

Theologically  
Reading Metropolitan  
of Pergamon  
John Zizioulas



# Theologically Reading Metropolitan of Pergamon John Zizioulas:

*Orthodox, Ecumenical  
and Modern*

By

Nikolaos Asproulis

Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



Theologically Reading Metropolitan of Pergamon John Zizioulas:  
Orthodox, Ecumenical and Modern

By Nikolaos Asproulis

This book first published 2025

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2025 by Nikolaos Asproulis

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN: 978-1-0364-5005-2

ISBN (Ebook): 978-1-0364-5006-9

To Helene



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	xi
Chapter 1 .....	1
John Zizioulas in <i>History</i>	
1.1 The <i>Greek</i> Theological Context: From the Fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453) to the Theology of the 60s.....	1
1.1.1 The Fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453) and The “Eastern Confessions” as prehistory .....	1
1.1.2 The Philokalic Renaissance.....	3
1.1.3 The University of Athens and the Emergence of the “School” Theology.....	3
1.1.4 Academic theology (Christos Androutsos and Panayotis Trembelas) in Greek universities .....	4
1.1.5 The First Congress of Orthodox Theology (1936): The Awakening of Contemporary Orthodox Theology .....	9
1.1.6 From the Athens Conference of 1936 to the “Theology of the 60s” .....	10
1.1.7 And the Religious Brotherhoods.....	18
1.2 John Zizioulas’s <i>Theological Formation</i> : Paul Tillich, Georges Florovsky, and the Greek Theology (Christos Yannaras, Vladimir Lossky, and John Romanides) .....	19
1.2.1 The Early Years (1960s): Paul Tillich –Georges Florovsky .....	19
1.2.2 The Intermediate Stage of Zizioulas’s Formation: Christos Yannaras, Vladimir Lossky, and John Romanides (1960-1970).....	25
1.2.3 Zizioulas’s Formative Encounter with the Counterparts of His Time: An Evaluation.....	29
1.3 The <i>Contemporary</i> Context: (Post) Modernity and the Climate Crisis.....	31
1.3.1 Orthodoxy and Modernity: An Uneasy Relationship.....	32
1.3.2 The Greek “Modernity”: The Interplay Between The Ecclesial and Secular .....	38
1.3.3 The Climate Crisis as the Most Urgent Challenge Today .....	41

## Part 1: Zizioulas the *Orthodox* (or Zizioulas in Theory)

Chapter 2 .....	48
Hermeneutics and Theological Method	
2.1 Foundations I: Hermeneutics and Iconic Ontology:	
The Key Role of Eschatology .....	48
2.1.1 The Status Questionis.....	48
2.1.2 The Eschaton as Mystery and Problematic .....	50
2.1.3 Eschaton, Eschatological Ontology and the Kingdom of God .....	51
2.1.4 The Role of Pneumatology in Eschatology .....	57
2.1.5 The Concept of Icon and the Truth .....	57
2.1.6 Icon, Church, and the Eschaton.....	61
2.1.7 The Eucharist as the Foundation of the Foretaste of the Eschaton.....	62
2.1.8 The Holy Spirit and the Relationship between History and Eschaton .....	66
2.1.9 Toward an Eschatological Hermeneutics.....	71
2.1.10 The “End of History” or Its Verification? .....	72
2.1.11 History, Christ, and the Eschaton.....	73
2.2 Foundations II: Being and Theology .....	80
2.2.1 Theology and Ontology .....	80
2.2.2 What Kind of Ontology? .....	84
Chapter 3 .....	92
Trinity, Creation, and the Church	
3.1 God the Trinity, Creation, and Humanity .....	92
3.1.1 God the Trinity .....	92
3.1.2 Creation Theology.....	97
3.1.3 Existential Implications of the Theology of Creation .....	99
3.1.4 Salvation: Christ as Priest of Creation .....	101
3.1.5 Critical Remarks .....	102
3.2 The Mystery of the Church: Trinity, Eucharist, and Eschaton through Iconic Ontology .....	112
3.2.1 Introduction.....	112
3.2.2 Iconic Ontology as a Key to Ecclesiology .....	113
3.2.3 The Trinity and the Church. The Church as Icon of the Trinity .....	115
3.2.4 Church and the Eschaton. The Church as an Icon of the Kingdom of God .....	117
3.2.5 The Hermeneutical Premises of the Relation Between the Holy Trinity, the Church, and the Eschaton.....	119



3.2.6 Critical Remarks .....	125
3.3 History, Christ, and the Church as Constituted by the Spirit.....	127
3.3.1 Holy Spirit and the History .....	128
3.3.2 Two Types of Pneumatology .....	129
3.3.3 The Identity of Christ and the Spirit.....	130
3.3.4 Christ, Spirit, and the Church.....	131
3.3.5 Jesus Christ as a “Corporate Personality,” and the Spirit.....	132

## **Part 2: Zizioulas the *Ecumenical***

Chapter 4 .....	136
Zizioulas as Ecumenist and Churchman	
4.1 Zizioulas and “Faith and Order” Commission .....	137
4.2 Zizioulas’s Involvement in Bilateral Dialogues .....	141
4.3 PanOrthodox Synod (Crete, 2016) .....	146
4.4 The Theological Principles of Zizioulas’s Ecumenical Vision .....	149
4.5 A Critical Note .....	154

## **Part 3: Zizioulas the *Modern* (or Zizioulas in Practice)**

Chapter 5 .....	158
Zizioulas the <i>Modern</i> (or Zizioulas in Practice)	
5.1 The Holy Spirit and political theology .....	158
5.1.1 A Political Theology or a Theology of Politics.....	162
5.1.2 The Spirit of God Goes Political!.....	163
5.1.3 Can Pneumatology Influence Politics? .....	165
5.2 Theology of Personhood and the Challenge of Pluralism .....	166
5.2.1 Christian Personhood I: The Origins.....	168
5.2.2 Christian Personhood II: A Plea for a New Identity of Human Being .....	171
5.2.3 Christian Personhood III: Is the Immigrant the Ultimate Exemplar of Personhood? .....	173
5.3 Gender, Sexuality and Personhood.....	177
5.3.1 A Pre-modern Church Faces a Post-modern Sexualized Culture .....	179
5.3.2 Who am I? Ontology as the Horizon of Theological Anthropology .....	180
5.3.3 What the Fathers Would Have to Say About Sexuality?.....	181
5.3.4 Personhood and Sexuality .....	183

