Analogia

St Gregory Palamas

Special Series – Part 4

"For if the deifying gifts of the Spirit in the saints are 'created', and are 'like a habit' or a 'natural imitation', [...] then the saints are not deified beyond nature, nor are they born of God, nor are they spirit, as having been born of the Spirit, and, one spirit with the Lord, being joined to him."

Analogia is a peer-reviewed academic journal dedicated to the scholarly exposition and discussion of the theological principles of the Christian faith. A distinguishing feature of this journal will be the effort to advance a dialogue between Orthodox Christianity and the views and concerns of Western modes of theological and philosophical thought. A key secondary objective is to provide a scholarly context for the further examination and study of common Christian sources. Though theological and philosophical topics of interest are the primary focus of the journal, the content of *Analogia* will not be restricted to material that originates exclusively from these disciplines. Insofar as the journal seeks to cultivate theological discourse and engagement with the urgent challenges and questions posed by modernity, topics from an array of disciplines will also be considered, including the natural and social sciences. As such, solicited and unsolicited submissions of high academic quality containing topics of either a theological or interdisciplinary nature will be encouraged. In an effort to facilitate dialogue, provision will be made for peer-reviewed critical responses to articles that deal with high-interest topics. *Analogia* strives to provide an interdisciplinary forum wherein Christian theology is further explored and assumes the role of an interlocutor with the multiplicity of difficulties facing modern humanity.

EDITORIAL

This volume is the fourth and final of a four-volume special series dedicated to the theology of St Gregory Palamas. In this last volume, I feel obliged to thank once again all the authors for their original contributions, which, I think, are of decisive importance for contemporary Palamite research. Taken as a whole, this special series forms one of the most important scholarly tributes to Palamite thought over the last decades.

This last volume begins with David Bradshaw's excellent study, which undertakes the difficult task of describing the nature of the distinction between essence and energies in Palamas' theology. Is this distinction *kat' epinoian* or not? Bradshaw's path-breaking and polymath scholarship shows how subtle the Palamite position ultimately is. I think that no future research on this question can afford to ignore this study.

Marcus Plested, in his paper, offers some new and fascinating insights into an underexplored aspect of St Gregory Palamas' teaching: the nature of the life to come. His teaching on the spiritual body, his connection of the future resurrection with the possible participation in Christ's ascension, and his assimilation of the Dionysian and Cappadocian concept of *epektasis*, broaden our understanding of his thought on that crucial point.

Christos Terezis and Lydia Petridou, in a co-authored article, attempt a carefully thought-out methodological analysis of the Palamite theology of the union and distinction between the divine essence, the divine persons, and the divine energies. The authors demonstrate how the Trinity forms the fundamental ontological reality underlying any discourse about God and his relations with creation.

Miroslav Grisko offers a well-elaborated treatise on the ontological meaning of St Maximus the Confessor's eschatological teaching, where history, ethics, and natural and gnomic will are perceptively interwoven. This article has been added to this volume as a Maximian comment on the question of Palamite eschatology that Marcus Plested has brought to our attention.

Finally in my article, I make a systematic effort to read Maximus the Confessor's doctrine of pleasure and pain along with Gregory Palamas' doctrine of energies in a modern existential context.

– *Nikolaos Loudovikos*, Senior Editor

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Essence and Energies: What Kind of Distinction?

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There is much confusion among scholars over the precise nature of the essence-energies distinction. Various authors have identified it as a Thomistic real minor distinction, a Thomistic rational distinction with a foundation in the object, and a Scotistic formal distinction, whereas others deny that any of these descriptions properly apply. The issue is further complicated by the tendency of some of Palamas' closest followers, such as Philotheos Kokkinos and John Kantakouzenos, to describe the distinction as 'conceptual' (*κατ' ἐπίνοιαν*), notwithstanding that Palamas himself seems to have avoided describing it in this way. Such varying interpretations point to the need for a careful consideration of the history and meaning of the various types of distinction at play, both Greek patristic and Latin scholastic. After offering such a history, I conclude with some thoughts regarding the ways in which Palamas' own distinction does, and does not, conform to these various models.

The exact nature of the essence-energies distinction has been controversial ever since the time of Palamas. Within twentieth-century scholarship, this subject was first given prominence by the great Roman Catholic scholar Martin Jugie. Jugie took it as obvious that Palamas meant to distinguish between the divine essence and energies as between two *res*, or, in other words, that he intended what the scholastics call a real distinction.[1] He was followed on this point by Sébastien Guichardan, who argued specifically that the distinction between essence and energies is a Thomistic real minor distinction.[2] In the subsequent decades, numerous other authors accepted that Palamas intended a 'real' distinction.[3] It must be admitted, however, that they

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[1] Martin Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire', *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 11, pt. 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932), col. 1735–76, esp. col. 1750, 1755–56, 1760–64.

[2] Sébastien Guichardan, *Le problème de la simplicité divine en orient et en occident au XIVe et XVe siècles: Grégoire Palamas, Duns Scot, Georges Scholarios* (Lyons: Anciens Établissements Legendre, 1933), 93, 105–109. The largely critical review of this work by Vénance Grumel, *Echos d'Orient* 34 (1935): 84–96, repeats this point without criticism.

[3] For example, Basil Krivosheine, *The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas* (London: Coldwell; reprint from *The Eastern Churches Quarterly*, 1938), 32; Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1976; orig. pub. in French, 1944), 76–77 and 'The Theology of Light in the Thought of St. Gregory Palamas' (orig. pub. in French, 1945) in idem, *In the Image and Likeness of God* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 45–69, at 56; Georges Florovsky, 'St. Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers,' *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 5 (1959/60): 119–31, at 130; idem, 'St. Athanasius' Concept of Creation', *Studia Patristica* 6 (1962): 36–57, at

often did not define this term or even associate it specifically with the scholastics, so their exact meaning is not always clear.

Other interpreters have identified Palamas' distinction with the formal distinction of Duns Scotus. This is a view that Jugie and Guichardan argued can be found in some works of Patriarch Gennadios Scholarios.[4] In modern times it was revived by Gérard Philips and has been endorsed by a number of others.[5] Most recently it has been vigorously defended by John Milbank and just as vigorously criticized by Nikolaos Loudovikos.[6] Mark Spencer also takes this view in part, although he limits its scope to those energies that are 'absolute attributes' as opposed to those that are contingent acts.[7]

Another important recent development has been renewed attention to Palamas' followers during the last century of Byzantium, both as figures important in their own right and for the light they shed on Palamas' thought. Jugie offered a preliminary history of the Palamite controversy in which he alleged that the prevalent trend

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57; John Romanides, 'Notes on the Palamite Controversy and Related Topics', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 6 (1960/61): 186–205, at 190; Kallistos Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed: The Apophatic Way and the Essence-Energies Distinction', *Eastern Churches Review* 7 (1975): 125–36, at 134; Gerry Russo, 'Rahner and Palamas: A Unity of Grace', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 32 (1988): 157–80, at 175 (but cf. 178); Joost van Rossum, 'Deification in Palamas and Aquinas', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 47 (2003): 365–82, at 371, 373. Of these authors, Krivosheine, accepts the identification with a real minor distinction, but says it is 'merely analogical'. Ware cites from Krivosheine the alleged statement of Palamas that the distinction is a *πραγματικὴ διάκρισις*, but Krivosheine cites no source and in more recent writings Ware has not, so far as I am aware, repeated this claim. The others speak of a 'real distinction' without further definition.

⁴ Martin Jugie, 'Palamite (controverse)', *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 11, pt. 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932), col. 1777–1818, at 1800–01; S. Guichardan, *Le problème de la simplicité divine*, 188–90, 204–05. See also the thorough discussion in Christiaan Kappes, *The Theology of the Divine Essence and Energies in George-Gennadios Scholarios* (PhD dissertation, University of Thessaloniki, 2017), available at https://bcs-us.academia.edu/ChristiaanKappes (accessed September 2018).

⁵ Gérard Philips, 'La grâce chez les orientaux', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 48 (1972): 37–50, at 38, 47; Juan-Miguel Garrigues, 'L'énergie divine et la grâce chez Maxime le Confesseur', *Istina* 19 (1974): 272–96, at 280; Georges Barrois, 'Palamism Revisited', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 19 (1975): 211–31, at 223; David Coffey, 'The Palamite Doctrine of God: A New Perspective', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 32 (1988): 329–58, at 334–35.

⁶ See John Milbank, 'Ecumenical Orthodoxy: A Response to Nicholas Loudovikos' in *Encounter between Eastern Orthodoxy and Radical Orthodoxy*, eds A. Pabst and C. Schneider (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 156–64; idem, 'Christianity and Platonism in East and West' in *Divine Essence and Divine Energies: Ecumenical Reflections on the Presence of God in Eastern Orthodoxy*, eds C. Athanasopoulos and C. Schneider (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2013), 158–209; Nikolaos Loudovikos, 'Striving for Participation: Palamite Analogy as Dialogical Syn-energy and Thomist Analogy as Emanational Similitude', *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 122–48; idem, 'Being and Essence Revisited: Reciprocal Logoi and Energies in Maximus the Confessor and Thomas Aquinas, and the Genesis of the Self-referring Subject', *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 72 (2016): 117–46. Christian Kaapes, J. Isaac Godd, and T. Alexander Giltner, 'Palamas among the Scholastics: A Review Essay Discussing D. Bradshaw, C. Athanasopoulos, C. Schneider et al., *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*', *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 55 (2014): 175–220 also points to numerous parallels between Palamas and Scotus, although without specifically addressing the nature of the essence-energies distinction.

⁷ Mark K. Spencer, 'The Flexibility of Divine Simplicity: Aquinas, Scotus, Palamas', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 57 (2017): 123–39.

among these figures was to back away from Palamas' real distinction.[8] In recent years the editing and publication of new texts has prompted renewed inquiry. The most thorough contribution to date is undoubtedly that of John Demetracopoulos.[9] Like Guichardan, Demetracopoulos sees Palamas as advocating a real minor distinction. He further sees the description of the distinction as 'conceptual' (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν) by Palamas' earliest followers, such as the Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos, as fundamentally a way of restating this understanding.[10]

Demetracopoulos draws a sharp line between these followers and those influenced by Byzantine Thomism, beginning with the former emperor, John VI Kantakouzenos, in his correspondence with Paul, the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople. According to Demetracopoulos, Kantakouzenos and his successors reinterpreted the distinction *kat' epinoian* (a phrase that they, like Kokkinos, use to describe the essence-energies distinction) as a rational distinction with a foundation in the object (*cum fundamento in re*), thereby bringing their own form of Palamism into line with Thomism.[11] Antoine Lévy, who has also written on this issue, agrees regarding Kantakouzenos but draws no line between him and Palamas or his early followers, seeing a rational distinction *cum fundamento in re* as the consistent teaching of the entire Palamite school.[12] Nikolaos Loudovikos too would seem to be roughly of this view; he understands *kat' epinoian* as meaning 'made by mind', and takes Palamas and his followers to assert a distinction that is in no way 'ontological' but merely mental, like that between the existence and attitude of a personal subject.[13] Presumably, in referring to the distinction as 'made by mind' he has in mind something like the scholastic rational distinction.

