

## BOOK REVIEW

SZABOLCS SZUROMI

**Erdő Péter:** *A bűn és a bűncselekmény.*

*Két alapvető fogalom viszonya az egyházi jog tükrében*

**[Sin and crime: Relation of two basic categories in canon law reflection] (Pázmány Könyvek 8), Budapest, 2013, pp. 151**

The categories of sin and crime are such two fundamental problems which can be found throughout the entire history of the human being. Moreover, these are those categories which perhaps show by the most adequate way the strong bond between the moral and legal principle within the human society. We can particularly confront to this intrinsic and strong relation when the consonance of the two principles deteriorates, because the classical categories are vanishing in that current epoch, geographical and cultural circumstances. The epochs of the cultural disintegrations—which arise again and again in the history—well characterize this appearance. Therefore, the analysis of the meaning of sin and crime is really important and current in any historical age.

Card. Péter Erdő, Primate, Archbishop of Esztergom–Budapest Archdiocese, has dedicated to this particular question of his new work. He intends to describe and elucidate those principles which are the bases of the aforementioned unique relation in the canon law sciences. Card. Erdő uses rich biblical and canonical sources, moreover canonical science historical observations from different centuries to illumine the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church concerning the question on sins and penalized actions. This volume's genre fits well into the series of "Pázmány Könyvek" (Pázmány Books) which are intended to explain briefly some important and timely problems based on the Catholic teaching to the public at large (i.e., e.g. Waldstein, W., *A szívébe írva. A természetjog mint az emberi társadalom alapja*, Budapest 2012 [Written into the heart. The natural law as basis of the human society]). Through the historical and current canonical analysis of the categories of sin and crime the author crystal-clear expresses the inseparability of these two principles in the life of the human society in any historical epoch; moreover he points out the strong bond of these categories to the peculiarities of morality and law. Therefore, the necessary human reflection on these principles does not depend on the human community, cultural circumstances, or a particular historical age. The active and continuous presence of the two categories in the human society is objectively indispensable for the operability of the human community. The above indicated facts clearly underline the created entity of the World, which radically signs the indispensability of God's existence for the mankind. Those norms which were created by God and are within the created World oblige the human activity.

This volume distributed into seven basic units. The author speaks the actuality of the question in the first chapter based on an outline of the most current canon law history research (11–17). Chapter II analyses the development of the concept of sin and crime within the Catholic theology and canon law. It is organized in minute detailed form into

nine sub-topics (19–77). Chapter III places the stress on the description and interpretation of the idea of sin and crime, explaining it on the basis of the first Code of Canon Law (1917) and the auxiliary canon law literature to it (79–81). Chapter IV turns toward the discipline of the current Code of Canon Law (1983) and the author observes the description of crime within the Code, particularly the normative, objective, and subjective elements (83–90). The imputability of the subject of the penalized action is getting one of the most analyzed field within any penal system, which is obviously true concerning the canonical penal law system, too. The question is in the focus of Chapter V of this volume (91–120). There is a unique Chapter (i.e. VI), dealing with those sins which do not fall under the canonical category of crime. This part observes its topic through the administration of sacraments and sacramentals, moreover through the peculiarity of canonical process law (121–130). The author summarizes his conclusions in eight clear and brief articles, organized his answers by moral, legal, theological and canonical views (131–133).

That methodology which is used by Péter Erdő throughout his new book is remarkable, because he makes the analysis on the basis of the canonical sources, canonical legislation, canonical law administration and interpretations of these by the most important authors of canon law science of the history. He gives a particular stress on the biblical and patristical background too. The author cites the most eminent canon lawyers of the history to prove his concept, namely Hostiensis, Alfonso de Castro, Martin de Azpilcueta, etc. Nevertheless, Peter Erdő clearly expresses his own point of view based on the above indicated sources and authors.

The contents of this volume is enriched by a foreword of the president of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University (5–7); moreover the table of abbreviation (135–136) and the bibliography (137–151). Card. Péter Erdő shows again by this volume which is a well balanced, logical clear-out work, why those values are indispensable which has been accumulated by the canon law science in the Church history. This book also testifies the author's extensive knowledge in the field of sacred sciences but the law and political sciences, too, moreover his strong emotion to the moral good, the truth and the justice.