

Csepregi: Violence and non-violence – [Erőszak és erőszakmentesség]

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**VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE IN BONHOEFFER’S THEOLOGY****PART 1: DEATH AS A FORMATIVE FACTOR OF BONHOEFFER’S LIFE<sup>1</sup>****[ERŐSZAK ÉS ERŐSZAKMENTESSÉG BONHOEFFER  
TEOLÓGIÁJÁBAN****1. RÉSZ: A HALÁL MINT BONHOEFFER ÉLETÉNEK FORMÁLÓ  
TÉNYEZŐJE]**

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**Abstract.** At 2013 a new debate started about whether Bonhoeffer, who in his mid-twenties turned into a devoted pacifist Christian changed his mind later as agreeing to kill Hitler or stayed a representative of non-violence until his violent death. Some interpreters, the biographer Eberhard Bethge among them, represent the change, arguing, that this change was a sort of development as Bonhoeffer’s sense of the world, responsibility and theological reflection matured. Other interpreters, for example, Mark Thiessen Nation, author of *Bonhoeffer the Assassin?* Think that Bonhoeffer did not change his preference for non-violence. In my paper I call these positions a “development-type” and a “consistency-type” of argumentations. Although I express my preference for the latter, I do not engage the debate between these standpoints here – I save it for the second part of my essay. Instead, I suggest an examination of the background of Bonhoeffer’s theological decisions, reflecting on the atmosphere of his family as well as the interpretation of Luther inherited from 19th century German Protestant theology. Both had a rather peculiar focussing on death that became a tacit dominant motif for Bonhoeffer’s life and theology. In the year of the 80th anniversary of his violent death I think it is time to have a closer look at it.

**Keywords:** Bonhoeffer’s family, 19th century, German Culture and Theology, tacit motif

Let me recall for you my first memory of experiencing a topic of violence with respect to Bonhoeffer. It was in the summer of 1984, the Pre-Assembly Youth Gathering before the Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Budapest. I was 22, a student of theology, and one of the delegates representing my Lutheran Church in Hungary. One of the keynote speakers at the Youth Gathering was the South African reformed theologian, Allan Boesak, who urged young people to consider violent resistance against any kind of oppression. His chief example was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who, as a Lutheran theologian, was ready to take part in a secret conspiracy to kill

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Hitler. At that time, I had just finished an 18-month-long service in the Hungarian People's Army. Our unit had never taken part in armed conflict. Nevertheless, seeing how far readiness to apply violence could contaminate the human mind and heart, I built a solid argument against violence for myself. So, I publicly antagonised Boesak, and he gave a matter-of-fact response that implied I was inexperienced and naive. What came after Boesak's answer I will never forget. The Palestinian delegate, naturally a Lutheran young man, nodded to me, whispering: "You are right, no violence". We never met or talked after that occasion, but I can still picture his face, just as I saw it that day.

Readers of Bonhoeffer's life and theology all know the interpretation of his life<sup>2</sup> developed by his student, and later his biographer, Eberhard Bethge. According to this interpretation, after his 1932 stay in the United States at the age of 26, Bonhoeffer turned into a pacifist. He took part in several international ecumenical conferences, often speaking publicly from a pacifist perspective. He served two German-speaking congregations in London in the same vein, and, most importantly, he trained the young pastors of the Confessing Church with this perspective. It is recognizable in his books that summarise the courses of this training, *Discipleship*, and *Life Together*. However, as he became part of the secret conspiracy made up mainly of officers of the army, the Wehrmacht, and the military intelligence service, the Abwehr, he accepted the practice of violence. It would involve killing Hitler as a possible means of bringing down Nazi rule and ending the war! Bethge emphasised that there were only a few members of the Confessing Church who had contact with this resistance group, Bonhoeffer among them. Their decision placed them ahead of other members and leaders of the church. By accepting violence, Bethge believed, Bonhoeffer's Christian life and theology reached a point that was not accepted by most of his fellow Christians.