Finally, yet another contingent denies that the scholastic distinctions are of any use at all in understanding Palamas, whose thought it sees as *sui generis*.[14] The wide disagreement we have noted arguably lends some support to this conclusion. On the other hand, in itself it is merely a negative statement, and does nothing to clarify the

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[8] M. Jugie, 'Palamite (controverse)' (above, n. 4).

[9] John A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed: Palamite Interpretations of the Distinction between God's "Essence" and "Energies" in Late Byzantium' in *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History 1204–1500*, eds M. Hinterberger and C. Schabel (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 263–372.

[10] See J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed', 272–76, 291–92. He also includes in this group the later Palamite, Joseph Bryennios (287–91).

[11] See J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed', 292–305, 369–70.

[12] See Antoine Lévy, 'Lost in *Translatio*? *Diakrisis kat' epinoian* as a Main Issue in the Discussions between Fourteenth-century Palamites and Thomists', *The Thomist* 76 (2012): 431–71, esp. 434–41, 467–71.

[13] See N. Loudovikos, 'Striving for Participation', 127; idem, 'Being and Essence', 121. See also Anna Williams, *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 139–48, which suggests (without quite asserting) that the distinction is 'nominal' rather than 'real'.

[14] For example, John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974; orig. published in French, 1959), 225–27; André de Halleux, 'Palamisme et scolastique: exclusivisme dogmatique ou pluriformité théologique?' *Revue théologique de Louvain* 4 (1973): 409–42. Many of the authors cited earlier (especially among the Orthodox) would probably also hold this view, although they use scholastic terminology as a concession to western audiences.

nature of Palamas' thought or to relate it in an illuminating way to other forms of theology.

In view of this widespread disagreement, I believe it may be of some use to step back and ask about the purpose and value of the various distinctions that are at play. Both the distinction *kat' epinoian* and the various scholastic distinctions have a history, and it is only in light of that history that their application (or lack thereof) to the essence-energies distinction can be properly assessed. I will therefore spend the greater part of this essay recounting their development and the range of their traditional applications. Having done so I will then turn to Palamas to ask what light, if any, they shed on his thought.

Epinoia: Early Stages

The history of *epinoia* prior to the Cappadocians has been addressed adequately by others and need not be repeated here.[15] Broadly speaking, *epinoia* includes the faculty, the act, and the resulting conception formed by the process of reflecting upon and analyzing the deliverances of sense perception. Since this process can include taking things perceived and recombining them so as to produce fictions, such as giants and goat-stags, some of its products are merely imaginary. More interestingly for our purposes, its deliverances also include different ways of conceptualizing or describing a given object. The Stoic Posidonius, for example, says that substance (οὐσία) and matter (ὕλη) are the same in reality (κατὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν) and differ solely in *epinoia*.[16] By this he apparently means that the same thing is called substance in that it exists, and matter in that it is subject to change.

Such an analysis was occasionally applied to theological matters, although not in any sustained way. Philo of Alexandria says that *kyrios* and *despotēs* are two names of the divine Ruling Power which are the same in their substratum (ὑποκείμενον), but differ *kat' epinoian* insofar as they have different meanings.[17] Plotinus says that Intellect is 'all one nature divided into parts [i.e., *genera*] by our conceptions

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[15] See G. Christopher Stead, 'Logic and the Application of Names to God' in L.F. Mateos Seco and J.L. Bastero, eds, *El Contra Eunomium I' en la producción literaria de Gregorio de Nisa: VI Coloquio Internacional sobre Gregorio de Nisa* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1988), 303–20; Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 241–45; Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 192–94; John A. Demetracopoulos, 'Glossogony or Epistemology? Eunomius of Cyzicus' and Basil of Caesarea's Stoic Concept of ΕΠΙΝΟΙΑ and Its Misrepresentation by Gregory of Nyssa', *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II*, eds L. Karfíková, S. Douglass, and J. Zachhuber (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 387–97; Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 59–66, 149–52; Mark Delcogliano, *Basil of Caesarea's Anti-Eunomian Theory of Names* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 163–64, 171–76.

[16] G.C. Stead, 'Logic', 311.

[17] Philo of Alexandria, *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things* 22–23; cf. G.C. Stead, 'Logic', 311–12. Another citation offered by G.C. Stead (*Questions on Exodus* II.63) appears to be a mistake, as the phrase quoted does not appear in the text.

(ἐπινοίαις)'.[18] This latter statement requires some clarification. Despite his reference to 'our conceptions', Plotinus goes on to argue that the 'parts' of Intellect thus distinguished—being, rest, motion, sameness, and difference—are intrinsic to reality as such.[19] This is what one would expect, given that these 'parts' are in fact the five 'greatest kinds' of Plato's *Sophist*. Evidently, then, *epinoia* here is a matter of discovery rather than invention.[20]

Within early Christian literature, the most prominent reference to *epinoia* was undoubtedly Origen's treatment of the different titles of Christ as *epinoiai*. He includes in this group not only those that are clearly relational (such as 'light of men', 'shepherd', and so on) but also those that presumably pertain to Christ in his eternal being, such as 'wisdom', 'word', 'life', and 'truth'.[21]

Another significant early discussion occurs in Origen's great critic, Methodius of Olympus. In the course of critiquing Origen's view of the resurrection, Methodius distinguishes three ways in which things can be separated: in thought (ἐπινοίᾳ), in actuality (ἐνεργείᾳ) but not subsistence (ὑποστάσει), and in both actuality and subsistence. An example of separation in thought is that of matter from its qualities; of that in actuality but not subsistence, when a statue is melted down and its shape is separated so that the shape no longer exists; of that in actuality and subsistence, when two things that had been mingled (such as wheat and barley) are physically drawn apart.[22] This is a more developed version of the commonplace Stoic distinction between difference *kat' epinoian* and *kata tēn hypostasin* which we have already observed in Posidonius.[23]

As is well known, *epinoia* first became a topic of discussion in its own right during the Eunomian debate. St Basil initially describes *epinoia* in a way that emphasizes the role of the mind in dividing what otherwise appears simple: 'whatever seems simple and singular upon a general survey by the mind, but which appears complex and plural upon detailed scrutiny and thereby is divided by the mind—this sort of thing is said to be divided in thought (ἐπινοίᾳ) alone'.[24] Although he notes that imaginary constructions are said to be produced by *epinoia*, plainly his focus is on

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[18] Plotinus, *Enneads* VI.2.3.22–23.

[19] Plotinus, *Enneads* VI.2.7–8.

[20] Compare the discussion of this passage in J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Glossogony', 389–90.

[21] Origen remains non-committal, however, regarding precisely which of these titles (other than Wisdom) would have applied to the Son in the absence of the Incarnation; see Origen, *Commentary on John* I.19.118–1.20.123.

[22] Methodius of Olympus, *On Resurrection* III.6 (GCS 27:397). My thanks to Christiaan Kappes for drawing my attention to this passage.

[23] See further examples and discussion in Regiland Eldred Witt, 'ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΙΣ', in *Amicitiae Corolla: A Volume of Essays Presented to James Rendel Harris*, ed. H.G. Wood (London: University of London Press, 1933), 319–43. As Witt notes, this distinction is also found in Philo and Origen.

[24] Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius* I.6. For the Greek see *Contre Eunome*, vol. 1, eds B. Sesboüé et al. (Paris: Cerf, 1982), 184.22–25, and for the English Mark DelCogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, trans., *St. Basil of Caesarea: Against Eunomius* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 97.

its role in discerning that which is in some sense truly present in the object. Besides imaginary objects, his other examples are the analysis of a body into its constituent qualities—color, shape, solidity, size, and so on—and the many ways of naming grain such as 'fruit', 'seed', and 'nourishment'. Both, he says, are the result of 'more subtle and precise reflection' upon a concept that first arises from sense perception.[25] The subsequent chapter goes on to apply the same analysis to terms used of Christ and of God. The different names Christ applies to himself, such as 'door', 'vine', and 'light', are given in accordance with different *epinoiai* based upon his different activities and relations to creatures. Terms used of God, such as 'unbegotten' and 'incorruptible', are likewise formed by considering through *epinoia* different aspects of the divine life.[26]

As the *Against Eunomius* proceeds, the linkage between *epinoia* and activity (ἐνέργεια) becomes stronger. Basil sees Eunomius' refusal to 'consider anything at all [about God] by way of conceptualization (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν)' as leading to the absurd conclusion that all attributes of God refer to the divine substance. He observes that it is absurd to suppose that God's creative power, providence, and foreknowledge are His substance, summarizing the point by asking, 'is it not ridiculous to regard every activity (ἐνέργειαν) of His as His substance?'[27] Evidently, just as in the case of Christ, the different names formed by *epinoia* are based upon different activities and relations to creatures. As Basil adds later, 'we are led up from the activities of God (τῶν ἐνεργειῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ)... and so come in this way to an understanding of His goodness and wisdom'.[28]

Two further passages of Basil were particularly significant for later developments. In the course of criticizing Eunomius' view that 'the Father is greater than I' (John 14:28) implies a temporal priority, Basil observes that there is a natural order between cause and effect even when they are simultaneous. He cites the case of fire and its light, observing that 'we do not separate these things from one another by an interval, but through reasoning (τῷ λογισμῷ) we consider as prior the cause to the effect', and that the same is true in the case of the Father and the Son.[29] Despite the absence of the term *epinoia*, it is clear that the seed is here planted for seeing the distinction between the Persons of the Trinity as *kat' epinoian*. If we recall that Basil elsewhere emphasizes the lack of any interval (διάστημα) between the divine Persons, whereas human persons are separated by place and external circumstances,

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[25] Basil, *Against Eunomius* I.6 (Sesboüé 186.42–43; DelCogliano 98).

[26] Basil, *Against Eunomius* I.7 (Sesboüé 192; DelCogliano 100).

[27] Basil, *Against Eunomius* I.8 (Sesboüé 194.24–25; DelCogliano 101).

[28] Basil, *Against Eunomius* I.14 (Sesboüé 220; DelCogliano 113). The *Against Eunomius* leaves it unclear whether the terms said of God are merely formed from observing the activities (as 'hydrogen' names something involved in the process of making water) or actually name the activities or operations themselves. I believe Basil's Epistle 234 makes it clear that he intends the latter, but nothing hinges on that here.

[29] Basil, *Against Eunomius* I.20 (Sesboüé 246; DelCogliano 121, slightly modified).

it is not hard to see how this line of thought might be carried further to see the unity of the Trinity as real (πράγματι), whereas that of created persons is *kat' epinoian*.[30]

The second passage occurs in *Against Eunomius* IV, a work commonly attributed today to Didymus the Blind or Apollinaris but accepted by the Byzantines as by Basil.[31] The author argues that the notoriously problematic verse, 'the Lord created me the beginning of his works' (Prov. 8:22), refers to 'the form of a servant' taken on by the Word, whereas the parallel statement a few verses later, 'before all the hills he begets me' (8:25), refers to the Word in his divinity. He explains, 'in all this we do not speak of two, God alone and a man alone (for they are one), but we consider the nature of each conceptually (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν)'.[32] He thus offers what was to become an important precedent for applying the distinction *kat' epinoian* to the two natures of Christ.