5.3.5 By Way of Conclusion .....	185
5.4 Cosmic Liturgy, Priest of Creation and Animals .....	187
5.4.1 Historical Roots of the Ecological Crisis .....	187
5.4.2 The Doctrine of Creatio ex Nihilo .....	189
5.4.3 Survival of the Planet.....	192
5.4.4 The Eucharist as Cosmic Liturgy.....	194
5.4.5 The Priest of Creation .....	195
5.4.6 And Now What? .....	196
5.4.7 Appendix: Towards an Orthodox Animal Theology .....	196
5.5 Religion and Science in Dialogue .....	200
5.5.1 Theological Prerequisites.....	201
5.5.2 The Context of the Encounter Between Theology and Science .....	202
5.5.3 Relational Ontology: What is it?.....	203
a) Relational Ontology from the Perspective of Modern Physics.....	203
b) Relational Ontology from the Point of View of Orthodox Christian Theology .....	207
5.5.4 From an Ontology of Relation to an Ontology of Personhood .....	209
5.5.5 By Way of Conclusion.....	211
Post-Script.....	213
Bibliography .....	214
Index of Names.....	231

## INTRODUCTION

I want to start with a note about this book's title. I will present Zizioulas's work from three perspectives: *Orthodox*, *Ecumenical*, and *Modern*. By "Orthodox," I refer to Zizioulas's adherence to the *doctrinal orthodoxy* of the Church, particularly as articulated in the doctrinal formulations of the Second Ecumenical Council (381) and the Definition of Chalcedon (451). While one may critique his somewhat ambiguous interpretation of these doctrines, there is no doubt about his commitment to the core matters of faith. Simultaneously, Zizioulas stands out as one of our time's most open and dialogical Orthodox theologians. Following the example set by his mentor, Georges Florovsky (1893-1979), and driven by a deep conviction that he embodies the faith of the early Church, Zizioulas has engaged in extended dialogues with representatives of other Christian traditions, all in the "ecumenical" spirit of pursuing the eschatological unity of the Church. Finally, when I describe him as "modern," I acknowledge that despite his shortcomings, deficiencies, and internal tensions, or perhaps because of them, Zizioulas has provided us with valuable *tools* and *insights* to address the existential challenges of our era, offering a *soteriologically* effective message to humanity.

But who was it really?

John D. Zizioulas (1931–2023) was born in Katafygion Kozani, a small, mountainous hamlet in Northern Greece. After completing his education in his hometown, he planned to study theology at the universities of Thessaloniki and Athens, as well as at Bossey in Geneva. Then, on a grant from the World Council of Churches (WCC), he traveled to the United States to complete his doctoral studies at Harvard University. There he had the good fortune to meet and study with Georges Florovsky (with whom he began a doctoral thesis on the Christology of Saint Maximus the Confessor), and another notable and distinguished professor of the time, Paul Tillich (1886-1965). In the United States, he works as a research associate at the prestigious Foundation for Byzantine Research, Dumbarton Oaks. After a period of collaboration with the Greek Orthodox Theological School of the Holy Cross and the Saint Vladimir's Theological Seminary, he returned to Greece to defend a doctoral thesis at the Theological School of the University of Athens (1962-1966) on the unity of the Church in the Eucharist and the Bishop during the first three centuries. Later (1967-1970), he served as Secretary of the "Faith and Order" Committee of WCC, while he was

quickly elected initially (1970) associate professor at the University of Edinburgh, and later professor (1973) at the University of Glasgow, where he lectured constantly until 1987. In 1984, he began teaching at the School of Theology at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (he also became a permanent visiting professor at King's College, London, in 1989), and the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected him Metropolitan of Pergamon in 1986. Zizioulas was an engaged participant in the Ecumenical Movement from a young age, notably serving as Metropolitan of the Ecumenical Throne. For many years, he co-chaired the Joint Committees that facilitated the Official Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, and between the Anglican Communion and Orthodox representatives. His contributions were instrumental in shaping the dialogue and remained at its core for an extended period.

Drawing inspiration, mainly from the great Greek Fathers (such as the Cappadocians, Maximus the Confessor, and Ignatius of Antioch, to mention only his favorite) but also from a continuous and fruitful dialogue with the various intellectual (philosophical, social, etc.) currents of his time (e.g., existentialism), Zizioulas will deeply explore the ecclesiastical tradition, attempting with his multidimensional work to highlight its existential importance. In one of his texts, Zizioulas expresses the ecumenical openness and the traditional ethos of dialogue contained in the vision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, of which he was for many decades the main theological spokesman, and attempts to dynamically confront the various fundamentalist tendencies, which unfortunately, "are growing and multiplying" within the bosom of the traditional Orthodox Churches: "I happen to belong to a tradition shaped by the Greek Fathers, and I cannot overlook the fact that the theology of these Fathers transformed the culture of their time. This makes me feel deeply sorry and disappointed when I come across my contemporary fellow-Orthodox who, usually in the name of the faithfulness to the Fathers (!), refuse to open up theology to the challenges of our culture."<sup>1</sup>

The book explores Zizioulas's theological program through a *historical* and particularly *systematic* perspective. I do not claim to present a complete account of his vision. Such an enterprise would have required more than one volume, and despite the time spent studying his work, which has been published in numerous volumes and journals that are not always easily accessible, the life of one scholar would not be sufficient to thoroughly

---

<sup>1</sup> John D. Zizioulas, "Faith and Order: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," in Idem. *The One and the Many. Studies on God, Man, the Church, and the World Today* (Alhambra, CA: Sebastian Press, 2010), 379-387, here at 383.

evaluate his life's work in all of its details. I am afraid this is the fate of all those thinkers whose work had a tremendous effect not only on a personal level but in general. Zizioulas was fortunate to see the study of his work develop early on, particularly after the release of his much-celebrated *Being as Communion* in 1985. During a private discussion, he expressed his amazement at the influence this collection of texts has had on academics, intellectuals, and ordinary people. This is the most quoted book in his entire work, highlighting his remarkable achievement. Reflecting on the book's success invites a realm of speculation. As he shared with me privately, perhaps it was his emphasis on *communion* as the fundamental concept underpinning everything we can say that exists—a dimension that may have been overlooked in the Western culture of his time, which has grown accustomed to an *inter-subjectivity* that lacks a foundation in ontology. This perspective resonates with the “dialogue” involving figures like Emmanuel Levinas, who prioritizes *ethics* over ontology, and Jean-Luc Marion, who emphasizes God *without* being.