Bethge's interpretation has become the mainstream of international Bonhoeffer research, producing countless publications representing this view. Ten years ago (in 2023), however, three Mennonite theologians, Mark Thiessen Nation, Anthony G. Siegrist, and Daniel P. Umbell published a book, titled: *Bonhoeffer the Assassin? Challenging the Myth, Recovering His Call to Peacemaking*<sup>3</sup>. Their book, as Stanley Hauerwas writes in his Foreword, is quite a challenge to the mainstream view. The three authors argue that based on Bonhoeffer's later theology, given in his *Ethics and Letters and Papers from Prison*, there is no evidence of any major change that would distance him from his previous pacifist view, elaborated in *Discipleship and Life Together*. Further, they show, that Bonhoeffer's arrest in the spring of 1943 did not happen as a result of his participation in the resistance. That had been unknown to the Nazi authorities before the Zossen files were discovered in September 1944. So, the more than a year-long interrogation of Bonhoeffer before this time was focused on convicting him of being a conscientious objector. Bonhoeffer was trying to deny **this**

charge, not a quite different charge of being a perpetrator, ready to use violence. The point of the argument of the three authors is that, in fact, Bonhoeffer's pacifist view, acquired in 1932, did not change until the end of his life.

To provide a brief characterization, I call the old, mainstream view a „development type” of interpretation, and the new, alternative view, a „consistency type” of interpretation. I think, it is worth examining both interpretations in detail, but it can't take place in this study. What we should do now is explore two issues. First, we should study the debate stirred up by the publication of the alternative interpretation. We will see, that it is very difficult to decide in favour of either side of the debate. Second, we can pursue an approach to the violent or non-violent character of Bonhoeffer's theology on a basis different from the one on which the arguments of the debate have been based. As a result, the reasons for the subtitle of this lecture will become clear: “Death as a Formative Factor of Bonhoeffer's Life”.

### **First step: the debate and its impasse**

The arguments of the debate can be made clear in the writings of Clifford Green, representing the “development type”, and those of the senior of the three Mennonite authors, Mark Thiessen Nation, representing the “consistency type. It will be important to learn how their views impact Bonhoeffer scholarship.

Green is probably the first Anglo-Saxon Bonhoeffer interpreter who provided an important supplement to Eberhard Bethge's biography of Bonhoeffer. Within just five years of the appearance of the original German edition of the biography, he finished his own book<sup>4</sup>. In it, he related Bonhoeffer's life story and his most important theological texts to observations of details of Bonhoeffer's social life, as well as the dimension of his inner, psychic life, as Green understood it. Within this complex approach, he made a resolute statement about the way Bonhoeffer's “ego” might have developed. Green thinks that “Bonhoeffer grew up in a family which nurtured and expected great personal strengths from its members. At the same time, this obliged each member of the family to find an identity within the solidarity of the family. A better context than this family for developing the strengths and skills of a strong and healthy ego would be difficult to imagine.”<sup>5</sup> On this familial and personal basis, Green argues that the central problem of Bonhoeffer's theology is the power of the ego, whose intellectual understanding and existential affirmation provided the main motivation for his closely connected anthropology and Christology. According to Green's reconstruction, the young theologian recognised the destructive power of the ego, both in personal and social life, whose redemption can only be “Christ Existing as Community”. This title is a major thrust in *Sanctorum Communio*, his first dissertation. After his turn “from the phraseological to the real” (this is the other term signifying the event when Bonhoeffer regarded himself as a pacifist), he started a new

path of obedient discipleship in which he surrendered his ego to the “power Christ.” Nevertheless, as his participation in the resistance movement advanced, he became more and more involved in the community of “his secular, humanist brothers, who combined strong, healthy egos and free, responsible action on behalf of others. In their company [Bonhoeffer], now freed of both the initial ambitions of the powerful ego and the attempt to suppress the autonomous ego, came to a personal and theological affirmation of human autonomy...”<sup>6</sup>. As far as his Christology is concerned, “[i]n the place of the power Christ who requires ego suppression in Discipleship,... we have the weak Christ, ‘the one for others’”<sup>7</sup>.