Although Basil's colleague, Gregory Nazianzen, did not deal at length with *epinoia*, it is worth noting that he, too, sees the distinction between Christ's natures as conceptual. In the fourth Theological Oration he argues that the terms used by Christ to address the Father differ with respect to Christ's two natures, 'God' being a term Christ uses in his human nature and 'Father' in his nature as God the Word. He then adds: 'An indication of this is that whenever the two natures are separated in conception (ταῖς ἐπινοίαις) from one another, the names are also distinguished; as you hear in Paul's words, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory"'.[33] Like the similar statement in Pseudo-Basil, this passage would have an important influence on subsequent debates.

Gregory also goes further than does Basil in emphasizing the real unity of the Trinity in contrast to the merely conceptual unity of the human race. In the Trinity, he says, there is one essence, one nature, and one appellation (κλῆσις), although we assign distinct names in accordance with our various conceptions (ἐπινοίαις).[34] By contrast, the unity of human nature is perceived only in thought (ἐπινοίᾳ), whereas human individuals are separated from one another in time, dispositions, and power.[35]

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[30] For the lack of *diastēma* see Basil, *Epistle* 38.3–4 (a work that, even if in fact by his brother Gregory, was regarded as Basil's by the Byzantines).

[31] For the attribution to Didymus see Joseph Lebon, 'Le Pseudo-Basile (*Adv. Eunom.* IV-V) est bien Didyme d'Alexandrie', *Muséon* 50 (1938): 61–83. More recently, F.X. Risch has argued that the author was Apollinaris of Laodicea and that these works actually antedate Books I–III; see France X. Risch, *Pseudo-Basilius: Adversus Eunomium IV-V, Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), and Thomas Böhm, 'Basil of Caesarea, *Adversus Eunomium* I–III and Pseudo-Basil, *Adversus Eunomium* IV–V', *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 20–26.

[32] Pseudo-Basil, *Against Eunomius* IV (PG 29:704C).

[33] Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations* 30.8 (citing Eph. 1:17), ed. P. Gallay, *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 27–31* (Paris: Cerf, 2006), 242; trans. NPNF II.7, 312.

[34] Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations* 29.13; cf. *Orations* 23.11, where each of the Persons is God 'if contemplated alone, the mind dividing (τοῦ νοῦ χωρίζοντος) things that are indivisible' (PG 35:1164A).

[35] Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations* 31.15.

It was left to Basil's younger brother, Gregory of Nyssa, to return the focus directly to *epinoia* in his own *Contra Eunomium*.[36] We will note here only a few highlights from his lengthy discussion.[37] Gregory develops more fully than does Basil the subtle interplay between human mental processes and the objective reality under consideration. In opposition to Eunomius, who had held that 'unbegotten' uniquely and adequately describes the divine essence, Gregory holds that terms applied to God are human creations expressive of human *epinoia*. Such terms aim only to give a 'clear and simple declaration of our mental processes (τοῖς τῆς διανοίας κινήμασιν) by means of words attached to, and expressive of, our ideas (νοήμασι)'.[38] On the other hand, *epinoia* is answerable to reality, and when functioning properly it merely discovers or reveals that which is already there. Gregory defines *epinoia* as 'the method by which we discover things that are unknown, going on to further discoveries by means of what adjoins to and follows from our first perception with regard to the thing studied'.[39] He recognizes that 'it is possible for this faculty to give a plausible shape to what is false and unreal', but adds that *epinoia* 'is nonetheless competent to investigate what actually and in very truth subsists'.[40] In other words, our mental processes, when functioning properly, are not merely ours, but answer to and reveal the actual structure of reality.

More precisely, Gregory, like Basil, holds that the concepts formed by *epinoia* correspond directly to divine activities or operations (ἐνέργειαι). Gregory is more explicit than his brother in holding that terms said of God actually name the *energeiai*. They are thereby 'shadows of the things themselves', that is, of the acting agent. He explains:

> Are we not clearly taught... that the words which are framed to represent the movements of things are shadows of the things themselves? We are taught that this is so by holy Scripture through the mouth of the great David, when, as by certain peculiar and appropriate names derived from the operation (ἐνεργείας) of God, he thus speaks of the divine nature: 'The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and of great goodness' (Ps. 103:8). Now what do these words tell us? Do they indicate his operation or his nature? No one will say that they indicate (ἔχειν τὴν σημασίαν) anything other than his operation.[41]

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[36] I use the Latin version of the title to avoid confusion with Basil's work of the same name.

[37] For more detail see the papers collected in L. Karfíková, S. Douglass, and J. Zachhuber, eds, *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

[38] Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* (= C.E.) II.168 (GNO 1, 274; trans. NPNF II.5, 266).

[39] Gregory of Nyssa, C.E. II.182 (GNO 1, 277; trans. NPNF II.5, 268).

[40] Gregory of Nyssa, C.E. II.190 (GNO 1, 279; trans. NPNF II.5, 268).

[41] Gregory of Nyssa, C.E. II.150–52 (GNO 1, 269; trans. NPNF II.5, 265).

Among the names formed from the divine *energeia* is the term 'God' (Θεός) itself, which has 'come into usage from the activity of His oversight, for our faith tells us that the deity is everywhere and sees (θεᾶσθαι) all things'.[42] In general, Gregory says, the many different forms of beneficent divine *energeia* 'pass over into the form of a name, and such a name is said by us to be arrived at by conception (ἐπινοίᾳ)'.[43]

We may also briefly note a passage in which Gregory applies the distinction *kat' epinoian* to Trinitarian theology. Speaking of the co-eternity of the Holy Spirit with the Son and the Father, he says that the Spirit 'is in touch with the Only-begotten, who in conception alone (ἐπινοίᾳ μόνῃ) is conceived of as before the Person of the Spirit in accordance with the account of the cause'.[44] Here 'in conception alone' is a way of emphasizing that the priority of the Son to the Spirit is solely causal, rather than temporal. As we shall see below, the precise meaning of this phrase became a point of contention during the *filioque* controversy.

Even in this passage, *epinoia* is clearly more than a mere act of human naming; and elsewhere Gregory's account of it is emphatically realist. The realism of the Cappadocians seems to have emboldened later authors to apply this concept even more broadly.

Epinoia and the 'Real' Distinction

For the sake of brevity we shall note only one fifth-century author, Cyril of Alexandria. Cyril builds upon the suggestion of Basil and Gregory Nazianzen that the distinction among the Persons of the Trinity is recognized through reasoning to affirm explicitly that it is *kat' epinoian*. Interpreting the statement of Christ that 'I am in the Father, and the Father in me' (John 14:11), he offers as an analogy how sweetness might say the same of honey, or heat of fire. In each case the two are divisible in *epinoia*, but one in nature and substance.[45] Just as had Basil, Cyril makes it clear that calling the distinction conceptual does not deny that it exists within the natural order. On the contrary, the distinction is precisely that between a cause and the effect that comes forth from it by a partless and indivisible procession (πρόοδος).[46]

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[42] Gregory of Nyssa, C.E. II.585 (GNO 1, 397; trans. NPNF II.5, 309). For this etymology and other similar passages in Gregory, see my *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 162–64.

[43] Gregory of Nyssa, C.E. II.298–99 (GNO 1, 314; trans. NPNF II.5, 280).

[44] Gregory of Nyssa, C.E. I.691 (GNO 1, 224–25; trans. NPNF II.5, 100).

[45] Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John* I.3 (PG 73:53B–C). See also similar analogies at I.5 85A (light and its radiance) and II.1 213C (fire and its heat), as well as *Thesaurus* 4 (PG 75:44C) (fire and light) and 12 184A (sun and its radiance), all said to be distinguished *tēi epinoiai*.

[46] One might object that these analogies seem inadequate, since the relation of the Son to the Father is causal whereas sweetness is in the honey and heat in the fire as *propria* (that is, essential accidents) in their subject. (I thank Mark Spencer for raising this objection.) Cyril, however, does seem to think of heat as caused by the fire, as indicated by his referring to it as naturally proceeding (φυσικῶς προιοῦσα) from the fire (53B). Presumably he would say the same of the sweetness of the honey. In Plotinian terms these are

In the period after Chalcedon the primary application of the distinction *kat' epinoian* naturally shifted to Christology. A number of authors followed up on the suggestion of Gregory Nazianzen and Pseudo-Basil that the distinction between Christ's divine and human natures is *kat' epinoian*. It is in this context that we begin to find the contrast between a distinction that is conceptual and one that is 'real'. Leontius of Byzantium affirms that the humanity and divinity of Christ are separated in *epinoia* but not in actuality (ἐνεργείᾳ).[47] Eustathius Monachus does the same, offering 'in reality' (πραγματικῶς) as a synonym: 'we do not divide the natures in actuality, or, as one might say, in reality, but they are distinguished conceptually'.[48] Theodore of Raithu contrasts the two natures of Christ, which are 'united in actuality and in reality, and distinguished solely in *epinoia*', with created hypostases, which are 'united solely in *epinoia*, and distinguished from one another in actuality and reality'.[49] In a particularly interesting passage, the Emperor Justinian draws a parallel between the distinction of soul and body in thought alone (μόνῳ λόγῳ καὶ θεωρίᾳ) and the similar distinction between the two natures of Christ, which nonetheless are not divided in reality (πραγματικῶς).[50] Although he does not mention *epinoia*, the implication would seem to be that the distinction of soul and body is *kat' epinoian*.

From the contrast of the distinction *kat' epinoian* and that which is 'real', it is a short step to distinguishing two kinds of existence, the merely conceptual and the actual. However, the two contrasts do not map neatly onto one another, for items that are distinguished *kat' epinoian* can both exist in actuality. This is in fact essential to neo-Chalcedonian Christology. Thus, Leontius of Byzantium, immediately after affirming that the humanity and divinity of Christ are separated in *epinoia*, adds that they nonetheless exist in actuality.[51] Pamphilius Theologicus makes a similar observation.[52] Leontius of Jerusalem observes (by way of *reductio*) that if Christ's human nature existed only in thought (ἐπινοίᾳ), he could possess that nature only in thought and not in reality (πράγματι).[53]

The appearance of these two contrasts—one a distinction between ways of thinking or considering something, the other between types of reality—among a variety of authors in the sixth century naturally gives rise to the question of philosophical influence. It is well known that Christian theology of this era was

cases of external rather than internal act; see D. Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 76–78.

[47] Leontius of Byzantium, *Solution to the Objections of Severus* (PG 86:1937C; cf. 1932C).

[48] Eustathius Monachus, *Epistuala de Duabus Naturis* (PG 86:921D).

[49] Theodore of Raithu in F. Diekamp, ed., *Analecta Patristica:Texte und Abhandlungen zur griechischen Patristik* (Rome: Pontificale Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1938), 215.

[50] Justinian, *Confessio Rectae Fidei* (PG 86:1005C). For a translation see Kenneth Paul Wesche, *On the Person of Christ: The Christology of Emperor Justinian* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1991), 174.

[51] Leontius of Byzantium, *Solution to the Objections of Severus* (PG 86:1937C).

[52] Pamphilius Theologicus, *Panoplia Dogmatica* 9.4, cited in G.W.H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), s.v. *epinoia* 3.