As a member of his younger generation of students, I first became acquainted with him during his later years. My initial stance is a *positive* reception of his work, accompanied by a careful *critical* evaluation of certain aspects of his program that may be perceived as problematic today. It is not my intention to dismantle his entire body of work. To pursue this course of action, one must first offer an alternative, and to be frank, I am not yet prepared to present a definitive theological system that addresses the challenges of our time or to supplant his theological vision. Instead, as seen in the book's final and larger section, an attempt is made to explore the significance of Zizioulas's thought in various ways that he did not clarify. “Avoid steer repetition of the past, try to re-interpret the past in light of the eschaton to address the challenges of the present,” could be what he was saying... Not a simple task, as a study of the literature on his work may easily illustrate.

The first introductory chapter describes the larger intellectual, historical, religious, and sociopolitical background in which Zizioulas's vision and agenda emerged. This is a difficult job for the researcher since it requires briefly reconstructing the long and intricate history of religious and theological advances from the fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453) to the theology of the 1960s, a nearly four-hundred-year span. This was a pivotal epoch that defined the very identity of modern Orthodoxy, in which Zizioulas was born and had to battle and interpret. At the same time, I do not plan to provide a comprehensive account of the Orthodox Church's extensive history and doctrine.

The reader of this book will thus become acquainted with the traumatic consequences of the fall of the Byzantine empire for the Eastern Orthodox world, important instances in the history of Eastern Orthodox theology (such as the role played by *Philokalia*, the 1936 Athens conference, etc.), the variety of spiritual and intellectual movements, and leading thinkers (e.g. religious brotherhoods as well as theology within and outside academia) to the renewal of contemporary Greek Orthodox theology with the generation of the 1960s. The chapter also examines Zizioulas's formative years in the United States, where he studied under two prominent theological figures of the time, Paul Tillich and Georges Florovsky. This rich background would significantly contribute to his theological formation in terms of developing his method and style of theology and addressing tradition in a critical conversation with the West. Simultaneously, his "encounter" with philosophers such as Berdyaev, Buber, Heidegger, and Levinas appeared to play an important part in the articulation of the ontological language and framework of Zizioulas's theology.<sup>2</sup>

However, this is only one aspect of his environment that contributed significantly to his steady development. To fully grasp all the layers and dimensions of his intellectual journey, we must also consider the secular environment, primarily defined by *(post)modernity* as the broader framework, *secularization*, and the urgent threat of the climate crisis. Zizioulas developed his theological synthesis to address humanity's existential quests.

Building on his major works, particularly his *Being as Communion* (1985) and *Communion and Otherness* (2006), and his posthumous *Remembering the Future* (2023), as well as unpublished archival material and the vast body of critical literature, the second chapter of the book seeks to highlight the metatheological prerequisites that underpin his entire theological program. By "metatheological," I refer to the foundations of his overall perspective (i.e., the role of eschatology in hermeneutics and iconic ontology, an almost unique development in contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology, along with his strong tie between ontology and theology). In this regard, I want to look at how these foundations define and inform the many aspects of his theology. In response to the growing critique from patristic scholars and historians regarding Zizioulas's interpretation of the patristic tradition, I demonstrate that Zizioulas views the eschaton as the fundamen-

---

<sup>2</sup> The reader of the book will quickly see that there is no special examination of Zizioulas's philosophical background, formation, and sources, much alone contemporary Orthodox theology in general. However, this is a deliberate choice by the author, as such an exploration necessitates thorough and in-depth digging in their work.

tal basis for theological hermeneutics. He also emphasizes the significance of iconic ontology and personalist language in this context.

This third chapter examines how Zizioulas's "first things" pertain to his Trinitarian theology, creation theology, and the resulting absolute dialectic between the Trinitarian God and the creation in terms of absolute freedom. Theological anthropology is also discussed, as well as the significance of a theology of *personhood* in light of the *nature-person dialectic* that underpins Zizioulas's entire work. Moving on from the immanent to economic Trinity and beyond a latent, distorted relationship between Christology and pneumatology, Zizioulas develops a comprehensive *pneumatological* understanding of Christology, ecclesiology, and history, where the Holy Spirit liberates Christ from the threat of individualization and the constraints of history. At the same time, Christ is regarded not as an individual but primarily as a communion event, in other words, as "corporate personality." From this perspective, the Eucharist is recognized as the very locus, or rather the proper framework of Zizioulas's overall theological vision, which "makes the church" what it truly is, a way of being, the Body of Christ, where both a "participation by communion" in the very life of the Trinitarian God and a foretaste of the eschatological Kingdom of God is available.

The fourth chapter of the book delves into Zizioulas's ecumenical presence and activity, as well as the influence he wielded over the rapprochement of Christian traditions, through his involvement in various ecumenical organizations and committees, as well as inter-Christian bilateral official dialogues (with Roman Catholics and Anglicans), particularly as the eminent spokesman of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In this light, his special role in the preparation, convocation, and reception of the PanOrthodox Synod of 2016 (Crete) is fully appreciated, as one of his last "special missions" to set the tone of the ecumenical vision towards unity, despite the results going in the opposite direction, due to the stance adopted by specific churches (Moscow Patriarchate for instance) which wanted to lead the intra-Orthodox dialogue to a dead end.

The fifth and last chapter gives a distinct perspective. Based on the previous presentation of his theological vision and program in its basic tenets, an attempt is made to apply his theology to five different fields (political theology, pluralism, gender issues, climate crisis, and the dialogue between theology and science), offering a reflection on the current and future relevance of Zizioulas's theological legacy. Although Zizioulas has not been implicitly or intentionally involved in political or social issues, his work has inspired and continues to inspire a significant number of scholars and thinkers (both Orthodox and non-Orthodox) who seek to bring to the forefront the *existential*, *political*, and *public* implications of

his theological synthesis, addressing various and urgent challenges posed by the modern world to Orthodoxy. In one of his several ecotheological essays, Zizioulas gives an example of how to contextualize and re-interpret patristic theology in a way that is relevant for today: “What would the Fathers say to us today?”

