world.

If revelation means to avail something that is missing, and symbol means uniting that which is missing or hidden; if transcendence or existential means the process of going beyond what is already revealed by raising the minds to join with the one hidden or missing, then icons are used as symbols that reveal, that which is hidden through the elevation of the minds of the viewer. As an object symbol, an icon calls for the other half by pointing toward it, hence connecting the person to that other reality. It therefore reveals, that is, connects that which is hidden from our immediate world, by lifting our minds to beyondness. The OC representing the iconophiles, therefore, uses icons as a means of revelation of God and His will. Icons transcend us through the history of Christianity and connect us with past time, giving us a glimpse into the past space, making us live and experience that which was experienced by the then people in the history. Icons also connect us to the things which are hidden to us through elevating our minds as well (Macquarrie, 1972: 48).

4. 3 Icons and Word

Word is a mode or a medium of revelation. The word addresses hearing and through hearing it touches the heart. Just as the word, the icon serves the visual and it complements the word. The icon touches the sight and the rational spiritual perceptions. Both the word and icon have the same purpose in that they both work to the soul of human being. They both depend on the Holy Spirit in order to accomplish their tasks. Their relationship is that the icon serves or assumes the responsibility of embodying the word to unveil the mysteries from above. Just like through incarnation the Son of God assumed the body, the word through the icon assumes a body when the events which are described in the scripture are depicted on an icon. An example is the event of baptism of Christ in River Jordan and, the lord`s Supper, among many other events. This makes the word of God to embody in the souls of (Bolocan, 2008: 32–33).

4. 4 Icons in Revelation

Icon is a transmitting mode or medium of God`s revelation through which faith helps us to participate in the divine truth. Serving as a reflex of eternity, it permits us to transcend connecting us with the object of our faith, the ultimate concern (Louth, 2018: 73).This is the understanding of the Orthodox Church in her use of icons as pointers to the reality beyond what is perceived with eye. Macquarrie (1969: 169) argues that, a symbol requires a lot of background information. A case in point is the crucifix; to be understood as pointing to the crucified Christ, one must have known about the sacrificial passion of Christ to die on the cross. This is referred as the experienced experience (Muellar, 1984: 16). Therefore, knowing what an icon is and being able to interpret it is very important in avoiding this error of misusing or even abusing them by praying to them.

We find this as the weakness of icons in that. Unless one is told about them, it is not easy to say where they are pointing to. The question could be whether the OC has done enough to explain this to her adherents, so that they can transcend as expected. An icon becomes an idol when it fails to point beyond itself, hence becoming the believer`s ultimate concern. When a believer`s ultimate concern transcends the icon, the icon only points to God. The gaze given by the worshiper is directed to God behind the icon and not to the icon itself (Tillich, 1959: 70).

To make this concept of experienced experience understandable, the researcher uses a wrist watch as an example. A wrist watch is used to point to time even though we know very well

that it is not time itself. There could be I a community in place X which has never heard or seen a watch before and are still not aware that there could be such a gadget that shows time. Then someone from place P who has a wrist watch happens to visit this place X. In their interaction, the person from place P happens to look on the wrist and then speaks of time with an exact accuracy of these people of place X. Two things might happen here. First, people of place X will be amazed by this person from place P and they might end up calling him or her a magician. Then the wrist watch will be viewed as magic; both person P and the wrist watch could be treated with superstitiously. The reason for such a reaction from people of place P is due to the fact that they do not have experienced experience. Their seeing of the wrist watch, was their first experience. For (Muellar 1984: 16) this first experience is not enough to make sound conclusion. For one to know how to use it, one requires to be taught on how to use it.

This argument places human being as the determiner or the objectifier of the object. This means that human being determines and dictates what to see and how to interpret. In our argument, human beings are the ones who can make an icon to be an idol or not. They are therefore capable of deciding whether the homage they pay to icons is worship or not worship similar to the one given God. But this is made possible after they have background information concerning the symbols in question and how they are interpreted(Macquarrie, 1972: 3).

4. 5. 0 Icons in no Icons SDA Church

Ellen G. White taught that icons were idols, condemning those using them as idolaters. Nevertheless, this position does not stop this church from using symbols. The SDA *Church Manual* 17th Edition (2005) shows symbols that are observed in this church.