[53] Leontius of Jerusalem, *Aporiae* 58 (PG 86:1800D); trans. Patrick T.R. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem: Against the Monophysites* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 217, slightly modified.

permeated by the influence of the Aristotelian commentaries of Ammonios, son of Hermeias, who lectured in Alexandria from around 480 to the 520s, and his students and successors.[54] Although the Christian tradition already contained internal developments that would have led in the directions we have noted, it seems likely that there was also some influence from the Aristotelian commentary tradition. Already in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle had noted that truth and falsity are not in things (πράγματα) but in thought (διανοίᾳ), since they arise from mental operations of combination and division.[55] He also frequently observes that two things may be separable in definition (λόγῳ) but not spatially or in their being (τὸ εἶναι), such as the same surface viewed as convex and concave, or the road from Athens to Thebes and from Thebes to Athens, or a given act of learning and the corresponding act of teaching.[56] Although Aristotle himself does not use the term *epinoia* in this connection, it is not hard to see how his commentators might find in such passages a precedent for distinguishing existence which is in *epinoia* from that which is real. This development was no doubt furthered by the Stoic distinction between existence *kat' epinoian* and *kath' hypostasin*, as well as by Porphyry, who in his *Isagoge* famously poses the question of whether genera and species subsist or lie in simple conceptions alone (μόναις ψιλαῖς ἐπινοίαις).[57]

Following up on these hints, the commentators developed a technical doctrine of the distinction *kat' epinoian* roughly concurrent to that of the sixth-century authors we have noted. Like their contemporaries among the theologians, they shifted readily (and sometimes almost imperceptibly) between *epinoia* as a mental operation and as a mode of existence. Existence in 'bare' *epinoia* or *epinoia* alone was identified with existence that is entirely a product of human thought, such as that of the goat-stag.[58] By contrast, *epinoia* that is without qualification (i.e., not bare) is

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[54] See Brian Daley, 'Boethius' Theological Tracts and Early Byzantine Scholasticism', *Mediaeval Studies* 46 (1984): 158–91; also, from a more critical standpoint, Dirk Krausmüller, 'Aristotelianism and the Disintegration of the Late Antique Theological Discourse' in J. Lössl and J. W. Watt, eds, *Interpreting the Bible in Late Antiquity* (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), 151–64.

[55] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV.4 1027b25–31.

[56] For example, *Physics* III.3 202a18–21, b10–22, *De Anima* III.10 433b22–25, *Nicomachean Ethics* I.13 1100a28–32. It is also possible for something to be divided in its being but spatially and numerically one, as are the activity of the sensible object and the perceiving sense (*De Anima* III.2 425b26–426a1) and a given sense when it perceives contrary qualities (426b29–427a5). There thus seem to be three levels of separability: (1) in *logos* alone, (2) in *logos* and being, (3) in *logos*, being, and spatial/numeric. To these one may add the further elaborate distinctions among the three kinds of sameness and unity—numeric, specific, and generic—in *Topics* I.7, VII.1-2 and *Metaphysics* V.6, 9, X.3. It would appear that these two ways of classifying various types of unity and distinction are independent of one another.

[57] Porphyry, *Isagoge*, in A. Busse, ed., *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* (CAG) (Berlin: Reimer, 1882–1909), vol. 4.1, 1.10–11. Precisely what Porphyry meant in referring to existing *monais psilais epinoiais* is a matter of dispute. Alain de Libera, *La Querelle des universaux de Platon à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Vrin, 1996), 37, interprets this phrase as referring to a merely fictional existence, as opposed to that of entities that are conceptually distinguished but truly exist. Jonathan Barnes, *Porphyry: Introduction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), 40–42, argues that the phrase simply means 'depends on thought alone' without distinction as to different types of mind-dependence.

[58] Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 4.3, 39.14–40.6, *In Aristotelis De Interpretatione*, CAG 4.5,

that by which we separate things that are otherwise inseparable, such as the potency and actuality of the sun, or a physical triangle and its shape, or body (in general) and color.[59] Some accidents can be separated from their substratum both in *epinoia* and actually, like the white of a white man, whereas others can be separated only in *epinoia*, like the black of an Ethiopian.[60] Yet even *epinoia* cannot remove essential qualities, such as the changelessness and eternity of the gods, or make things that are properly opposites, like rationality and irrationality, be present together.[61]

A particularly interesting application of these distinctions is to the realm of mathematics. The question of whether geometrical entities exist solely *kat' epinoian* or also *kath' hypostasin* had already been posed by Posidonius, who affirmed both.[62] Within the Aristotelian tradition it was more commonly held that they exist *kat' epinoian* alone.[63] On this view, entities such as the triangle or square are enmattered in their hypostasis but immaterial in *epinoia*; as Pseudo-Elias remarks, geometry contemplates its objects solely τῷ νῷ καὶ τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ.[64] They are thus intermediate between sensible objects, which are enmattered in both hypostasis and *epinoia*, and divine things, which are immaterial in both respects. This treatment of mathematical entities is strikingly parallel to that of the two natures of Christ among the theologians, and it seems likely that the long tradition of debate on this subject among the philosophers helped shape their terminology.

Returning now to the theologians, the seventh and eighth centuries saw a further consolidation of the various applications of the distinction *kat' epinoian* already mentioned. Maximus the Confessor, in the course of arguing against the Origenist belief in the pre-existence of the soul, affirms that soul and body are distinguished only in *epinoia*.[65] As he goes on to explain, this does not exclude that the soul survives the death of the body or that each of them has its own essential principles (λόγοι κατ'οὐσίαν). The point is rather that they remain essentially and intrinsically

29.8–9; Elias, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 18.1, 46.6–47.11, 49.17–20; David, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 18.2, 108.24–109.9, 110.22–32, 114.2–5, 116.4–15.

[59] Ammonius, *In Aristotelis De Interpretatione*, CAG 4.5, 250.9–12; Elias, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 18.1, 49.17–20; David, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 18.2, 119.17–22. A somewhat different account of unqualified *epinoia* is offered by the unknown author known as Pseudo-Elias: whereas bare *epinoia* is the imagination of non-existent things such as the goat-stag, unqualified *epinoia* is that of a state of affairs that could be but is not, such as that I am currently in Alexandria or Athens; *Pseudo-Elias (Pseudo-David): Lectures on Porphyry's Isagoge*, ed. L.G. Westerink (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing, 1967), 29.6 (ed. Westerink, 66).

[60] David, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 18.2, 205.20–26; Pseudo-Elias, *Lectures* 45.7–8 (ed. Westerink, 120).

[61] Ammonius, *In Aristotelis De Interpretatione*, CAG 4.5, 133.20–23; Elias, *In Porphyrii Isagogen*, CAG 18.1, 77.32–34.

[62] See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* VII.135.

[63] See Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Aristotelis Metaphysica*, CAG 1, 52.10–25, 228.29–231.25. Alexander is following here the teaching of Aristotle, *Physics* II.2 and *Metaphysics* XIII.2-3, although Aristotle does not refer to *epinoia* in this context.

[64] Pseudo-Elias, *Lectures* 18.19–21, 19.28 (ed. Westerink, 34, 38); cf. 36.11–13 (ed. Westerink, 94).

[65] Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 7 (PG 91:1100C).

related, so that each of them 'possesses as its own form the whole human being' of which it had been a part.[66] Maximus also applies the distinction *kat' epinoian* freely elsewhere, including in cases where the two items so distinguished cannot exist separately; for example, he explains that the birth by 'vital inbreathing' spoken of by Gregory Nazianzen is only conceptually distinct from birth through normal bodily processes.[67]

The example of soul and body figures importantly in the *Dialectica* of John Damascene, where it is enlisted to clarify the difference between a veridical and a merely imaginative use of *epinoia*. Like the commentators, John identifies the latter with 'bare' *epinoia*. *Epinoia* in the fuller sense is 'a certain thinking out and consideration by which the general concept and unanalyzed knowledge of things are unfolded and made fully clear… Man, for example, appears to be simple, but by *epinoia* he is discovered to be twofold—made up of a body and a soul'.[68] The phrasing of this definition largely follows Leontius of Byzantium, although the example of body and soul is probably drawn from Maximus.[69] The durability of the definition in the scholastic literature may be indicated by the fact that, five centuries later, Nikephoros Blemmydes in his *Epitome of Logic* (1237) gives an almost identical account of the two kinds of *epinoia*—one, the faculty by which things that exist together by nature are distinguished, and the other, 'bare' *epinoia* which considers as real things that are not.[70]

Nonetheless, the actual application of *epinoia* in theology was more complex. In *On the Orthodox Faith* John elaborates upon the role of *epinoia* in the more robust sense. Much like Theodore of Raithu, he observes that created hypostases of the same species are divided in reality (πράγματι) but united by reason and *epinoia*. (This does not mean that their reality is merely a mental construct; John is a moderate realist about universals, so the unity of the members of a species is discovered, not created, by the mind.)[71] In the case of the Trinity, the opposite is the case: the divine Persons are united in reality, owing to their unity of essence, energy, will, and judgment, but distinguished by *epinoia* because of the distinctive property (ἰδιότης)

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[66] Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 7 (PG 91:1101B); trans. Nicholas Constas, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014), vol. 1, 139.

[67] Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 42 1317C, 1320A; cf. further applications at 1324C–D, 1349A.

[68] John of Damascus, *Dialectica* 65, ed. P.B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969–88), vol. 1, 135; trans. Frederic H. Chase, *Saint John of Damascus: Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1958), 101.

[69] See Leontius of Byzantium, *Solution to the Objections of Severus* (PG 89:1932A–B). The Leontian version of the definition is also found in the short collection of philosophical chapters included by Kotter as an appendix to the *Dialectica* (*Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 1, 170–71) and in the *Doctrina Patrum de Incarnatione Verbi* (ed. F. Diekamp [Münster: Aschendorff, 1907], 198–99), where it is attributed to Leontius.

[70] Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Epitome of Logic*, chap. 5 (PG 142:724C–725B).

[71] For John's view of universals see my 'The Presence of Aristotle in Byzantine Theology', *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, eds N. Siniossoglou and A. Kaldellis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 381–96, at 389.

and mode of subsistence of each.[72] Obviously, to be distinguished by *epinoia* is here fully compatible with each Person being distinct from the others in a way that is mind-independent.[73]

The same is true later in the same work, when John invokes the conceptual distinction while cataloging the various kinds of statement made of Christ in Scripture. The flesh of Christ and the Word, he says, although 'really inseparable', can be distinguished by 'tenuous thoughts or subtle imaginings' (ἰσχναῖς ἐπινοίαις ἤτοι νοῦ λεπταῖς φαντασίαις), and this is what is done when Scripture refers to Christ as servile and ignorant, as his flesh would be apart from its union with the Word.[74] Plainly, although the flesh of Christ and the Word are inseparable, the distinction between them is not merely introduced by our thought, but is a recognition of that which exists in nature. A further such example is Christ's referring to the Father as 'my God', where Christ himself engages in an act of *epinoia*. John refers to this as a case of 'mere (ψιλίν)' conceptual distinction.[75] Evidently the qualifier 'mere' here does not indicate a purely imaginary construction, as in other authors we have examined; instead it emphasizes that Christ's statement, although not false (since as man he can truly say that the Father is his God), must be understood as a voluntary condescension undertaken for our sake.

These statements by the Damascene later became the standard by which right and wrong ways of thinking of Christ's humanity are to be judged. In the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* we find several passages condemning those who misuse the distinction *kat' epinoian* in a way that wrongly separates Christ's humanity from his divinity.[76] The first derives from a synod summoned in 1117 against Eustratios of Nicaea. Although Eustratios renounced the condemned views, a statement was nonetheless included in the *Synodikon* anathematizing those who 'do not employ with all reverence the

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[72] John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* 8 (ed. P.B. Kotter, vol. 2, 28–29).