I have some criticism of Greens' reconstruction of Bonhoeffer's personal development, but I'll save it for a later moment. At this point, however, it needs to be said that Bethge's “development-type” of interpretation, given in his biography, was reinforced by Green's understanding of Bonhoeffer's social status and psychological development. Having this background, it was no wonder that Green turned out to be an adamant critic of the “consistency-type” of interpretation. The main point of his argument, published in *Modern Theology* in 2015<sup>8</sup>, is that a pacifist view cannot be attributed to Bonhoeffer. The reason for this is that his Christian ethic was not based on principles but on his following Christ and searching for the will of God. Bonhoeffer had a “peace ethic”, Green argues, rather than a pacifism based on principles. Besides the main argument, Green reminds his reader of several occasions when Bonhoeffer spoke of the possibility of war or violence. Green thus concludes that historical evidence does not allow Bonhoeffer to be considered a consequent pacifist.

Segments of Green's argument seem right to me, although they do not help us understand Bonhoeffer better. It will be helpful to analyse Green's criticism through the lens of the senior author of the alternative book. Mark Thiessen Nation, who wrote the book “Bonhoeffer the Assassin?” together with two of his former doctoral students, tells us that he wrote his first paper on Bonhoeffer and pacifism in 1989. It was praised in the Newsletter of the International Bonhoeffer Society, and later by Green himself. It represents a view rather different from the one he holds today. It took him a long time to reach his present position. In his rather reflective answer (titled: “The Heart of Bonhoeffer, the Assassin?: Engaging Clifford Green's Review, Shifting the Burden of Proof”<sup>9</sup>), he reminds Green of his thesis, that Bonhoeffer's “peace ethic” is a Christ-centred ethic. If someone wants to prove that Bonhoeffer was not a pacifist, therefore, one has to build an argument based on Bonhoeffer's Christology. Nation, I think, is right in claiming that Bonhoeffer's Christ-centred theology cannot allow any space for violence. The burden of proving its opposite would be a rather heavy one, indeed. However, Green is also right in claiming, that there are sentences in Bonhoeffer's texts that reflect Bonhoeffer's endorsement of violence. The way out of this contradiction, I think, should be the acceptance of the fact that Bonhoeffer's theology is more than his Christology and his Christ-centred “peace ethic”. There are other factors too, which

formed Bonhoeffer's theological identity, rather different from his devoted study of the Jesus of Nazareth presented in the Gospels. These other factors will now be addressed in the second step which provides another approach to understanding the reason for the subtitle, "Death as a Formative Factor of Bonhoeffer's Life".

### **Second step: factors of Bonhoeffer's theology outside of his Christology**

Understanding that there are two types of interpretations, it's important to recognize that I favour the second one, the „consistency type”. I think that Bonhoeffer did not change much after his 1932 decision to turn into a pacifist; or, his wish to be a pacifist did not change. However, I think the consistency in Bonhoeffer's life and thought takes place at a deeper level, and I mean „deeper level” in two ways. First, this level, in part, could not be seen by Bonhoeffer himself – as far as we can observe from his writings known to us. Second, based on this „deeper level” there are changes that might support the „development-type” interpretation. Nevertheless, these changes do not reflect a conscious desire on Bonhoeffer's part to give up pacifism. Rather they are consequences of constant factors that were directing Bonhoeffer's life and reflections. These factors were not entirely known and understood by Bonhoeffer himself.

What follows will be a short outline of my view on this issue, supported by some details. I think that the „deep level” that consistently directed Bonhoeffer's life and theology consisted of two main factors: first, the atmosphere and the character of his family, and, second, the dominant interpretation of Luther in his church, the Old Prussian Union, and, later, in the Confessing Church. On the one hand, both factors had noble and valuable elements; on the other hand, both factors had toxic, even deadly elements as well. As far as the toxic or deadly side is concerned, the two factors had in common the view that death was not only a necessary, unavoidable part of human life, but it had a meaningful, elevating character as well. Wishing death upon others, even by violent means, might be acceptable to God. Further, accepting death for oneself, even in the form of violence, might also reflect God's will. My point is that Bonhoeffer's life and thought were directed by these deeply rooted convictions about death, that, finally, led to his early and violent death.