4. 5. 1 Symbols used in SDA Church

(Church Manual, 2005: 23) SDAs believe in baptism as a symbol for the union of the baptized person with Christ. It also symbolizes forgiveness of sins through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. It also symbolizes the reception of the Holy Spirit by the candidate. Another symbol is the lord`s Supper. Through it, one participates in the emblem body and blood of Christ, expressing faith in Him. It also represents Christ's presence in the meeting; through it, he strengthens his people. When people participate in the Lord's Supper, they proclaim symbolically the death of Christ until his resurrection. During the lord`s Supper there is also the service of washing of feet. This symbolizes the renewed cleansing and willingness to serve one another in Christ like humility (Pohler, 2007: 1–5)Church Manual, 2005: 15).

Another symbol is the Sabbath Day, representing Christ's redemption and sanctification of the people's standing also as a token of people's allegiance to God and a foretaste of eternal future of God's kingdom. So when done repeatedly, Sabbath observance symbolizes being in the future kingdom of God (Church Manual, 2005: 16).

4. 5. 2 Criticism of their Position on Icons

The most important characteristic of a symbol is its ability to point beyond itself which is made possible by its enough background information (experienced experience) in this research. These facts apply to all levels of symbols, that is, the transcendence level and the material level. They are also of three categories, the acted symbols, the person's symbols and the objective symbol (Tillich, 1959: 21–23). Now, are the SDA Church symbols different from the OC symbols? Maybe the research should answer this.

As we have already seen, the term symbol in ancient Greek refers to the act of uniting, merging or joining two separate things but of the same kind. It has also come to our attention that knowledge exists in segments or incompleteness. Symbols, therefore, are used to join the missing segment with the one which is available for a better understanding. Thus, a symbol points to what is hidden beyond it and which ought to be reconnected to the one perceived. A symbol also takes the form of words, sounds, gestures or visual images which are used to covey ideas which are also the modes of revelation (Tillich, 1959: 54;Macquarrie, 1972: 2).

Let us test the symbols used in the SDA Church to see whether they fit in this or not. If we take the person symbols, the SDA Church believes in the person of Jesus Christ as the image of God, seeing Jesus, one sees the Father even though the Father is not the Son and neither is the Son the Father. The Father is a distinct person and the Son is a distinct person too. Therefore, the Son points to the Father and as St. John of Damascus argued, the Son is of the same substance except that he is begotten while the Father is the begetter. Therefore, the SDA Church uses Jesus as the icon of the Father even though they do not paint it, when they transcend in their minds, they see this icon pointing to the Father (John of Damascus, 1898: 16;(Church Manual, 2005: 13–16)(Malver, 2020: 384–396)

Another level of interest is the level of object. Under this category, there are symbols that are visual and touchable just like the person symbols. The SDA Church approves the Lord`s Supper as a symbol of emblem of the body of Christ. Through the bread and wine, the Lord`s supper points to Christ as being in the midst of them. This means that, the Bread and wine point to beyondness, to the body and blood of Christ himself. When they partake of the

Lord`s Supper, that is the bread and wine which are in material form, they are symbolically united with the Christ himself in the spiritual realm (Church Manual, 2005: 15).

Another object that is witnessed in the lord`s Supper is during the washing of feet in preparation for the lord`s Supper. In this washing, they use water symbolizing cleansing. So when water touches their feet, it connects them with spiritual cleansing; therefore, the person is said to be clean. This is a pointer to the spiritual cleansing which is not given by water but God hence water points to something beyond (Tillich, 1959: 54).

We can argue that the Lord's Supper and washing of feet waters are in material from that point to Jesus Christ himself. These materials also symbolically bring Jesus Christ to be in the midst of the congregation. This is done through the presence of the bread and wine. Therefore, material, object symbol transcends the minds of these believers and point beyond it (Macquarrie, 1972: 1).

The third category is that of the acted symbols like baptism. Baptism is a symbol that symbolizes the union of the baptized with Christ. So, when this act is done, the person is said to be united with Christ through faith. This act points to show that the person is forgiven his or her sins, and therefore the Holy Spirit can now dwell in him. It also symbolizes forgiveness of sins and reception of the Holy Spirit. Baptism also signifies repentance of sins and one's faith in Jesus Christ is shown (Macquarrie, 1972: 14).