[73] It is possible that this passage in *On the Orthodox Faith* was influenced by a very similar passage in the *Doctrina Patrum* (ed. F. Diekamp, 188–90; cf. the direct verbal parallels noted by Kotter). The passage is attributed there to St Basil's *Short Rules*, but this is almost certainly incorrect, both because of the anachronism involved and because such a discussion would be wholly out of place in the *Short Rules*. If the *Doctrina Patrum* dates from 685–726, as argued by Diekamp, then it seems more likely that John copied from the *Doctrina* than vice versa, although the latter cannot be excluded. At any rate, the attribution of this passage to Basil in the Byzantine period no doubt greatly enhanced its authority, as did its substantive agreement with Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations* 29.13 and 31.15 (cited above).

[74] John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* 65 (ed. P.B. Kotter, vol. 2,164; trans. F.H. Chase, 325), substantially repeated in chap. 91. As Kotter notes, the Damascene's phrasing here seems to echo Cyril of Alexandria, who refers to the distinction between soul and body as perceived ἐν ἰσχναῖς θεωρίαις, ἤτοι νοῦ φαντασίαις (Ep. 46.5 [PG 77:245A]).

[75] John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* 91 (ed. P.B. Kotter, vol. 2, 217; trans. F.H. Chase, 383).

[76] For a brief account of these events and their significance see John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), 196–97, 200–01. So far as I am aware, their relevance to the essence-energies distinction was first observed by Norman Russell, 'The Christological Context of Palamas' Approach to Participation in God' in *Triune God: Incomprehensible but Knowable—The Philosophical and Theological Significance of St. Gregory Palamas for Contemporary Philosophy and Theology*, ed. C. Athanasopoulos (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 190–98.

distinction *kat' epinoian* for the purpose of showing only the difference between the ineffably conjoined two natures in Christ... but employ this distinction improperly and say the humanity which Christ assumed is different not only in nature but in dignity, and that it worships God and offers a servile ministry'.[77] Although the two natures can be distinguished *kat' epinoian*, then, such a distinction must not be used to envision the human nature as capable of acting independently or to conjecture what it would be like if it were to exist alone.

In 1170 further condemnations were added pertaining to the correct interpretation of the statement of Christ that 'the Father is greater than I' (John 14:28). The first and most detailed one condemns those who

> say that the Lord's words are only understandable when the flesh is considered purely conceptually ($\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\psi\iota\lambda\grave{\eta}\nu$ $\grave{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\iota}\nu o\iota\alpha\nu$) in separation from the divinity as though it had never been united, and who do not receive this saying of a pure conceptual division in the sense in which it was uttered by the holy Fathers—who employ it only whenever servitude and ignorance are mentioned, since they could not endure that Christ's flesh, which is one with God and of the same honor, be insulted by such terms—but say instead that the natural properties, which truly belong to the Lord's flesh that is enhypostatic with his divinity and remains indivisible from it, are to be understood purely conceptually, and thus they dogmatize the same concerning things unsubstantial and false as they do for the substantial and true.[78]

Here again there is a warning that the distinction *kat' epinoian* between the two natures does not license one to envision the human nature existing on its own. A further anathema on the same subject aimed at Constantine of Corfu mentions specifically his divergence in this regard from the teaching of John of Damascus.[79] A yet further condemnation (added later the same year) condemns the similar teaching of John Eirenikos.[80] In addition, a clause was added to the profession of faith required of candidate bishops before their ordination, affirming that Christ's human nature 'is in no way to be considered naked and separated from the divinity by a subtle conceptual ($\kappa\alpha\tau$' $\grave{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\iota}\nu o\iota\alpha\nu$) division, but is always to be seen subsisting with the Logos in a single hypostasis'.[81]

Another significant episode showing some uneasiness over the distinction *kat' epinoian* occurred in the conflict between Stephen of Nicomedia, a theological

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[77] Jean Gouillard, ed., *Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxie: Édition et commentaire* in *Centre de recherche d' histoire et civilisation Byzantines: Travaux et Mémoires* 2 (1967): 71; cf. discussion, 206–10.

[78] *Synodikon*, ed. J. Gouillard, 79; cf. discussion, 221–23.

[79] *Synodikon*, ed. J. Gouillard, 79.

[80] *Synodikon*, ed. J. Gouillard, 81.

[81] V. Grumel, ed., *Les regestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. 1, fasc. 3 (Paris: Institut Français d'études Byzantines, 1932), 147, cited in N. Russell, 'Christological Context', 193.

adviser to the Patriarch of Constantinople, and St Symeon the New Theologian. According to the *Life* of Symeon by Niketas Stethatos, at their first meeting (circa 1003), Stephen posed to Symeon the question, 'how do you distinguish (χωρίζεις) the Son from the Father, in concept or in reality?'[82] I translate χωρίζεις here as 'distinguish' because that is undoubtedly the meaning intended by Stephen; like earlier authors, he uses χωρίζειν as at least potentially indicating no more than a mental operation.[83] Symeon, however, chose to take the term in a quite different way. His reply (included among his works as Hymn 21) assumes that by χωρίζεις Stephen means 'separate'. Symeon accordingly affirms emphatically that the Father and Son can be separated neither in concept nor in reality, and that any suggestion they can be is heretical.[84] Symeon does not address whether they can be *distinguished* conceptually, a view that had been orthodox since the time of the Cappadocians. Since he clearly intends by χωρίζεις something more radical than distinction, the only real novelty in his view is terminological rather than substantive. Nonetheless the difference between separation and distinction is sufficiently subtle that the net effect of his discussion was probably to cast some doubt on the very notion of a conceptual distinction, at least as regards the Trinity.

The controversy over the *filioque* brought the question of conceptual distinction in the Trinity to renewed attention. The so-called *Synodikon against John Bekkos*, issued (at least in its current form) in 1285, includes a condemnation against those who attempted to draw support for the *filioque* from the statement of Gregory of Nyssa mentioned earlier that the Son is prior *kat' epinoian* to the Spirit.[85] The document explains that 'the Son is regarded as prior *kat' epinoian* on account of the nomenclature of the relationships which lead to divine knowledge of the Person of the Spirit'.[86] In other words, the role of the conceptual distinction here is purely epistemic and does not (contrary, perhaps, to the *prima facie* meaning of the text) indicate a priority in the causal order. Here again we see some caution regarding the application of the distinction *kat' epinoian* to the Trinity, owing in this case to its potential exploitation on behalf of an unwanted conclusion.

Nonetheless, as Demetracopoulos has noted, in the fourteenth century it remained commonplace to refer to the Persons of the Trinity as distinguished conceptually.[87]

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[82] Niketas Stethatos, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, ed. and trans. R.P.H. Greenfield (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 172.

[83] See above, n. 34 (where the mind χωρίζοντος the three Persons) and n. 47 (where Christ's humanity is χωρίζεται conceptually from his divinity).

[84] Symeon, Hymn XXI. 25–33, 307–11, 456–66, 477–79, in J. Koder, ed., *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien. Hymnes. Tome II: Hymnes 16–40* (Paris: Cerf, 1971).

[85] This document was attributed by John Eugenikos to Patriarch Germanos the New (1223–1240), but is regarded by its modern editors, V. Laurent and J. Darrouzes, as more probably by George Moschabar. See V. Laurent and J. Darrouzes, *Dossier Grec de l'union de Lyon (1273–1277)* (Paris: Institut Français d'études Byzantines, 1976), 128–32 (discussion), 574–88 (text).

[86] V. Laurent and J. Darrouzes, *Dossier Grec*, 581.

[87] See J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed', 284 n. 58 (citing Makarios Chrysocephalos).

So we find something of a mixed scorecard: continuing use of the terminology of *epinoia*, but, in at least some quarters, confusion or hesitation regarding its meaning.

Distinctions in Aquinas

Let us turn now to the West. Aquinas' treatment of the various kinds of distinction would seem to have three major roots. One is the tradition of Aristotelian exegesis stemming from Boethius, who translated and commented on several works of the Organon as well as Porphyry's *Isagoge*. His second *Isagoge* commentary includes a well-known passage in which he applies the Aristotelian understanding of the formation of mathematical entities to the problem of universals. According to Boethius (explicating, he says, the view of Aristotle), just as the mind 'by its own power and thought (*cogitatione*)' can understand separately geometrical entities which subsist only in bodies, so it can do the same for species and genera. Naturally this raises the question of how the same thing (species and genera) can subsist as particular in sensible objects while being understood as universal in the intellect. Boethius explains:

> For there is nothing to prevent two things which are in the same subject from being different in reason (*ratione diversae*), like a concave and a convex line, which although they are defined by diverse definitions and although the understanding of them is diverse, are nevertheless always found in the same subject.[88]

In effect Boethius here extrapolates what in Aristotle had been a contrast between two qualities (concave and convex) existing at the same ontological level, to the quite different question of how the same entity can exist at two different levels, particular and universal. Although this brief remark (which Boethius does not amplify further) is not yet a systematic contrast between a 'real' and rational distinction, plainly it is a first step in that direction.[89]

A second (and undoubtedly more significant) influence was Latin Trinitarian theology. Let us note first the introduction into this arena of the distinction *kat' epinoian* by Burgundio's Latin translation of *On the Orthodox Faith* (1153–54). The crucial passage in chapter 8 reads as follows:

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88 Boethius, *Second Commentary on the* Isagoge I.11; CSEL vol. 48, 166–67.
89 See also the even briefer remark in the *Consolation of Philosophy* that 'everything which lies open to the senses, if you relate it to reason (*ad rationem referas*) is universal, but if you look at it by itself is singular' (V.6.135; ed. and trans. S.J. Tester, *Boethius: The Theological Tractates, The Consolation of Philosophy* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973], 430).

One should know that it is one thing actually (πράγματι, *re*) to observe something and another to see it through reason and thought (λόγῳ καὶ ἐπινοίᾳ, *ratione et cogitatione*). Thus in all creatures there is an actual distinction (διαίρεσις πράγματι, *divisio re*) to be seen between the individual substances. Peter is seen to be actually distinct from Paul. But, that which is held in common, the connection, and the unity is seen by reason and thought... The aforesaid is true of all creation, but it is quite the contrary in the case of the holy, supersubstantial, all-transcendent, and incomprehensible Trinity. For here, that which is common and one is considered in actuality (πράγματι, *re*) by reason of the co-eternity and identity of substance, operation, and will... And the oneness of each is not less with the others than it is with itself, that is to say, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are one in all things except the being unbegotten, the being begotten, and the procession. It is by thought (ἐπινοίᾳ, *cogitatione*) that the distinction is perceived.[90]

Burgundio's choice of *cogitatio* to translate *epinoia* was certainly reasonable. However, whereas the Damascene's original readers were already familiar with the meaning of *epinoia* in patristic usage, his Latin readers were not.[91] Appearing thus abruptly, the notion that the distinction among the Persons of the Trinity is merely in thought (*cogitatione*) and not reality (*re*) no doubt appeared jarring. As we shall see in a moment, it was gently but firmly rejected by Aquinas.