Although there is ongoing interest in Zizioulas’s legacy, as evidenced by over a hundred master and doctoral theses, as well as a significant number of articles, essays, and individual books on his work in all major international languages, a *comprehensive* (and always critical) approach to his overall work is still lacking, based primarily on a) the central role that *eschatology* plays in the formulation of the various aspects of his program. This is not to claim that Zizioulas’s research has not yet addressed eschatology; rather, I aim to show that his “eschatological outlook” has never been accepted as the central key to unlocking and grasping his vision. b) The research on the intellectual background, social setting, movements, persons, and events, that spurred directly or indirectly his worldview and without which Zizioulas would not be the same (essentially he is a child of his era); c) The examination of archival material that, although not significantly altering the overall image of his theology, sheds essential light on certain aspects of his background and foreground theological perspective. For example, knowing that he stated comparable ideas about the church in 1955, in a journal he ran as a graduate student at Athens University, and ten years later in his thesis, reveals that the fundamental outlines of his thought were established very early in his career.<sup>3</sup> What we have here is not a progression (in terms of *development*), but rather an *exegesis* (in terms of *explication*), an elaboration, and an additional interpretation of the apostolic and patristic tradition.

This study is not a definitive or comprehensive assessment of his vision. In contrast, the book aims to elucidate key concepts and ideas, such as eschatology, communion ontology, personhood, and the Eucharist, that permeate the author’s entire corpus. It seeks to demonstrate how these ideas substantiate the foundations of his project, while also examining particular shortcomings and limitations inherent in major intellectual frameworks. Concurrently, it puts his theology into practice and explores the relevance of his theological legacy. At the end of the day, what matters is if our theology can fulfill human beings’ thirst for *theosis*, which is communion with the life of the Trinitarian God, or, more specifically, a mutual and recipro-

---

<sup>3</sup> It is intriguing that the title of this “journal” was “Resurrection” (Anastasis) (archival material. Special thanks to Bishop of Los Angeles Maxim Vassiliev for bringing this to my attention).



cal encounter with God the Father in Christ through the Spirit in the banquet of the Kingdom. The reader, acting as the ultimate (see eschatological) judge of each work, will ultimately deliver the final verdict.



# CHAPTER 1

## JOHN ZIZIOULAS IN *HISTORY*

It is widely acknowledged that no text exists in isolation, without a context; a larger intellectual, cultural, and social context constantly influences it. Similarly, the time in which people live has an unavoidable impact on them. To understand Zizioulas's theological vision, one must first examine the Greek socio-religious, the broader ecumenical-theological, and the (post)modern contexts that shaped and informed his thinking. Understanding the historical and socio-cultural conditions that directly or indirectly shaped the theological landscape of that era allows us to appreciate the significant changes Zizioulas brought about in comparison to the traditional practices of Orthodox theology (Greek and ecumenical) of the preceding era.

### **1.1 The *Greek* Theological Context: From the Fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453) to the Theology of the 60s**

Let us begin by presenting some incidents from the prehistory and history of Modern Greek theology that affected Zizioulas's theological formation. This is not a complete history of Greek theology. In contrast, we are interested in the historical events and movements that created the intellectual landscape of this period.

#### **1.1.1 The Fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453) and The "Eastern Confessions" as prehistory**

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the subsequent Ottoman occupation had a significant impact on the development of Greek Orthodoxy and its theology, causing Orthodox people to experience profound *psychological* and *existential* trauma, as they witnessed the collapse of the glorious Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium). The disturbance caused by this historical process resulted in a major breach in the East's long philosophical and theological tradition. During the nearly 400 years of Ottoman domination, the

church was ill-prepared and may have been incapable of providing comprehensive theological education to its people and authorities. Many intellectuals at the time who sought advanced education were forced to enroll in Western universities, which had long been established. As a result, they were significantly influenced by the current scholastic theological trends.

During the Reformation, the Greek church and theology confronted a paradoxical situation as they attempted to address the new challenges posed by Western churches and theologies. This entailed responding to the Catholic missionary effort and engaging in dialogue with the earliest reformers, frequently duplicating Catholic arguments to refute Protestant accusations, and *vice versa*.<sup>1</sup> In this perspective, the so-called “Eastern Confessions of the Christian Faith” that were published during the following years, are considered by contemporary Orthodox theology to be a “pseudomorphosis,”<sup>2</sup> in which Orthodoxy of that time for different reasons spoke in or fully adopted “the idiom of the Roman or Protestant worlds,”<sup>3</sup> while theological education followed the pattern of each of the two traditions.<sup>4</sup> A thorough evaluation of these *Confessions*, free of hermeneutical bias and personal opinions, is essential. These texts illustrate an era (17th-18th centuries) during which the Orthodox patriarchs attempted, whether effectively or otherwise, to meet the challenges provided by their local environment.

---

<sup>1</sup> For a general account of the encounter between Eastern Orthodoxy and Lutheranism during this difficult period, see my “The Encounter between Eastern Orthodoxy and Lutheranism. A Historical and Theological Assessment,” *The Ecumenical Review* 69/2 (2017): 215-224.

<sup>2</sup> This strange term was used by Georges Florovsky to describe the mentality of the Orthodox theology of that time. Following Oswald Spengler, Florovsky describes the term as follows: “This term was used by Oswald Spengler ‘to designate those cases in which an older alien culture lies so massively over the land that a young culture, born in this land, cannot get its breath and fails not only to achieve pure and specific expression-forms, but even to develop fully its own self-consciousness.’ We may also use the term in a wider sense. ‘Pseudomorphosis’ may become a kind of schism in the soul, in cases where an alien language or symbolism, for some imperative reason, is adopted as a means of self-expression. ‘Thus,’ to continue the quotation from Spengler, ‘there arise distorted forms, crystals whose inner structure contradicts their external shape, stones of one kind presenting the appearance of stones of another kind.’” See Georges Florovsky, “The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement prior to 1910,” in: Georges Florovsky, *Christianity and Culture*, Collected Works vol. 2 (Massachusetts: Nordland-Belmont, 1974), 181.