So we can argue that, the Seventh Day Adventist Church uses symbols as pointers to something beyond them. All of their symbols are used to transcend their minds to. This therefore means that they have the images of those symbols in their minds as they elevate them to see beyond. While using these symbols, it has never come to them that these symbols are the source of the grace they claim to convey but rather they only point beyond them to the source of that grace. As we had seen in our methodology, human minds objectify any object it willingly decide to objectify and also willingly dictates to what extent this objectification can be done. Meaning, if some members may decides to take these symbols as the source of grace by themselves, what Tillich calls, ultimate thing, then whether they are acted symbols like baptism or object symbols like bread, will be turned into an idols. This is the very same danger the Orthodox Church is facing while using icons which are object symbols. If control in the mind is taken, then both groups can be safe from this error of idol worship (Macquarrie, 1972: 3)Tillich, 1959: 70–71).

The SDA`s claim that they do not use icons is thus contradictory. Indeed, they also have object symbols only that they do not paint them. Not painting them as the OC do, does not make them less images users since they hold those images in their minds.

Secondly, going with the definition and the use of symbols, they also do fall in the very claim they make against the Orthodox symbols of being idols. The same way they believe and use their images without compromising their worship of God, is the same way the OC uses their icons without worshiping them. The transcendental method has enabled human being to set boundaries required between the two acts of using symbols and worshiping God. If this claim is true, then, they also are worshipping the same, since they also have symbols in their worship. As we have seen, if background information about a symbol is not enough, the observers can fail in turning the symbol as the ultimate thing. If the mind of the observer does not see beyond the symbol, then the symbol is turned into an idol- something which the SDA Church can also be accused of (Tillich, 1959: 19; Macquarrie, 1972: 3).

4. 6. 0 Icons towards Transcendental Theology of Revelation

The following discussion is on how icons participate in transcendental theology of revelation. This will be achieved through testing their relationships and showing how they rely on icons.

4. 6. 1 Icons as Elements of Transcendence

In transcendental concept, knowledge exists in segments, discontinuity and incompleteness as argued by (Macquarrie, 1972: 1). This therefore calls for the seeker of knowledge to hold onto the available segment and then use it to seek what is missing. This is based on the argument that human being must rely on the experienced experience in order to transcend. To find the hidden segment, one should have a proper method which is the transcendental method (Macquarrie, 1972: 1).

Transcendental method, therefore, is a process of elevating the minds beyond what is visible towards what is hidden, for one to get the hidden knowledge that is required. It is important to note that there must be a starting point, the experienced experience. This is to say, when enough background information about the icon is provided, the minds of the one who observe, develops a desire to have more knowledge (question) and by so doing, the mind is lifted beyond the icon to what is behind it. Icons therefore participate here as the bearer of that experienced experience which becomes the starting point or the door through which one looks through. It is on this premise that an icon becomes a pointer to a beyond that is behind

and through which it connects the one who gazes, with the heavenly reality (Macquarrie, 1969: 196).

4.6.2 Icons as symbols, a Mode of Revelation

Berkhof defined revelation as the process of availing something which has been missing and that which is being searched for. It means to uncover that which has been covered or hidden. Also, the removing of avail and also making something exposed in order to be seen. In making Himself known to man, God has used revelation as the way to give knowledge about Him (Berkhof, 1939: 24–25). In revelation, different modes of communication have been used ranging from words, gestures, visions, images among many others. Icons as we have seen are symbols, a symbol is anything that calls its hidden part or half dime and which must be joined together with what is already seen. So, an icon serves as that part which has been made available to us. It can be argued therefore that, icons as symbols represent a half of that knowledge which is required and whose hidden part should be revealed. An icon`s purpose is therefore to point to what is beyond them, in order for the observer of the icon to see beyond the icon and through this a revelation takes place (Bolocan, 2008: 25).

4.6.3 Icons in Transcendental Revelation

Through this research, it has been argued that revelation is the process through which God makes Himself known to human being. So, if in transcendental method as argued world or God' knowledge exists in bits, segments or incompleteness, then how to connect these segments in order to create continuous flow with completeness is through the process of revelation (Berkhof, 1939: 32).