Until his pacifist turn, by and large, his life was determined by these two convictions about death. After his pacifist turn he tried to distance himself from these toxic elements in both his family and theological heritage, and he made a remarkable advance, reflected in *Discipleship and Life Together*. This advance was remarkable, indeed, if we consider how deeply Bonhoeffer was determined by the heritage of his family and theological training. A closer reading of these two books reveals, however, that, while pacifism held Bonhoeffer back from wishing a violent death on others, distancing himself from his familial and theological heritage was not enough for him

not to consider accepting violent death for himself, and for the followers of Christ in general.

The road he took in 1932, finally brought him, by 1939, within the circumstances at play in Nazi Germany, to the risk of being executed as a conscientious objector. It was the risk he did not want to take. To avoid this risk, he first accepted the invitation to the United States, then, after his return to Germany, as a last chance, he accepted the invitation to become an employee of the Abwehr. From this point onwards, family and mainstream Lutheran theology partly won him back. Considering violent death as his own fate as well as the fate of Christians often appears in his writings, and accepting the violent death of others, as something approved by God, returns from his time before 1932 as well. Interestingly, prison time gave him the freedom for self-reflection, on a much deeper and broader scale, than he had ever had before. In this freedom, he reached a more nuanced knowledge of himself. However, in my view, there was not enough time for him to recognise all the important factors that directed his life.

Here the outline of my argument ends. Some of the details of the familial and theological factors that influenced Bonhoeffer's life and thought can now be considered. For the relevant details, we will turn to two authors related to Bonhoeffer research.

### John A. Moses

The first author is John A. Moses, who, besides being an Anglican theologian in Australia, is also a trained historian of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>-century German history. Moses offers us a detailed exposition of "The 'Peculiarity' of German Political Culture"<sup>10</sup>, which cannot be found either in Bethge's biography or in the mainstream interpretations following the biography. He provides a broad picture in which all the elements of the Bonhoeffer family life can be understood. There is also a description of Dietrich's younger years until he finished his home theological training in Germany within which are his qualification for teaching in a university, given for Act and Being at the age of 25. One paragraph may be enough to show what Moses means by branding 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>-century German political culture as a "peculiar" one. Discussing the politics of Otto von Bismarck, Moses writes:

„the three military victories [that is, over Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866, and France in 1870) accomplished, was not only territorial expansion for Prussia; they convinced any sceptics within Germany that the politics of force were wholly justified, or, in other words, that Realpolitik was the way to achieve all political goals. This should be done, moreover, by employing existing political institutions, and in Prussia's case that meant the military monarchy and the bureaucracy that administered it. Consequently, when Germany was united under Prussian leadership in 1871, the tradition of the authoritarian, military, bureaucratic, and anti-

parliamentarian state was firmly established as the essential German way. Moreover, it was deemed right to claim that God approved it as being consonant with the letter and spirit of the gospel of Christ, rightly understood. Protestant German theologians of immense erudition, with a handful of exceptions, totally endorsed this paradigm.”<sup>11</sup>

Reading Eberhard Bethge’s biography about the Bonhoeffer family, we cannot have any doubt that the family, being a part of the Protestant elite for a long time before the First World War, and enjoying a high social prestige and a wealthy economic status, fit into this paradigm. With this background, closer attention can now be paid to the world of the parents and their children, with special attention to a tragic event, that, probably, deeply affected the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

The parents, Karl Bonhoeffer and Paula von Hase, raised eight children. First, came three boys: Karl-Friedrich and Walter in 1899, and Klaus in 1901. Then two girls: Ursula in 1902 and Christine in 1903. Five children within four years! Then, after a short gap, Dietrich and his twin sister, Sabine were born in 1906, and finally, Susanne arrived in 1909. First three big boys, then four girls– all surrounding the little boy, Dietrich.