<sup>3</sup> Florovsky, “The Orthodox Churches and the Ecumenical Movement prior to 1910,” 181; John Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1983), 78-79.

<sup>4</sup> Florovsky, “The Orthodox Churches and the Ecumenical Movement prior to 1910,” 185ff.

Over time, fresh perspectives arose. While it may appear bizarre to anyone inexperienced with the history of Greek theology, it is widely recognized today that the *Philokalia* marks a turning point in the progressive renewal of Orthodox theology and spirituality, coupled with the rediscovery of the fathers in the East.

### 1.1.2 The Philokalic Renaissance

The *Philokalia of the Holy Ascetics*, first published in Greek in 1782 in Venice by Sts. Makarios of Corinth and Nicodeme of the Holy Mountain is a carefully curated collection of patristic and ascetic works from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries. It is based on a spiritual tradition founded in prayer and divided into three stages: *purification* from the passions, *illumination* by divine light, and perfection, known as *theosis* (deification). Its main goal was to reinstate a virtually lost component of (patristic) theology, where theology and prayer were considered mutually reinforcing, separate from the prevalent post-Reformation Western spirituality that appeared to influence the teaching of the institutional church at that time. It is worth emphasizing that after the fall of the Byzantine Empire, many Orthodox regions were under Ottoman rule, and theology used different conceptual and methodological frameworks. Thus, the publishing of *Philokalia* was designed to be “a turning point in the history of Orthodox theology.”<sup>5</sup> Turning thus away from a style of theology that was mainly inspired by Western patterns, *Philokalia*, as part of a larger renewal of Orthodox spirituality taking place in Mount Athos,<sup>6</sup> promoted a certain theology and *ethos*, based on the experience of the holy fathers of the primitive church, which accounted for a direct vision of the divine glory bestowed on the practitioners of mystical prayer and *ascesis*.

### 1.1.3 The University of Athens and the Emergence of the “School” Theology

The faculty of theology was one of the first departments established by the University of Athens in 1837, following the Greek Independence War of 1821. Its organization and programs were fashioned after those of German

---

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers. From the Philokalia to the present* (London: SPCK, 2015), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Kallistos Ware, “Philocalie,” in: M. Viller-F. Cavarella, (eds.) *Dictionnaire de spiritualite, ascetique et mystique*, tom. XII (Paris: Beauchesne, 1984), 1336-52.

universities. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, aspiring university professors were required to get a higher education in theology from German universities, whether Protestant or Catholic. However, at this time, Greek theology had limited opportunity to engage with the (patristic) tradition, particularly after the *philocalic* retrieval, which happened mostly outside of Greece.<sup>7</sup> The “school theology” which is taught, closely follows the changes occurring in the West, employing reason, philosophy, and scholastic methods to “establish Orthodox theology on a scientific basis.”<sup>8</sup>

### 1.1.4 Academic theology (Christos Androutsos and Panayotis Trembelas) in Greek universities

The term “academic theology” often refers to the study of theology in a formal educational environment of a university, similar to other academic fields like mathematics. This style of theology is frequently regarded as an intellectual pursuit, distinct from the practical and experiential aspects of the church. Greek universities divide theology into many units, such as systematic and historical theology, following the established structure utilized in Western universities. Given that theology in Byzantium was mainly performed in close connection with the church and monastic life,<sup>9</sup> by theologians who were primarily bishops, heads of local churches, and presiders of

---

<sup>7</sup> *Philokalia* had a significant impact, particularly on Russian (but also Romanian) Orthodoxy. Before the Greek version was published, St. Paisy Velichkovsky (1722-1794), who was familiar with the hesychast spirituality practiced on Mount Athos, began translating several similar manuscripts into Slavonic. This version premiered in 1793 as Dobrorolubiye, and was destined to become very influential: See Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers*, 4-6. At the same time, Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993) is rightfully considered the most important addition to the patristic resource in Romanian theology. Even before the actual explosion of the scholarly and spiritual interest in St. Gregory Palamas, he published a monograph on his life and work by making use of manuscripts of his unpublished works, while with his life-work of the translation and expansion of the *Philokalia* into Romanian language contributed a great deal to the flourishing of Romanian theology. See Cf. Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers*, 127-142, and Viorel Coman, “Revisiting the Agenda of the Orthodox Neopatristic Movement,” *The Downside Review*, 136/ 2 (2018): 99-117.

<sup>8</sup> Marcus Pledet, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, (Changing Paradigms in Historical and Systematic Theology) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 185.

<sup>9</sup> For the different perception of theology in East and West, see, for instance: Norman Russell, *Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 134-142. Russell rightly argues (136) that “the study of theology...was pursued in an ecclesiastical context, but not as an academic

the divine Eucharist, it is clear that the two perspectives differ in scope. Theologians educated in Western institutions and used specific conceptual tools frequently view the Christian faith as an intellectual journey. In this setting, the church fathers are not necessarily considered the primary source of inspiration. This is because their teachings may not always be consistent with academic epistemological or scientific standards. Instead, new figures, such as Western scholastic theologians and notable Western philosophers, are regarded as important contributors to the exposition and understanding of Christian theology.

Professor Christos Androutsos (1912-1935) was a prominent figure in Greek academic theology at the time.<sup>10</sup> Androutsos, a prolific writer with extensive work in many fields, would set the tone with his *Dogmatics*,<sup>11</sup> where he applies a scholastic methodology and structure in presenting his topics (examining successfully *Deo Uno*, *Deo Trino*, etc.), and a rational approach to theology. While Androutsos quotes patristic authors, scholastics, and confessions of faith to back up his ideas, the references to the patristic sources are essentially *proof-texts* rather than dynamic guides to the truth of God. Androutsos is open to the incorporation of natural theology and, unsurprisingly, emphasizes the importance of reason in comprehending and grasping dogmas.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, he quickly incorporates common Western concepts and terminology in his theological formulation, such as *actus purus*.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, he has not paid special attention to the normative, since Gregory Palamas (14<sup>th</sup>), essence-energies distinction.<sup>14</sup> Cataphatic theology appears to him to be the correct representation of theology, as the human mind's attempt to describe or even reach the truth of revelation. Despite the bold criticism he received during his lifetime from his colleagues at the university<sup>15</sup> and especially later on by Christos Yannaras

---

discipline or element of professional training" as it was the case in Western universities. The debate, for instance, between Hesychasts and Anti-hesychasts of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in the East clearly illustrates this different approach to theology.