It is only through God's intention and willingness that He reveals Himself to human being. Therefore it can be argued that, if through revelation God is known, and in revelation God's knowledge is gradually revealed, then this tells us that there is a lot of information hidden from human being. To know where this knowledge is, there must be a method to carry on this revelation. As per this research, that method is historical method which is in the transcendental methodology. For this method to work, it has been argued that the mind requires something or some information to trigger it to transcendence (Macquarrie, 1972: 1).

The OC has been using icons as the bearer of information which is the experienced experience to trigger the minds in order to transcend. When the icon is gazed at, it is full of knowledge although this knowledge is not complete. It makes the minds to desire to seek for more knowledge. When the mind transcends, they connect with that missing segment of

information and in the process, knowledge is made complete, this complete information is what we call revelation. So we can therefore argue that icons are symbols that are used to transcend the minds in order to get revelation about God (Lloyd, 2013: 1).

4. 6. 4 Conclusion

If revelation means to avail something that is missing, and symbol means uniting that which is missing or hidden, and, if transcendence means the process of going beyond what is already revealed by raising the minds to join with the one hidden or missing, then icons are used as symbols that reveal that which is hidden through transcending the minds of the viewer. As an object symbol, an icon calls for the other half by pointing towards it, hence connecting the person to that other reality. It therefore reveals, that is, connects that what is hidden from our immediate world by lifting our minds to a beyondness (Parmentier, 2015: 15).

The OC representing the iconophiles, therefore, uses icons as a means of revelation of God and His will through transcendence. Icons transcend us through the history of Christianity and connect us with the past, giving us a glimpse of the past space and time making us live and experience that which was experienced by the then people in the history. Icons also connect us to the things which are hidden from us by elevating our minds as well, to see the future and the heavenly realm. Icons are transmitting modes or mediums of God's revelation which through faith helps us to participate in the divine truth. They serve as a reflex of eternity by permitting us to transcend time and space and to perceive the grace beyond the mirrored image. They also serve as a faithful connection between the believer and what is believed, showing the object of his or her faith (Macquarrie, 1972: 48). This is the understanding of the OC in the use of icons.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Summary of Findings

Chapter Two sought to examine how denominations that do not use icons, represented in this research by the SDA Church perceive icons. Our work has demonstrated that iconoclasts had a case to argue against the use of icons. We have shown that the SDA Church sees icons as idols hence view those who use them as idol worshipers. To interrogate this SDA`s argument, we traced this practice from pre-Christian era in order to understand how it was understood by the then people. In the Graeco- Roman world, images were understood as real representation of those who they depicted. This means that whatever was done to images was done to the person depicted by them, a characteristic that made them idols, as argued by Paul Tillich.

When this practice was adopted into Christianity among many other practices, it brought opposition from the iconoclasts from inception in Christianity to the Seventh Centuries. Some people developed-icons and relic cults where some icons were associated with performing miracles. Some priests were mixing dust from scratching those icons, then mixed the dust with the Holy Eucharist for healing purposes. Iconoclasts took it upon themselves to clean the church off this practice but their victory was short lived when the 7th ecumenical council condemned the iconoclasts and declared that veneration of icons as an article of faith, reinstating icons back to churches (Louth, 2007b: 62).

The declaration made by the Seventh Ecumenical Council remained in force, persisting into the Reformation through proponents such as John Calvin. He declared them as idol worship, insisting that they should not be part of Church practice. It is on this argument that Ellen G. White, one of the founders of the SDA Church, aligned her teachings along this stance. Her teachings have continued to influence SDAs who regard the OC us of icons as worships idols.

Chapter Three analysed use of icons in the OC as symbols of revelation that transcend the minds of the observer to beyondness. This answers the second objective regarding the understanding of the OC on use of icons. We have explained that icons in the OC are not regarded as idols but symbols that participate in revelation. To do this, we have traced this from the Greco- Roman world before Christianity, to appreciate the fact that icons among

many other practices were adapted to Christianity from other religions that surrounded them. We have also argued that there were images used among the Jews, despite the prohibition against idols in the Decalogue.

We have proven that even during the time of Christ and His Apostles, this practice was being observed. The early Christians used symbols as pointers to beyondness. For instance, a symbol like that of a fish was pointing to Christ, among many other symbols. These symbols stand as proof that icons were in use in the early Christian times among church fathers, who later developed these symbols to human image, especially that of Christ who is and has always been referred as the icon of God the father.