According to the social norms of German upper-middle-class families of the time, boys were educated to have a profession and achieve a high social status recognised by the public, while girls were educated to be good wives and mothers, capable of leading a large and prosperous household, living an upper-level cultural life and supervising some servants. (The Bonhoeffer family employed five permanent servants.) In the Bonhoeffer family, this pattern was further complicated by the fact that the two parents had different views of the Christian faith. The father, being the leading professor of psychiatry of the time, was an agnostic, while the mother was a devout pietistic Christian. This meant, in practice, that while some serious profession was planned for the boys, Christianity, which was not valued by the father, was considered to be the way for the girls. However, the little boy, Dietrich, turned out to be a devout Christian. How was that possible?

During the First World War, the older boys were drafted into the army, Karl-Friedrich and Walter in 1917 and Klaus in 1918. As Bethge puts it, Karl-Friedrich and Walter „insisted on enlisting in the infantry, where the need was greatest”<sup>12</sup>. In April of 1918, Walter was wounded and five days later, he died. As Bethge recalls, the impact of Walter’s death on the family was traumatic:

„His death seemed to break his mother’s spirit. She spent weeks in bed at the home of the Schönes next door (that is, separated from her husband, A. Cs.). The following Christmas (that is, more than a half year later, A. Cs.) the eldest sister, Ursula, sent the youngest children’s wishes to their grandmother in Tübingen; their mother was not capable of it. For the next ten years, there were no entries in their father’s New Year’s diary. (...) he death of his brother Walter and his mother’s desperate grief left an

indelible mark on the child Dietrich Bonhoeffer (who was only 12 years old at that time, A. Cs.). At his confirmation three years later, [the mother] gave him the Bible that Walter had received at his confirmation in 1914. Bonhoeffer used it throughout his life for his personal meditation and in worship.”<sup>13</sup>

Here we stop for a moment and remember how Clifford Green characterised the Bonhoeffer family. He said, “Bonhoeffer grew up in a family which nurtured and expected great personal strengths in its members. At the same time, this obliged each member of the family to find an identity within the solidarity of the family... A better context than this family for developing the strengths and skills of a strong and healthy ego would be difficult to imagine.”<sup>14</sup> This superficial view of the family simply does not help to visualize the details of family life provided in Bethge’s biography. Naturally, a high view of the family, like this, resists all the critical questions that would lead to a better understanding of Bonhoeffer’s life.

### **Kenneth Earl Morris**

The next section introduces another author whose work has been invaluable in providing my current approach. While Moses is recognised (but not necessarily read) by mainstream Bonhoeffer interpreters, Kenneth Earl Morris is simply ignored to the extent, that his book,<sup>15</sup> published in 1986, is missing from the definitive bibliography. Nevertheless, Bethge’s accurate account of the impact of Walter’s violent death on the family has been elaborated further by him. In my opinion, Morris gave a possible key to understanding the most important psychological factors that formed Bonhoeffer’s decisions and theological reflections. What follows is a summary of the insights that Morris provides.

Walter’s violent death caused a crisis of confidence between the mother and the father. The mother might have accused the father of not mobilising all his professional contacts to gain a better medical treatment for Walter that might have saved his life. The father accepted his responsibility and was ready to pay a price, to offer a ransom, a compensation, for gaining back the trust of the mother. This ransom happened to be the little boy, Dietrich. Still young enough to shape his mind and soul, he became a devout Christian, the only one among the Bonhoeffer boys. At the age of 16, he decided to study theology. Bethge says that his father thought that serving as a Lutheran pastor would bring a boring life to Dietrich, something not worthy of a Bonhoeffer. This opinion was not shared with the mother and the family at that time, and was learned only many years later.<sup>16</sup>

Also learned from Bethge, it was the dead brother’s Bible that was given to Dietrich on the day of his confirmation, as a present from his parents. We also learned that this very book had become the most important book of Bonhoeffer’s life. It was “the” Bible he read every day, the Bible he brought to the prison with him and even to his last



earthly station, the Flossenburg concentration camp. It seems, that accepting Walter's Bible and having it until the very end of his life is a visible sign that Dietrich accepted his parents' decision of being a ransom for Walter. In other words, he was ready to be a substitute Walter in his mother's world, being a compensation for her loss. To say it in theological terms, expressing Bonhoeffer's most constant and central theological thought, he was ready to be a *Stellvertreter*, a "vicarious representative" for Walter.