<sup>10</sup> Yannis Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca* (Bologna: EDB, 1992); Dimitrios Balanos, *History of the Faculty of Theology. Anniversary of the University of Athens 1837-1937* (Pyrso: Athens, 1937), 13-14.

<sup>11</sup> *Dogmatics of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, (Athens, 1907).

<sup>12</sup> Androutsos, *Dogmatics*, 12ff.

<sup>13</sup> As he clearly put it, *Dogmatics*, 52: "God is *actus purus*."

<sup>14</sup> On the importance of Gregory Palamas's theology for Orthodoxy, see the most recent and highly informative study by Russell, *Gregory Palamas*.

<sup>15</sup> Konstantinos Dyoouniotis (1872-1943), a professor at the University of Athens, responded to Androutsos's call for dialogue on important theological themes in his *Dogmatics* by publishing a harsh theological critique on a variety of topics addressed

(1935-2024),<sup>16</sup> his work remained for a long time quite influential in Athens, as his successor, another giant of academic theology, the late Panayotis Trembelas (1886-1977)<sup>17</sup> witnesses.

Trembelas's three-volume *Dogmatics* (first published in Greek between 1959 and 1962)<sup>18</sup> is the last substantial work in the field by an Orthodox scholar, reflecting in length and structure the great Western dogmatic treatises of his time (e.g., Karl Barth).

Trembelas, while not Androutsos's formal student, praises his predecessor for clearly expressing the Orthodox faith systematically and comprehensively. Without relying on Androutsos's application of the scholastic method and theology, Trembelas quietly acknowledges the developing patristic revival of his time, first with the French *ressourcement* in the West and subsequently with the neopatristic synthesis in the East. In contrast to Androutsos, Trembelas takes an important, perhaps unintentional, move by introducing an anthology of patristic references not only to his dogmatics but also to his entire oeuvre, including substantial commentaries on the Bible. Trembelas rationally analyzes patristic texts, primarily using them as proof for Christian ideas. Yet he may be considered a neopatristic theologian for bringing patristic literature to the forefront in a significant way.

---

in Androutsos's book, titled "A critique to Christos Androutsos's *Dogmatics*" (Athens: Vlastos, 1907). Dyovouniotis's critique prompted Androutsos to respond boldly with a pamphlet titled "The Assistant Professor Dyovouniotis Judged on Doctrine and Logic," (1907), who felt his stature was challenged. During this lively debate, epistemological and theological issues (such as God's substance, creation theology, and so on) were examined. As a result, Dyovouniotis issued a more critical critique of Androutsos's work, titled "A necessary response," 1908. Regardless of each author's worth, one must accept that they both operate inside a scholastic framework, according to Western theological patterns, and are unable to discern or describe some "orthodox" criteria.

<sup>16</sup> In this massive *Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Identity in the Modern*, trans. P. Chamberas-N. Russell (Brookline MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), here at 202-206, 326-327, Christos Yannaras, a well-known Greek philosopher and theologian, offers a critical overview of the important trends, figures, and currents in contemporary Greek Orthodox theology from the fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453) to theology in the 1960s.

<sup>17</sup> For an overall assessment of Trembelas's contribution to Orthodox theology, see Nikolaos Asproulis (ed) *Panayotis Trembelas: Between tradition and renewal, between science and mission*, (Volos: Ekdotike Demetriadou, 2016) (in Greek); Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca*, 227-241; Aidan Nichols, *Light from the East. Authors and Themes in Orthodox Theology*, (London: Sheed & Ward, 1999), 98, and Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West*, 206-216, 327-329.

<sup>18</sup> Panagiotis N. Trembelas, *Dogmatique de l'Église Orthodoxe Catholique*, trad. Par Arch. Pierre Dumont, OSB, (Bruges: Chevetogne/Desclee de Brouwer, 1966-8).



However, it is vital not to overstate this move, as it still entails a “theology of repetition” of what the fathers said at the time. What is still missing is “what the fathers mean” by what they have stated or “what the fathers would have to say today.”<sup>19</sup> Trembelas, like his predecessor, is not only familiar with the Western scholastic tradition, but he is more at ease with classic Western concepts such as divine simplicity, *actus purus*,<sup>20</sup> and the like. At the same time, the famous distinction between essence and energies does not play an important role in his theology or his understanding of *theosis*, which is considered rather an ethical accomplishment on the part of human. He, like Androutsos, does not mention *Philokalia*, but he displays great dissatisfaction with the disproportionate emphasis on apophaticism in theology within monastic circles during his time. In his most mature work, Trembelas does not appear to acknowledge or engage with the significant changes occurring in Orthodox theology during his time, including methodological and agenda shifts (such as the *existential* interpretation of patristic thought, the shift to a *eucharistic* understanding of the church’s identity, emphasis on

---

<sup>19</sup> Cf. John Zizioulas, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, D. Knight – K. Nikolopulu (eds.), (London: T&T Clark, 2009), x. One can say that overall, the work of Zizioulas revolves around the existential interpretation of tradition, to find the point of “correlation” with the surrounding reality and the urgent needs of humanity.

<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, volume 1 of his *Dogmatics* (Zoe publications, Athens, 1959), 198 (I use here the original Greek edition). The whole structure, methodology, and bibliography of this work point to a scholastic understanding of theology, in an age where ressourcement theology has already been put forth in the West and is destined to lead to unexpected developments in the upcoming Vatican II (1962-65). At the same time Trembelas seems to ignore in this *magnum opus* the new developments taking place in Orthodox theology of his time, especially in the Russian diaspora, but also after the ground-breaking First Congress of Orthodox theology which was held in Athens (1936) with the participation, of the most eminent theologians of Orthodox theology of that period (among others, Georges Florovsky, Sergii Bulgakov et. al.). This conference takes place, just three years before Trembelas is appointed professor at the University of Athens, and will be a real milestone for the renewal of Orthodox theology, as it was inviting to a rediscovery of the criteria and prerequisites of Orthodox theology (a call for a return to the “patristic ethos” of theology). It is noteworthy here that, going through the Proceedings of the Conference, it is not possible to draw a safe conclusion from any direct or indirect reference to Trembelas’s physical attendance at the Conference. At the same time, however, Florovsky, in an unpublished letter, speaks of the reactions he met, from the side of traditional theologians, regarding the views he expressed in his presentations, about the need to return to the patristic ethos of theology. See “S’ezd pravoslavnykh bogoslovov v Afinakh (29. XI.–4. XII. 1936),” as cited in Paul Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 177-8 (fn. 24).