About the worship given to God versus homage paid to icons, we have demonstrated that there is a difference between the two. This is borrowing this from the Old Testament where homage was shown to angels without compromising worship which is due to God. This we have done by coming up with categories of worship from *Latria* given to God, to *hyperdulia* given to Theotokos and *Dulia* given to saints.

We have shown that icons in the OC are pointers to beyondness. As symbols, they are not the end by themselves. Icons have only been symbols of revelation, helping people to understand God through pointing beyond them, therefore they are not idols. They are windows through which one is able to peep through to see what is beyond and are therefore not idols.

The aim of Chapter Four was to examine the role of icons in Orthodox theology. This is to answer the third objective question on the role of icons in the OC. In this we have demonstrated that icons play a role in transcending the minds of the observer in order to receive a revelation. Therefore, icons, as symbols play a role in transcendental theology of revelation. We have demonstrated this by showing how icons fit as symbols and how they play their role by elevating the minds. This has been realized by explaining how the process of transcendence takes place in the minds of a human being as the subject that determines what to objectify and to what extent. This has shown that for an object to be, or not to be an idol, must exist in the mind of the person observing it. This implies, whatever someone decides in his or her mind then that thing becomes a reality to that person.

We have looked at the concept of revelation where we have demonstrated that in order for it to take place; different modes are used and symbols are one of those modes. Defining what symbols are and their categories, we have proven that despite being of different categories,

their role is one and the same, and that all symbols must fall within one of these categories. On this premise, we have proved that since the SDA Church uses symbols that fall in all categories for the same role, they then cannot run away from being icon users as well.

We have demonstrated that in order to transcend, icons as symbols play a very important role by triggering the minds of the one who seeks revelation. Transcendence process requires enough and appropriate background information concerning that symbol in question. The background information helps it to point behind it, a characteristic required to show that an object is not the ultimate concern by being an end by it. Any object that does not point behind it becomes the object of the ultimate concern, therefore becoming an idol.

Therefore having this summary we have made the following arguments.

According the iconoclasts' accusation, in the Fourth Century particularly, some individuals from the church were using icons as a source of powers. That means that they were seeing icons as the ultimate thing, therefore making them idols and the art idol worship. We have argued that, if an object observed or gazed at as the source of power by itself without pointing behind itself is an idol, and, if the iconophiles gazes to icons to seek powers from them, then icons are idols and the act is idol worship.

Another accusation of the iconoclasts is that, God had forbidden the use of images in worship among the Jews, hence, icons are a representation of the violation of the Decalogue. To this, we have argued that, if God had forbidden use of images among Jews as a representation of Himself, and if icons are images of representation in the Church, then use of icons is a violation of the Decalogue which is a sin in itself.

They accused the iconophiles of adopting this practice from the Greco- Roman world where they were being worshiped. As Ellen G. White argued, the church was lenient in converting people without instilling proper faith or requiring them to change from their past behaviours thus bringing this grave sin of idolatry in the church. Therefore, if images as idols were used as real representations in the secular world, and if these images were adopted to play the same purpose in the church, then the church adopted idol worship.

We have made the following arguments to prove the understanding of icons within OC.

Iconodules argued that use of images as symbols of revelation were ordered by God in the Old Testament times. Thus, If God ordered symbols in the Old Testament as a way of

revealing Himself, and if icons are symbols used to reveal God, then the Orthodox Church does not violate any of God`s commandments as the SDA Church accuses them of.

About the prayers offered to God being the same as homage or veneration given to icons, an accusation made by iconoclast. We have argued that, in the Old Testament people paid homage to Angels, this bowing did not compromise their true worship to God, accordingly, the OC does not compromise her worship of God by paying homage before icons.

We have demonstrated that, SDA Church is using icons without her members being conscious of this. As such, if symbols are used in the SDA Church, and if icons are symbols, then the SDA Church are users of icons as well in their use of symbols.

We have argued that, if revelation is to avail or to reveal what is missing, and if symbols mean to unite what is missing with what is available, then icons as symbols participate in revelation, by presenting the part which is available and pointing to the part that is missing.

On proving that icons are not idols, we have looked into the characteristics of an idol, which is the failure of an object to point beyond itself. Therefore we have argued that, if any object that points behind itself is not an idol, and icons are symbols that point behind themselves, then icons are not idols.