The fact that "vicarious representative action" is the only theological expression that dominates Bonhoeffer's theological reflections from the very beginning to the very end, is a long-known and frequently discussed topic in Bonhoeffer scholarship. For this widely known fact, we may have a clue from Morris, who, until now, has been ignored by the same scholarly community.

This clue may shed light on Bonhoeffer's theological position concerning violence and non-violence that otherwise would seem to be a paradoxical one. Accepting the role as a "vicarious representative" at the age of 15 had not become a consciously known fact to him – only some hints in the prison literature may show that sometimes he got closer to revealing it to himself. Being a "vicarious representative" means being ready to die for others. This is a constant and explicit line in Bonhoeffer's theology. In other words, becoming a victim of violence is taken for granted; in this respect, violence is accepted as the possible will of God. This is the "script", planted into Bonhoeffer's soul by both his family and his theological heritage, which was finally fulfilled on the day of his execution.

But how is it related to whether killing others can be approved by God? In the first part of his theological career, before the 1932 decision to turn into a pacifist, his thoughts reflect the German political culture and the related theological arguments that Moses calls a "peculiar" one. It means being able to see violence directed against others as God's will. After 1932 he turned against the image of the Prussian Warrior God. However, the God who may ask the Christian to accept deadly violence remains present in *Discipleship and Life Together* as well. Here we encounter a rather militant image of Christ, who calls his followers to an unconditional loyalty to himself, which Bonhoeffer calls "the faith". As part of his effort to say "no" to his familial and patriotic ties, this militant Christ is meant to be replacing nation and family; however, the militant character of the call remains the constant factor of the relationship between the leader (the *Führer*) and the obedient subject. From 1939 onwards, this position partly changed, and partly remained unchanged. On the one hand, it has not changed, since Bonhoeffer never explicitly gave up his pacifist views. The "consistency-type" represented by the Mennonite theologians, is right in this respect. On the other hand, it has changed, at the "deeper level" that remained unconscious for Bonhoeffer.

It is now possible for us to explore Bonhoeffer's often-quoted sentences in which he gave the reason for his return to Germany from the United States in the summer of 1939. He writes to his friend, Reinhold Niebuhr, in the context of Moses' and Morris'

scholarship: “I must live through this difficult period of our national history with the Christian people of Germany. I will have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war if I do not share the trials of this time with my people”<sup>17</sup>. These sentences clearly reflect the competitive character of the male world of Bonhoeffer’s closer and broader family. They also reflect the “honor-shame” culture in which the competition was rooted. At the same time, they reveal the difference between Bonhoeffer’s thought at the time. The event happened after Bonhoeffer thought of reuniting with the Christian community, but he found new people in the resistance, some of them far from Christianity.

As Morris convincingly shows, his decision to return to Germany from the United States in the summer of 1939 was rooted in his wish to reunite with the men of his family, his brothers, his brothers-in-law, his uncle, and others having high positions in the Third Reich, who, he thought, could do more for a future Germany, than his fellow Christians in the Confessing Church or his former students at Finkenwalde. So for Bonhoeffer, this decision meant a happy reunion on the one hand, and a partial accommodation to the world-view of these men, who were related to officers of the Wehrmacht and the Abwehr, some of them hundred percent Nazis in 1939. The alliance with the world of the “serious men” of his age has, I think, an influence on the content of Ethics and the related texts, and explains some of those sentences that do not fit into a pacifist view. Further, Bonhoeffer’s arrest gave him a relative distance from the resistance group. This may be one of the reasons why his prison writings represent more freedom, optimism, and the wish to live. I hope that sometime I will have the opportunity to support these findings with relevant texts.