*ontology* and theology of *personhood*, openness to the world, dialogue with philosophy and science, interest in the *Philocalic* tradition, renewed interest in the theology of icons, etc.). He appears to follow the same theological model he used at the beginning of his career. In this context, he became embroiled in a heated academic debate (similar to the Androutsos-Dyovouniotis debate of the early twentieth century) with fr. John Romanides (1927-2001),<sup>21</sup> over the latter's support for the admittedly pioneering, for his time, thesis on original sin, a controversy that appears to have ultimately revolved around the criteria of interpreting patristic texts. At the Second Congress of Orthodox Theological Schools in Athens in 1976, Trembelas, despite his elderly age, voiced a warm welcome of Florovsky's contribution to the rediscovery of the patristic ethos of doing theology in front of the leading representatives of Orthodox theology at the time.<sup>22</sup>

Since then, Androutsos and Trembelas (together with other academic theologians such as Zikos Rossis, Nicholas Damalas, Ioannis Karmiris, and Andreas Theodorou) have been acknowledged as significant leaders in a theological school that takes a systematic and scholastic view of tradition. This theological approach highlights the significance of reason and emphasizes cataphatic theological discourse, viewing theology as *philosophia perennis*. Academic theologians are willing to incorporate conventional Western notions and the ideas of important medieval thinkers into their work<sup>23</sup> while attempting to defend them from an Orthodox standpoint. Until now, academic theology has approached the fathers as a collective subject, without active consciousness, as a mere conceptual tool, one would argue, towards an end, without necessarily recognizing an absolute, authoritative, or normative character in them. Theology is defined as a human endeavor aimed at "comprehension of dogmas."<sup>24</sup> School theology, with its strong

---

<sup>21</sup> Compare the relevant polemical "correspondence" between Trembelas and Romanides, where it seems that Trembelas tries to interpret from an orthodox perspective relevant scholastic concepts and teachings, see Fr. Georgios Metallinos (ed.) *Handbook of the Correspondence between Fr. Ioannis S. Romanides & Prof. Panayotis N. Trembelas* (Athens: Armos, 2009), 91. etc., 132-135 and passim.

<sup>22</sup> Panayotis N. Trembelas, "Address to the 2nd Conference of Orthodox theology," in: Savvas Agourides (ed.) *Proceedings of the Second Conference of Orthodox theology*, Athens August, 19-29, 1976, (Athens, 1980), 20.

<sup>23</sup> It goes without saying that a particular central figure in both debates between Androutsos-Dyovouniotis and Trembelas-Romanides is the great scholastic figure, Thomas Aquinas, which is used either *pro* or *against* depending on the starting point of each theologian.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Ladouceur, *Modern Orthodox Theology. Behold I Make All Things New*, (London-New York: T&T Clark, 2019), 126.

intellectualism, uses the fathers as *proof-texts* to buttress the scholastic edifice, whether in opposition to or in dialogue with the West.

### **1.1.5 The First Congress of Orthodox Theology (1936): The Awakening of Contemporary Orthodox Theology**

However, the academic environment described above does not reveal the complete picture. In addition, it does not sufficiently explain Zizioulas's background. At the beginning of the twentieth century, following the experience of the tragic consequences of the Great War (1914-18), and the intense desire of Christians of all traditions for peaceful coexistence and dialogue (one can recall here the 1902, and 1920 encyclicals of the Ecumenical Patriarchate),<sup>25</sup> Orthodox theologians worldwide realized the need to overcome introversion and uncritical dependence on western standards, looking for new ways of describing and even defining Orthodox identity. Along these lines, the conference of 1936, the First Congress of Orthodox Theology,<sup>26</sup> in which eminent theologians and thinkers, representing important theological institutions from all over the world would gather in Athens, was intended to be a watershed moment in the direction of the necessary and urgent theological renaissance of global Orthodoxy in midst of modernity. This is when the crucial role of Amilkas Alivizatos (1887-1969) emerges, as a figure that might be considered the Greek counterpart to Georges Florovsky.

Alivizatos, who was already a professor of canon law and pastoral theology at the University of Athens, had studied abroad with prominent figures in Western theology, including Adolph von Harnack (1851-1930). He was actively involved in the early stages of the Ecumenical Movement and played a crucial role in organizing the conference, which had a significant impact on Orthodox theology in Greece and beyond.

The decision to convene the conference in Athens was not taken quickly. It marked the climax of the Ecumenical Movement's steady evolution, which eventually led to the establishment of the World Council of Churches in 1948, and laid the groundwork for convening this momentum meeting in Athens. As Alivizatos famously notes: "We owe the opportunity of studying

---

<sup>25</sup> On this see Fr. George Tsetsis, "Ecumenical Dialogue in the perspective of the Ecumenical Patriarchate," in: Pantelis Kalaitzidis et. al. (eds.) *Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism. Resources for Theological Education*, (Volos: Volos Academy Publications in cooperation with WCC Publications, Geneva, and Regnum Books International, Oxford, 2014), 322.

