

## Summary

The thesis of Cristian Panaitescu analyses Alexander Schmemmann's ecclesiology in relation to the crisis within the Orthodox Church. It follows the decisive turning points Schmemmann's generation of Orthodox Theologians living in emigration had to face: The Bolshevik revolution in Russia and its consequences; being strangers in different cultures; moving to the situation where Church no longer had a firm place in society and embedded structures of life; seeking for theological foundations that would be corresponding to the liturgical and spiritual experience the Orthodox theologians found formative. Thus it shows the crisis as a process with theological, cultural, social and political reasons and implications. Panaitescu follows how Alexander Schmemmann witnessed this crisis and dealt with it in his theology, namely within his liturgical and sacramental theology. Given that the crisis within the Orthodox Church has been a multi-layered reality, the thesis refers its various dimensions as it follows the evolution of Russian émigré theology as it has dealt with being previously dominated by Western neo-scholasticism the disruption between the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church and Orthodox theology, and eventually regarding the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the world. The dissertation identifies the positive aspects of Schmemmann's understanding of the rule *lex orandi est lex credendi* and of the potentiality of the world becoming a mediating place for God's presence. The thesis criticizes Schmemmann's less than clear arguments concerning the restrictive boundaries of the Orthodox witness in the world and the adequacy of the Eucharist being the ultimate solution for the multi-layered and complicated crisis. On the positive side, Schmemmann's ecclesiology is appreciated as a useful contribution to seeing the turning points of the Orthodox Church as new possibilities of finding a right relationship to its roots and its mission, and a right relationship with other Christian theologies and liturgical experiences.