## Conclusion

Bonhoeffer’s wrestling with the theological topics of violence and non-violence is of interest at an explicit level in itself. However, given the possible psychological roots of this wrestling, sometimes being unconscious of it himself, and, also, the “peculiar” German political culture as an intellectual and existential background for this wrestling, makes the study of his life and thought a premier opportunity for those who are interested in doing theology supported by personal and communal reflection.

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**Absztrakt.** 2013-ban új vita kezdődött arról, hogy Bonhoeffer, aki a húszas évei közepén elkötelezett pacifista lett megváltoztatta-e a nézeteit, amikor később egyetértett Hitler meggyilkolásának a tervével, vagy pedig élete végéig kitartott-e pacifista meggyőződésében. Az értelmezők egy része, akik a Bonhoeffer életrajzát megíró Eberhard Bethge szemléletét követik, a változás mellett érvelnek, ami szerintük fejlődést tükröz Bonhoeffer világtérképében, felelősségtudatában és teológiai reflexiójában. Más értelmezők, például a 2013-ban megjelent "Bonhoeffer the Assassin?" című könyvet jegyző Mark Thiessen Nation, azt állítják, hogy Bonhoeffer pacifista meggyőződése kitartott egészen a haláláig. Ezeket az álláspontokat "fejlődés-típusú" illetve "változatlan-típusú" érveléseknek nevezem. Magam a második érveléshez állok közelebb, de ebben a tanulmányban nem ismertetem ennek a vitának a részleteit - ezt majd az ősszel megjelenő második részben mutatom be. Az első részben Bonhoeffer teológiájának a háttérére mutatok rá, a családjának az atmoszférájára és a 19. századi német protestáns teológia világára. A kettő egyik közös metszete a halál szemlélete, ami, véleményem szerint, Bonhoeffer teológiájának is az egyik rejtett vezérmotívuma lett. Bonhoeffer erőszakos halála 80. évfordulója évében vizsgáljuk meg közelebbről a halál motívumát!

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**APPENDIX**

<sup>1</sup> This paper was read as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for my habilitation at the Evangelical-Lutheran Theological University, Budapest, in 30. November 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Bethge (1999)

<sup>3</sup> Nation, Mark Thiessen; Siegrist, Anthony G.; Umbell, Daniel P. (2013)

<sup>4</sup> First edition published 1972 under the title *The Sociality of Christ and Humanity. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Early Theology, 1927-1933*. I use the revised edition: Green (1999)

<sup>5</sup> Green (1999) 146f

<sup>6</sup> Green (1999) 16

<sup>7</sup> Green (1999) 16f

<sup>8</sup> Green (2015)

<sup>9</sup> Nation, Mark Thiessen: "The Heart' of Bonhoeffer, the Assassin?: Engaging Clifford Green's Review, Shifting the Burden of Proof"

[https://www.academia.edu/14694417/The\\_Heart\\_of\\_Bonhoeffer\\_the\\_Assassin\\_Engaging\\_Clifford\\_Green\\_s\\_Review\\_Shifting\\_the\\_Burden\\_of\\_Proof](https://www.academia.edu/14694417/The_Heart_of_Bonhoeffer_the_Assassin_Engaging_Clifford_Green_s_Review_Shifting_the_Burden_of_Proof) Downloaded: 28.11.2023.

<sup>10</sup> Moses (2009) „The 'Peculiarity' of German Political Culture" is the title of the first chapter of the book.

<sup>11</sup> Moses (2009) 22-23

<sup>12</sup> Bethge (1999) 27

<sup>13</sup> Bethge (1999) 27-28

<sup>14</sup> Green (1999) 146f

<sup>15</sup> Morris (1986)

<sup>16</sup> Bethge (1999) 37

<sup>17</sup> Bethge (1999) 655

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