The translation of John Damascene was followed in short order by the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (1155–57). Although Peter knew of the Damascene's work, he makes no mention of a distinction *cogitatione* among the Persons. He is content to affirm that there is a distinction between them, as well as among their personal attributes, without attempting to specify its nature.[92] Of more moment was his teaching that the divine essence is 'one certain highest thing' (*una et summa quaedam res*).[93] The three Persons, he adds, are also three things (*res*).[94] This naturally raises the question of the relationship between the one *res* which is the essence and the three *res* which are the Persons. The Lombard's answer is to affirm that there is a 'distinction in the mode of understanding (*distinctionem secundum intelligentiae rationem*) when we

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[90] John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* 8 (ed. P.B. Kotter, vol. 2, 28-29; trans. F.H. Chase, 185-86). For the Latin see E.M. Buytaert, ed., *Saint John Damascene: De Fide Orthodoxa. Versions of Burgundio and Cerbanus* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1955), 42–44.

[91] Of the works discussed earlier, the only other one translated into Latin during the Middle Ages was the *Dialectica*, translated c. 1240 by Robert Grosseteste. Grosseteste transliterates rather than translating *epinoia*, adding an explanation based on the term's etymology; see O.A. Colligan, ed., *St. John Damascene: Dialectica. Version of Robert Grosseteste* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1953), 50.

[92] See Peter Lombard, *Sentences* I, Dist. 9.1, 23.5, 24.1.8–9.

[93] Peter Lombard, *Sentences* I, Dist. 5.1.6; ed. anon., *Magistri Petri Lombardi: Sententiae in IV Libris Distinctae*, Third edition, vol. 1, pt. 2 (Rome: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1971), 82; cf. I, Dist. 1.2.4.

[94] Peter Lombard, *Sentences* I, Dist. 25.2.5, 34.4.1.

say hypostasis and when we say essence, since the latter signifies what is common to the Three, and the former does not'.[95] Although he says no more about the nature of this distinction, the immense influence of the *Sentences* ensured that the positing of some form of mental distinction between essence and person would thereafter figure prominently in scholastic theology.

The Lombard's teaching was attacked by Joachim of Fiore, who objected that describing the divine essence as a *res* in effect posits a fourth reality in God.[96] The Fourth Lateran Council in response decisively affirmed the Lombard's view, including the assertion that the divine essence is a certain highest *res*. In order to deny the inference that there are four realities in God, it further specified that this *res* is identical to each of the Persons.[97] The council did not, however, clarify in precisely what way (if at all) person and essence are distinct.

The third important influence was the wide dissemination (and adoption into the curriculum at the University of Paris) during the 1240s of Latin translations of Aristotle's non-logical works. As noted earlier, Aristotle observes that two things, such as the road from Athens to Thebes and from Thebes to Athens, may be separable in definition (λόγῳ) but not spatially or numerically. In Latin such things are said to differ *ratione* or *secundum rationem*, but to be the same *secundum rem*.[98] It is not surprising that theologians turned to this Aristotelian technical terminology—already adumbrated by Boethius—to provide a way to speak more precisely regarding distinctions in the Trinity.

We shall bypass the earliest such attempts, such as those of Albertus Magnus and Bonaventure, in order to focus on Aquinas.[99] Much like Peter Lombard and the Fourth Lateran Council, but now using Aristotelian terminology, Aquinas holds that each of the Persons differs from the divine essence not in reality (*re*) but only rationally (*secundum rationem* or *ratione*).[100] By contrast, the Persons differ from

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[95] Peter Lombard, *Sentences* I, Dist. 34.1.9; ed. anon., 250.

[96] See Fiona Robb, 'The Fourth Lateran Council's Definition of Trinitarian Orthodoxy', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997): 22–43; Isabel Iribarren, *Durandus of St. Pourcain: A Dominican Theologian in the Shadow of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 19–28.

[97] 'We... believe and confess with Peter Lombard that there is one highest, incomprehensible, and ineffable reality (*res*), which is truly Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the three Persons together, and each Person distinctly (*singillatim*); therefore in God there is only Trinity, not a quaternity, because each of the Persons is that reality... Hence, though "the Father is one Person, the Son another Person, and the Holy Spirit another Person" [Gregory Nazianzen, Ep. 101], yet there is not another reality but what the Father is, this very same reality is also the Son, this is the Holy Spirit'. Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, Forty-third edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), no. 804–5.

[98] See the comments upon the relevant texts by Aquinas: *sunt diversa ratione, licet subiecto et magnitudine sint abinvicem inseparabilia* (*Commentary on the* De Anima, Bk. III, Lect. 15, sect. 833); *eadem secundum rem, sed differunt secundum rationem* (*Commentary on the* Physics, Bk. III, Lect. 4, sect. 307). For text (and translation, where available) of Aquinas I use http://www.dhspriory.org/thomas (last accessed September 2018).

[99] For Bonaventure see Sandra Edwards, 'St. Bonaventure on Distinctions', *Franciscan Studies* 38 (1978): 194–212; I. Iribarren, *Durandus of St. Pourcain*, 51–59.

[100] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (= S.T.), I, Q. 28, art. 2, Q. 39, art. 1.

one another by a *distinctio realis*.[101] Such a distinction must be grounded on some essential or intrinsic difference.[102] In creatures this must be some difference of matter or form, such as that between objects that differ in number, species, or genus.[103] In God there is no matter, of course, and only a single form, the divine essence. Nonetheless a real distinction can be present because there is relative opposition such as that of 'begetting' and 'being begotten'. In general, in immaterial entities it is necessary and sufficient for a real distinction that there be some opposition of negation and affirmation, or at least, some form of relative opposition.[104]

In the course of defending his belief in a real distinction among the Persons, Aquinas considers and rejects—by gently reinterpreting—the teaching of John Damascene that they differ *ratione et cogitatione*. In his *Commentary on the Sentences* this text appears among the objections to Aquinas' own view, and the main body of the article notes that to say that the Persons are distinguished by reason alone 'sounds like the Sabellian heresy'.[105] Aquinas accordingly asserts that the Damascene did not really mean what he says: '"by reason" (*ratione*) means "by relation" (*relatione*), and relation is called *ratio* with reference to the essence, as was said in the main answer'.[106] This comment ignores the amplifying term *cogitatione*, which makes the Damascene's meaning clear beyond any doubt. Already we see here how the Greek and Latin distinctions lend themselves to mutual misunderstanding, for whereas it is perfectly orthodox to say in Greek that the distinction among the Persons is *kat' epinoian*, to say that it is *cogitatione* sounds to Latin ears like Sabellianism.

For our purposes, the most important application of this classification of distinctions is to the divine attributes. Aquinas holds that 'absolute properties' in God such as goodness and wisdom are not opposed to one another and so are not really distinguished, whereas such properties are really distinguished when they exist in creatures.[107] The distinction among the divine attributes is instead merely rational. To say this alone, however, is not particularly illuminating, for there are

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[101] Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Sentences* (= *In Sent.*) I, Dist. 22, Q. 1, art. 3; S.T. I, Q. 28, art. 3, Q. 30, art. 2, Q. 39, art. 1. Aquinas does not use this term frequently; in fact, its occurrences listed in the *Thomas-Lexikon* (available at http://www.corpusthomisticum.org, last accessed September 2018) all refer to the Persons of the Trinity.

[102] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (= S.C.G.) IV.24.9; S.T. I, Q. 40, art. 2.

[103] Thomas Aquinas, *De Potentia* Q. 10, art. 5; S.T. I, Q. 40, art. 2, Q. 47, art. 2. This is the familiar Aristotelian list of types of sameness or unity (above, n. 56).

[104] Thomas Aquinas, S.C.G. IV.14.15 and 24.7. The first of these passages affirms that there is 'opposition of negation and affirmation' in the Trinity, whereas the latter denies it, although affirming that there is 'relative opposition in origin'. *De Potentia* Q. 10, art. 5 similarly speaks of relative opposition as necessary for a real distinction in God.

[105] Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.* I, Dist. 2, Q. 1, art. 5, corpus and obj. 1.

[106] Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.* I, Dist. 2, Q. 1, art. 5, ad 1. Aquinas refers here to his statement just previous that 'The *ratio* of a relation is how it is referred to another. Relation in God can thus be understood two ways: either with reference to the essence, in which case it is *ratio* alone; or with reference to that to which it is referred, in which case each relation is really distinguished from the other by the proper *ratio* of relation'.

[107] Thomas Aquinas, S.T. I, Q. 30, art. 1, ad 2.

different kinds of rational distinction. Aquinas' fullest discussion of this topic is in his *Commentary on the Sentences*:

> A multiplicity of names can occur in two ways. (1) One is from the part of the intellect because, since names express the understanding, one and the same thing can be signified by diverse names according as it can be diversely accepted by the intellect... This can occur in two ways. One is (a) in accordance with negations by which the conditions of creatures are removed from God so that negative names are produced. Such names are multiplied by the conditions of creatures that are negated of God, especially those which universally accompany every creature, such as 'immeasurable', 'uncreated', and so on. The other is (b) in accordance with the relation of God to a creature which is nevertheless not really in God, but in the creature. In this way those divine names which convey some disposition toward a creature are produced, such as 'Lord', 'King', and others of this sort. (2) Likewise a multiplicity of names can occur from the part of a thing according as names signify the thing. It is in this way that names are produced expressing that which is in God. In God, however, there is not to be found any real distinction except that of the Persons which are three things, and from thence comes the multiplicity of personal names signifying the three things. But besides this, there is also to be found in God a distinction of intelligible characters (*rationum*), and these really and truly are in Him, such as the intelligible characters of wisdom and goodness, and others of this sort. All of these are indeed really (*re*) one, and differ rationally (*ratione*). They are preserved in property and truth insofar as we say that God is truly wise and good, and not only in the intellect of the one reasoning. Thence are produced the diverse names of the attributes. Although they all signify one thing, they nonetheless do not signify it according to one intelligible character (*rationem*), and therefore are not synonyms.[108]

It is notable that Aquinas here insists that, although the various divine attributes are one in reality (*re*), nonetheless their intelligible characters (*rationes*) 'really and truly are in Him'. In this respect the multiplicity of attributes differs from that of negative and relational terms said of God, which is produced solely by the intellect. Aquinas goes on to add that it is precisely because their *rationes* differ in God, that attributes such as wisdom and goodness differ in reality among creatures.[109]

What does it mean to say that there is a multiplicity of *rationes* in God? Aquinas addresses this question in an earlier article of the *Commentary* devoted to the question, 'Whether the plurality of *rationes* by which the attributes differ is solely

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[108] Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.* I, Dist. 22, Q. 1, art. 3 (numeration added).
[109] Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.* I, Dist. 22, Q. 1, art. 3, ad 3.

in the intellect or also in God'.[110] There he first distinguishes three ways in which a conception in the intellect can relate to an object outside of the soul. The first is when it is a likeness (*similitudo*) of the thing, as, for example, the conception 'man' is of a man. In such a case the conception has an immediate *fundamentum in re*, inasmuch as the thing itself makes the intellect true.[111] The second is when the conception is not a likeness of the thing but nonetheless follows from the manner of understanding (*ex modo intelligendi*) that thing, as when man is identified as an animal (something that never exists, simply as such, in reality) and mathematical entities are formed by abstraction. In such a case the conception has a remote *fundamentum in re*, and the intellect is at least not false. The third case is when there is no *fundamentum in re*, as with fictional objects, and in such a case the conception is simply false.