<sup>26</sup> Hamilcar Alivizatos (dir.), *Procès-Verbaux du premier Congrès de Théologie Orthodoxe 29 Nov-6 Dec 1936*, (Athens: Pyrsos, 1939).

and manifesting and realizing the idea of the Conference to the Ecumenical Movement.”<sup>27</sup> In this context, Alivizatos offered the notion of increasing co-operation among Orthodox theologians who had previously met at various international events. The purpose was to coordinate collaborative efforts for the progress of theology within Orthodoxy. As a result, during inter-Christian gatherings in Copenhagen (1922), Athens (1930), Cambridge (1932), and Chambezy (1935), representatives from various Orthodox theological schools unanimously agreed to hold the inaugural theological conference in Athens at the prestigious Orthodox theological school of the University of Athens. Given the pre-conference climate and the problem of theological studies being influenced by Western scholastic patterns, Alivizatos underlined the importance of establishing acceptable hermeneutical and methodological standards. The goal was to help Orthodox theology develop its theological perspective without blindly adopting Western patterns, with the patristic tradition of the early church acting as the basic starting point.<sup>28</sup>

Purifying Orthodox theology from external influences and methodologies was crucial, as they determine the vision of reality and the theological responses to current concerns. Alivizatos emphasizes the importance of establishing Orthodox theology by rigorous research rather than instinct. The major goal of the Athens conference was to rediscover and reestablish the patristic foundation of Orthodox theology, free from just imitating Western models.<sup>29</sup>

The First Congress of Orthodox Theology, which included major thinkers such as Georges Florovsky and Sergii Bulgakov, saw a considerable effort to determine the future of Orthodox theology, notably within Greek Orthodoxy. The congress attempted to free theology from the long-standing influence of Western and scholastic traditions, sometimes known as the “Babylonian captivity,” and to restore its real Orthodox and ecclesial nature by drawing from the teachings of the church fathers.

### **1.1.6 From the Athens Conference of 1936 to the “Theology of the 60s”**

It is vital to recognize that mental and life transformations do not always happen immediately. Despite Florovsky’s neo-patristic project<sup>30</sup> and Alivizatos’s strong emphasis on the patristic tradition as a distinguishing feature

---

<sup>27</sup> *The Modern Position of Orthodox Theology*, (Athens, 1937), 9 (in Greek).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Halmikar Alivizatos, “Modern theological trends in Greek Orthodoxy,” *Theologia* 20/1 (1949): 86.

<sup>29</sup> Alivizatos, “Modern theological trends,” 86.

<sup>30</sup> Florovsky’s neo-patristic program was widely presented during the First Congress of Orthodox theology in Athens with his two presentations “Western Influences in

to help Orthodox theology distinguish itself from scholastic patterns, their impact on subsequent Greek academic theology, particularly after the 1936 conference, was less than expected. Nonetheless, the foundation of academic theology had already begun to show signs of instability or “cracks,” indicating that a new period for Greek theology would eventually arise.

According to Yiannis Spiteris (1940-),<sup>31</sup> the former Catholic Archbishop of Corfu Island in Greece, and historian of contemporary Greek theology, Alivizatos’s article titled: “Modern Theological Trends in Greek Orthodoxy” (1949) marks the starting point of the activation of the neo-patristic program within Greek theology, in other words of the beginning of a golden period for the twentieth century (Greek) Orthodox theology. According to Alivizatos, it is time for “patristic theology [to be] recognized as the right point of departure for Greek theology,”<sup>32</sup> following a long period in which the church fathers were used as proof-texts. The impact of the Athens conference appeared to gain traction, though at a slower rate than a modern historian of ideas would expect. And this would be simply the beginning.

In 1957, John Romanides, a Greek American theologian and former student of Florovsky at Harvard University, delivered his doctoral thesis on ancestral sin to the theological faculty of Athens. This was despite strong objections from academic theologians such as Trembelas and Panayotis Bratsiotis (1889-1982), who engaged in a heated correspondence with Romanides about the church fathers’ authority compared to the scholastics on the same subject. The most noteworthy component of this long study is the shift in the interpretation of the Greek patristic tradition. Today, it is regarded as more than just a collection of proof-texts; it offers a way to approach theology from an Orthodox perspective. The debate between Trembelas and Romanides vividly displays the opposing views of two generations of Greek theologians on the patristic corpus: one group regards it as a collection of proof-texts, while the other sees it as mystical guidance toward *theosis*. Despite Romanides’s later flaws (his adoption of a strong anti-west-

---

Russian Theology” and “Patristics and Modern Theology” in: Hamilcar S. Alivizatos (ed.) *Procès-Verbaux du premier congrès de théologie orthodoxe à Athènes. 29 Novembre - 6 Décembre 1936*, 212-231 and 238-242 respectively.

<sup>31</sup> Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa*, 225-226. And Norman Russell, “Modern Greek Theologians and the Greek Fathers,” *Philosophy and Theology* 18/1 (2006): 79.

<sup>32</sup> Alivizatos, “Modern theological trends,” 86.

ern spirit by using the fathers not as proof-texts, but as a polemical caricature against the so-called heretic West),<sup>33</sup> his study on “Ancestral Sin”<sup>34</sup> (1957 in Greek) served as a catalyst for treating patristic tradition, as a living deposit capable of providing concrete answers to the church’s current challenges. Romanides’s emphasis on Palamite theology, particularly the essence–energies distinction as well as on the priority of apophaticism in the theological discourse, would influence at large, along with Vladimir Lossky’s work,<sup>35</sup> how the next generations of Greek theologians received the normative character of patristic theology.

Since then, several occurrences have confirmed this shift in Greek theology toward a creative reception of patristic heritage: A theological conference in Thessaloniki in 1959 dedicated to Gregory Palamas’s anniversary of his death (1359),<sup>36</sup> where Florovsky was invited to give a lecture,<sup>37</sup> along with the starting of the publication of Palamas’s works in 1960 by Panayotis Chrestou and his team would confirm the gradual change in both academic

---

<sup>33</sup> To this end, one might consult his book *Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine. An Interplay between Theology and Society* (Brookline Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1981), where Romanides abandoned the theological reception of the history of theology he followed in his early career for a more cultural, if not ideological, understanding of patristic tradition, and the gradually different developments that have taken place between East and West. For a bold critical evaluation of Romanides’s contribution to theology, see Pantelis Kalaitzidis, “Greekness and Anti-Westernism in ‘Theology of the 60s’,” Doctoral Thesis (2008), and Daniel Payne, *The Revival of Political Hesychasm in contemporary Orthodox thought. The Political Hesychasm of John Romanides and Christos Yannaras* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011).

<sup>34</sup> Ridgewood, NJ, Zephyr Publishing, 2002.

<sup>35</sup> For a detailed critical discussion of Lossky’s theology, see Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God: Apophaticism and Divine-Human Communion* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

<sup>36</sup> For the proceedings, see *Commemoration of the six hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Gregory Palamas* (Thessaloniki, 1959) (in Greek).

<sup>37</sup> See the abridged form of the presentation titled “St. Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers” in: Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*, 105-121.