The SDA Church, by not having icons hanged on the walls of her church as the Orthodox Church does, claim that they are not icon users. We have demonstrated that they are users of icons. This is by arguing that, if icons belong to the object symbols category, which means that, they are material and visible. If the bread and wine used by the SDA Church for the lord`s Supper are both material and visible, then the SDA Church has icons as well.

Icons having the ability to connect or to point behind them to reveal what is hidden behind them, Accordingly, people in the early church people used symbols to conceal themselves from persecutors; if the symbols like that of the fish were pointing to Christ, to those who understood this, then, even icons do point to a beyondness to those who understand them as such.

In transcendental method, knowledge is said to exist in segments where some segments are available and others are missing. If revelation by use of symbols means to make that missing segment connected with the available one, then icons as symbols point to the missing segments that call to be united.

We examined the sufficient information about an icon. We referred to the experienced experience being important in facilitating the mind to transcend. We have demonstrated that icons play the role of experienced experience or the background information. We did this by arguing that, the early Christians were taught that a fish pointed to Jesus, when they saw fish, they transcended their minds and saw Jesus using that background information. Members of the OC are taught to transcend their minds to Jesus when they see an icon.

We have argued that lack of sufficient information about symbols can lead to the error of idolizing the object in question. This, not only applies to object symbols, but also to other categories as well. This is the acted and the person symbols. If enough information about these symbols is not given, then the mind of the observer can decide to make them the ultimate concern where they can become the end in themselves, instead of pointers. Members of the SDA Church can, therefore, find themselves worshiping idols in the acted or person symbols without knowing as thus argued. If human mind is the subject that objectifies the object, and if an SDA Church member by not having enough information decides to objectify the acted or person symbols, then that object becomes an idol and the act becomes idol worship.

5.1 Conclusions

The SDA Church has the argument that icons are idols, not be used in churches, yet they have symbols that they use. We have proved that icons are symbols just like those symbols the SDA Church use. Their stand against icons and their use is, therefore, inconsistent because they appear to oppose them and use them at the same time.

In our argument, we have demonstrated that revelation is facilitated by symbols that range from words, voice, dream to images among others that is why the SDAs use symbols in their worship. Since icons are symbols, they therefore participate in revelation of God in the OC.

Christianity did not start in a vacuum it found herself adopting different elements of worship from other religions that were surrounding her. Many of those elements have been accepted without much questioning within Christianity. Icons, as well, were adopted among those other elements and they should, therefore, be accepted without dividing the body of Christ.

An object becomes an idol when it fails to point behind itself hence becoming in itself the ultimate concern to the user. Any object that points behind itself to something else, is just but a symbol. We have seen that God approved such objects that were serving as symbols and we

have argued that; in as much as we would agree that God had commanded against use of images in the Old Testament, we have proved that He also approved the use of symbols that were pointing to Him. If icons point to what is beyond them, then we can argue that God has approved them to be used in the church.

When symbols participate in the transcendental process, the mind of the observer should set the boundaries as to whether the object in question is the ultimate concern or is pointing to a beyond reality. Therefore, to claim that icons are idols can mean that, the accusers are setting their minds to see the icons as the ultimate concern objects. Therefore, according to their minds, icons can be idols and their approach be idol worship, even if those who understand them use them as pointers to a beyond reality.

5. 2. Recommendations

We have observed that icons as symbols participate in revealing God through the transcendental process. However, they require sufficient background information, termed the experienced experience in order to serve this purpose. If the OC fails to give this information sufficiently, members, without knowing can end up turning an icon into an idol, hence participate in idol worship.

This not only applies to object symbols, but also to symbols including human and acted symbols such as the Lord's Supper. Without sufficient information, people may end up worshiping the elements of the Lord`s Supper or the Sabbath Day itself as an idol instead of looking to what is beyond.

Conclusion

If symbols point to beyondness, and icons are symbols, them icons are pointers to a beyondness.

If pointing to beyondness is to reveal, and icons point to a beyondness, then icons participate in revelation.

If to transcend is to go beyond, and symbols point to beyondness, then icons are symbols that participate in transcendence process.

If in transcendental process the mind needs to be triggered, and the symbols trigger the mind, then icons trigger the mind of the viewer in order for it to transcend.

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