Of these three cases, the sort that applies to our conceptions of the divine attributes is the first; and it is in such cases that the *ratio* is properly said to be in the object.[112] Indeed, the perfections attributed to God are more properly and fully in the divine essence than in creatures. Aquinas cites three signs of this: they are all present together, they are without any defect, and they form a unity, 'for the things that are diverse in creatures are one in God'. For Aquinas, then, the real unity of the divine attributes is a sign that the perfections are more fully real, and their *rationes* more fully present, in God than in creatures. This means that, although the distinction among them is not 'real', in an important sense it is not mind-dependent. As Aquinas observes elsewhere, 'even if from eternity creatures had never been, and even if future things were never to be, it was true to say that God is wise, good, and other things of this sort'.[113]

Aquinas reiterates this view of the divine attributes frequently.[114] In the *Summa Contra Gentiles* he adds a helpful analogy designed to illustrate how multiple attributes can pre-exist as a unity in their source. The analogy is based on the different ways that heat and dryness exist in fire and in the sun:

> Through the same power through which it produces heat, the sun produces also many other effects among sublunary bodies—for example, dryness. And thus heat and dryness, which in fire are diverse qualities, belong to the sun

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[110] Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.* I, Dist. 2, Q. 1, art. 3.

[111] Aquinas has in mind here the Aristotelian theory of cognition, on which the form of the object comes to be present in the soul as the object is cognized. For a contemporary exposition see John P. O'Callaghan, 'The Problem of Language and Mental Representation in Aristotle and St. Thomas', *Review of Metaphysics* 50 (1997): 499–545.

[112] A. Lévy ('Lost in *Translatio*', 460–61) says that it is the second of these three cases that fits our conceptions of God, but I can see no basis for this in the text, and it would fail to explain how the *rationes* are truly present in God. For an English translation of the entire article see *Thomas Aquinas: Selected Philosophical Writings*, ed. T. McDermott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 230–40.

[113] Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.* I, Dist. 2, Q. 1, art. 2; cf. the similar statement in *De Potentia* Q. 7, art. 6.

[114] See *De Potentia* Q. 7, art. 5–6; S.C.G. I.31; S.T. I, Q. 13, art. 2–4.

through one and the same power. So, too, the perfections of all things, which belong to the rest of things through diverse forms, must be attributed to God through one and the same power in Him.[115]

One must bear in mind that, in Aristotelian physics, heat and dryness are real qualities that are constitutive of fire, just as heat and wetness are constitutive of air and coolness and dryness of earth. The sun is not made of fire, but of ether, and so does not possess these qualities in the same way as fire; yet clearly it does possess them in some higher mode, for otherwise it could not produce them among bodies.[116] We thus apply these terms to the sun, but in a way that bears only an analogical relationship to their application to fire and other sublunary bodies.

The Scholastic Distinctions: Development and Controversy

These are the beginnings of what became, in later scholasticism, a baroquely complex system of distinctions. Although Aquinas does distinguish between the real and rational distinction, as well as (implicitly, at least) two types of each, it is far from clear that he intended this classification to be exhaustive. He often speaks of two things as different or distinct without attempting to identify precisely the kind of distinction he has in mind, and in his voluminous works he does not devote even a single article to dealing with distinctions as a topic in their own right.[117]

The immediate catalyst for later developments was the work of Giles of Rome, a student of Aquinas who became one of his sharpest critics. Shortly after Aquinas' death, Giles began advancing the view that there is a real distinction between essence and existence (*esse*) in creatures, and that these are in fact two distinct *res*, at least one of which (essence) exists separately from the other in the divine mind.[118] Giles' views provoked numerous rebuttals, and these naturally devoted considerable attention to the question of precisely what kind of distinction there is between essence and existence, if it is not one that is 'real' in Giles' sense. It is noteworthy that Aquinas himself never said that there is a real distinction between essence and existence,

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[115] Thomas Aquinas, S.C.G. I.31.2.

[116] This is an application of what is sometimes called the Principle of Causal Synonymy, that is, the principle that a cause must possess in some fashion the form it imparts, for otherwise the form would be created *ex nihilo*. For discussion see A.C. Lloyd, 'The Principle that the Cause is Greater than Its Effect', *Phronesis* 21 (1976): 146–56, and Alexander Mourelatos, 'Aristotle's Rationalist Account of Qualitative Interaction', *Phronesis* 29 (1984): 1–16.

[117] He can also, on occasion, deliberately blur the difference among type of distinction; for example, S.C.G. IV.14.10 uses the identity of the divine attributes with the divine essence to argue for a similar identity between the Persons and the essence, without noting that the distinction among the attributes is rational whereas that among the Persons is real.

[118] See Francis A. Cunningham, S.J., *Essence and Existence in Thomism: A Mental vs. the 'Real Distinction?'* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988), 270–80; John F. Wippel, 'Essence and Existence', *Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, eds N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, and J. Pinborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 385–410.

and for several decades after his death such a view was not widely attributed to him. Later, however, the belief in a real distinction between essence and existence (albeit not in Giles' sense) came to be seen as a cornerstone of orthodox Thomism.[119]

Thanks largely to this controversy, both Thomists and their rivals began to develop increasingly subtle and sophisticated accounts of the various kinds of distinction. The following is what became the standard Thomistic breakdown.[120]

I. Real—obtains independently of the mind

A. Absolute ('real major')—between two entities (*res*) that are 'nonidentical as things in their own right, prior to and independent of any objectifying insight or construction elicited by the human reason' (Glanville).

1. Material—e.g., two individuals of same species; different material parts of a single individual.

2. Formal—e.g., essences or natures of different species; a substance and its accidents (understood as universals); different accidents (again, *qua* universal); the essence and the act of existence (*esse*) of an individual entity; the Persons of the Trinity.

B. Modal ('real minor')—between an entity and its modes, or among the modes.

1. Between a thing and its mode of being or acting—e.g., Socrates and his being seated; the soul and its faculties; a continuum and its indivisible elements (e.g., line/points).

2. Between two modes of the same thing—e.g., Socrates' being seated and his being in prison.

3. Between primary matter and substantial form.

II. Rational—obtains only in virtue of being thought by a mind

A. Greater (*distinctio rationis ratiocinatae*, 'distinction of reason reasoned about', a.k.a. 'virtual' or 'with foundation in reality')—originates both in the mind and in the object, i.e., the relatum considered by the mind has intrinsic

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[119] See F.A. Cunningham, *Essence and Existence*, for a thorough history of these developments.

[120] See Peter Coffey, *Ontology or the Theory of Being* (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1929), 104–13, 139–53; Sandra Edwards, *Medieval Theories of Distinction* (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1974); John J. Glanville, 'Distinctions, Kinds of', *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2003), vol. 4, 778–82; Edward Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction* (Lancaster: Editiones Scholasticae, 2014), 72–79. Much can also be gleaned from the short treatise of Francis Suarez, *On the Various Kinds of Distinctions*, trans. Cyril Vollert, S.J. (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1947), although Suarez differs in some ways from the Thomists.

intelligible content which is 'rendered positively and actually [distinct] by the abstractive power of the mind' (Glanville).

1. Major (or imperfect)—between two things the concept of one of which includes the other, but not vice versa, e.g., an individual and its successive essential attributes, such as Socrates, and his humanity, rationality, life, etc.; the divine perfections, e.g., goodness and wisdom; a divine Person and the divine essence.

2. Minor (or perfect)—between two things the concept of each of which includes the other, e.g., 5+7 and 12; being and substance; the principle of intellectual life and the principle of animal life in man.

B. Lesser (*distinctio rationis ratiocinates*, 'distinction of reason reasoning', a.k.a. 'without foundation in reality')—originates exclusively in the mind, e.g., man and rational animal; different essential attributes (*qua* universal) of an individual, such as 'body', 'animal', 'living', and 'man' said of Socrates; the negative divine attributes; the relational divine attributes; the divine intellect and its act; the divine will and its act.

III. Notional—also obtains only in virtue of being thought by a mind, and more specifically in virtue of different names conventionally applied to a single reality, e.g., Tully vs. Cicero, tunic vs. cloak, man (*qua* species) vs. rational animal.

Many questions could be asked about this breakdown, particularly as it relates to the distinction of essence and existence.[121] Perhaps the most significant for our purposes is that of precisely what is entailed by the presence of a greater or 'virtual' rational distinction. Is it really true that such a distinction obtains only in virtue of being thought by a mind, when it merely elucidates the intelligible content (*ratio*) that is intrinsic to the object? After all, as we have seen, Aquinas holds that a statement attributing to God a plurality of divine attributes would be true even if there never had been, and never were to be, any created minds.

It was in part to address this question that Scotus introduced his famous formal distinction.[122] Scotus defines two items as formally distinct when they cannot exist

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[121] Many Thomists would reject the characterization of an essence and its *esse* as two *res*, seeing this as precisely the error of Giles of Rome; presumably, they would then either characterize the real absolute distinction in a different way or place the distinction of essence and *esse* elsewhere, either as a real modal distinction (although it is hard to see how it could fit there) or a rational distinction. See Walter Patt, 'Aquinas' Real Distinction and Some Interpretations', *New Scholasticism* 62 (1988): 1–29.

[122] The best introduction to this topic remains Allan Wolter, 'The Formal Distinction', *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, vol. 3: *John Duns Scotus, 1265–1965* (Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 45–60, reprinted in idem, *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). See also Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 149; Peter King, 'Scotus on Metaphysics' in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. T. Wil-

separately (and thus are not 'really distinct', as he uses that term) but nonetheless can be defined or understood separately, in the sense that each can be defined or understood without reference to the other.[123] Scotus holds that, in order for such a distinction to hold, there must be a 'formality' (*formalitas*, 'little form') of each of the distinct items in the object prior to its being cognized by the mind. Such a formality should not be conceived as an ontological constituent in the same way as matter and form, but it is nonetheless distinct prior to its cognition by the mind. Scotists see this conclusion as merely drawing out the implications of Aquinas' own admission of the objectivity of the greater rational distinction.

Scotus' formal distinction thus effectively replaces the Thomistic greater rational distinction, although it also incorporates some cases that Thomists regard as belonging to the real distinction.[124] Prominent examples of the formal distinction include that between the soul and its faculties; that of successive essential attributes; that among the divine attributes and between any particular divine attribute and the divine essence; that between a divine Person and the divine essence; and that between being and its transcendental attributes, such as unity, truth, and goodness. In addition, Scotus posited a 'modal' formal distinction holding between a form and its mode, such as that between wisdom and infinite in God or between being and finite in creatures.

Another important question that can be posed regarding the Thomistic distinctions pertains to their application to the Trinity. Aquinas holds that each of the divine Persons is really distinct from the others but really identical with (and only rationally distinct from) the divine essence. This raises the question of how two items can be really identical to some third item, but not to one another; or in other words, how real 'real identity' actually is, given that it is not transitive. Certainly we move here beyond the realm of Aristotle's relatively intuitive concept, which *does* obey such a rule; if the roads from A to B and from C to D are both really identical to Route 89, for example, they are really identical to one another. Suarez was admirably forthright about the oddity of this special exemption in the case of the Trinity:

> If two things are in reality identical with a third thing, they will also be identical with each other in reality, although they may be diverse in concept... In creatures and in finite things this principle avails absolutely. But

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liams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 15–68, at 21–26.

[123] 'Definition' here refers to an Aristotelian definition by genus and differentia. Many items can be understood and so have a *ratio* although they cannot be defined; for example, the highest genera, potencies, the four causes, and accidental unities, not to mention the Persons of the Trinity (P. King, 'Scotus on Metaphysics', 23).

[124] This point seems to me to argue against the suggestion which is sometimes made that the Scotistic formal distinction and the Thomistic greater rational distinction are really the same and differ only in emphasis. See also on this point the spirited critique by a Scotist, Michael Sullivan, of the account of distinctions in Feser's *Scholastic Metaphysics* at http://lyfaber.blogspot.com/2014/06/fesers-scholastic-metaphysics-book_4.html (accessed September 2018).

in an infinite thing, such as is the divine essence, the maxim is not verified, absolutely speaking, since on account of its infinity the divine essence can be identical with opposite relations which, because of this opposition, cannot be identical with one another, except in the essence alone.[125]

It is hard to know what to make of this claim that infinity enables an essence to be really identical with opposites, which yet remain not really identical with one another. If infinity can work such magic in the case of the divine essence, why can it not equally do so in the case of the divine Persons, who are also infinite—and, indeed, really identical to the essence?

One might suppose that this is simply part of the mystery of the Trinity. Yet that the Persons are really distinct from one another but really identical with the essence is hardly *de fide*, even for Roman Catholics. It is merely one formulation among others of Trinitarian doctrine, one that arose in the specific historical circumstance of the attempt to develop Peter Lombard's Trinitarian theology (including the *quaedam summa res*) using Aristotelian terminology.

Scotus, at any rate, thought that there was a better option. In his view each of the Persons is only formally distinct from the essence.[126] Each is thus also 'really identical' with the essence, in the limited sense of being unable to exist separately from it; but real identity in this sense (which is very different from Aristotle's) clearly is not transitive, and so does not threaten the distinction of the Persons.

What Kind of Distinction?

We can now turn at last to the question of the application of these various distinctions to that between essence and energies. It has often been observed that Palamas seems to have deliberately refrained from describing the essence-energies distinction as *kat' epinoian*.[127] In light of the history we have observed, this should surely be no surprise. The range of items traditionally described as distinct *kat' epinoian* is immense. It includes (within theology alone) the names of Christ, the divine attributes, the Persons of the Trinity, the two natures of Christ, the flesh of Christ and the Word, and the human body and soul. Plainly this is an extremely heterogeneous grouping, and much that is true in any particular case does not carry over to the others. The Persons of the Trinity and the two natures of Christ, for

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[125] F. Suarez, *On the Various Kinds of Distinctions* III.8; trans. Vollert, 67.

[126] See A. Wolter, 'The Formal Distinction', 54; R. Cross, *Duns Scotus*, 69. In his late Parisian lectures, Scotus somewhat modified this view, holding that each Person is formally identical to the essence (inasmuch as the Person's *ratio* cannot be specified without reference to the essence) but that the essence is formally distinct from each Person (inasmuch as its *ratio* can be specified without reference to the Person). This non-symmetric formal distinction is still sufficient to block the threatening inference. See Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus on God* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 235–40.

[127] For example, J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed', 278–79; N. Russell, 'Christological Context' passim.

example, exist as distinct in full actuality prior to any act of human thought, whereas the same cannot be said (according to Maximus, at least) of the body and soul. On the other hand, the body and soul can, after their initial union, exist apart from one another, whereas the same is not true of the divine Persons or the two natures. Because of this heterogeneity, to describe a distinction as *kat' epinoian* can invite considerable confusion, as occurred in regard to the two natures of Christ, and, to a lesser extent, the Persons of the Trinity.

What all this shows is that to speak of two things as distinct *kat' epinoian* is, taken alone, not an ontological statement at all. It is an epistemological statement, in that it identifies the means by which we conceive or recognize them as distinct— that is, through reflection rather than sense experience. As we have seen, this is the original meaning of the term as far back as the Stoics, and it is clearly expressed in the general discussions of *epinoia* by Basil and Gregory of Nyssa. It is for this reason that unity can also be *kat' epinoian*, as is true (according to Theodore of Raithu and John Damascene) of the human race. Confusion enters because the term *epinoia* is also used in statements that *do* have ontological significance, as when something is said to be conceived by bare *epinoia* (meaning in the imagination) or to exist in *epinoia* and not in reality. Careful attention must be paid to the specific locution, as well the context, to discern the author's meaning in a particular case.

Taking the term in its epistemological sense, it is certainly true that the essence-energies distinction is *kat' epinoian* since both concepts involved are formed through reflection. But to say this is not very helpful as regards the ontological issues that are generally of interest. Furthermore—as the controversies enshrined in the *Synodikon* illustrate—it can invite confusion by seeming to suggest that we can intelligibly ask what the essence would be like apart from the energies, or vice versa. As Palamas never tires of reiterating, no essence can exist without its natural energies, nor can an energy exist without being the active manifestation of some essence. I would suggest that it was primarily to avoid such potential confusions that Palamas quietly eschewed referring to *epinoia*.

His immediate followers, such as Kokkinos and Kantakouzenos, were less cautious. No doubt, as Demetracopoulos and Lévy have observed, they wished for polemical reasons to emphasize as clearly as they could the limited character of the distinction. This seems a sufficient explanation in the case of Kokkinos, who wrote prior to the appearance of the Greek translations of Aquinas.[128] The case of

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[128] See J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed', 283–84, for Kokkinos' assertion that essence and energies are distinguished conceptually (ἐπινοίᾳ) in his *Fourteen Chapters against Barlaam and Akindynos*, written probably in 1351. As Lévy observes, there are also repeated statements to this effect in his *Antirrhetics against Gregoras* of the mid-1350's. One particularly interesting passage claims to find a precedent for this teaching in 'Anastasius the Great' (Discourse 5, ed. D. Kaimakes, Φιλοθέου Κοκκίνου δογματικὰ ἔργα, vol. 1 [Θεσσαλονίκη: Κέντρο Βυζαντινῶν Ερευνῶν, 1983], 164). Kaimakes cites no source for this reference, and the source cited by Lévy (the *Logoi Dogmatikoi* of Anastasius of Antioch, misiden- tified by Lévy as by Anastasius of Sinai; see A. Lévy, 'Lost in *Translatio*', 449) appears to be an error. If this

Kantakouzenos is more complex, since he may have intended his usage of *epinoia* to be understood in light of that given to it in these translations. On the basis of evidence so far presented, however, I am not yet convinced that there is truly a substantive difference between him and his predecessors.[129] More work will be needed to determine precisely the effect of the Thomistic translations on the unfolding of Palamism.

This brings us to the second set of distinctions, those of the scholastics, and the question of whether and how they can be correlated with those of the East. There is an unfortunate tendency to take the scholastic distinctions as if they were simply a known and fixed quantity, the only debatable question being that of how those of the East (the essence-energies distinction and that *kat' epinoian*) relate to them. This is very far from the case. Not only have the scholastic distinctions been the subject of interminable controversy, among Thomists, Scotists, Suarezians, and others; the history we have surveyed reveals several points at which the fundamental line of thought behind them can and should be brought into question.

One must note, first of all, the sheer happenstance involved in the problem which triggered this development, that of making sense of Peter Lombard's Trinitarian theology. Viewed from a patristic standpoint there is nothing necessary or even very plausible about the idea that the divine essence is *quaedam summa res*, while each of the Persons is a *res* that is identical to the essence although not identical to the others. This is a formulation that is found in none of the Fathers, East or West, and is far removed from the subtlety and complexity of their thought. It bequeathed to the scholastics the problem of explaining how such an apparently contradictory set of statements could possibly be true. It is not surprising that they turned to Aristotle for help, and specifically to the Aristotelian distinction between separability in definition (λόγος) and in being (τὸ εἶναι). In reality, however, this Aristotelian distinction is not very helpful, since Aristotelian 'real' identity (that is, identity in being) is transitive.

To the perplexities thus generated, a further set were soon added in the attempt to expand the rather *ad hoc* distinctions drawn by Aquinas into a comprehensive system that would embrace all distinctions whatsoever. As noted earlier, Aquinas neither says nor implies that every distinction must fit into his own three categories of real, rational, and notional.[130] This is an assumption that entered through the

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source could be identified, it would provide further insight into why Kokkinos so readily adopted the terminology of *epinoia*.

[129] See J.A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed', 292–305, where a difference seems to be asserted rather than demonstrated.

[130] See on this point the comments of Sandra Edwards: 'Is the real distinction a difference of real beings or principles which obtains independently of the mind? Unlike many of his successors Aquinas never presents such a general description, nor has he explicitly characterized all possible distinctions of real beings or intrinsic principles of such beings. For example, no mention is made of the distinction between a corporeal thing and its matter; the distinction between the accident of one thing, e.g., the whiteness of Peter, and another thing, Paul; the distinction between a substance which is created and its existence; and so on. Are these real distinctions also, and if so how do we determine that they are?' S. Edwards, *Medieval*

heat of the controversy sparked by Giles of Rome over the nature of the distinction between essence and existence. The central question is whether 'obtaining in virtue of being thought by a mind' is the sort of predicate about whose application there is always some decisive fact of the matter, or whether instead it is one to which there may be, in principle, no clear answer as to whether it applies or not. It is important to note that many predicates are indeterminate to some degree. Most familiarly, this includes those that are vague, such as 'heap', 'crowd', 'beard', or 'ill'. But there are other types as well, such as those that depend for their truth on some presupposed reference frame or point of view. It is true that stars twinkle if one has in mind how they appear from the earth, but not if one has in mind their appearance from space; and the same is true of other commonplace statements, such as that the planets have retrograde motion and the sun rises in the east. A further class of predicates apply only when one presupposes some important but unstated qualification. When I point to a photo and say, 'that is Helen', my statement may well be true, but only if understood with the implicit qualification that it is her photo, not the actual person.

Bearing all this in mind, the assumption that 'obtains in virtue of being thought by a mind' neatly divides possible distinctions into two disjoint and mutually exhaustive classes is decidedly one that requires to be supported by argument. So far as I am aware, such argument has not been forthcoming. In fact, I would go further and suggest that, from a theistic point of view, there should be at least a *prima facie* presumption that it is false. All distinctions, including those that are merely notional or verbal, have (on the traditional view of foreknowledge) been known to God from all eternity. Is it really true, then, that some of them obtain only in virtue of being thought by a human mind? Why is divine thought not enough? If the answer is that God thinks them only because we (in the causal order) think them first, is not God then passive with respect to the content of His own thought? That seems an awkward conclusion, especially if God is *actus purus*. Why not say instead that our ability to think them is derivative from the divine thought, and that they exist already actually—although, no doubt, with different degrees and forms of actuality—in the divine mind? But then almost all distinctions would hold in virtue of being thought by a mind, either divine or human, although the extent and degree to which human thought recognizes them may vary greatly.[131]

I merely raise this issue as a way of indicating how fraught with difficulties the traditional scholastic categorization of distinctions actually is. Surely, then, we should be cautious in applying it to the essence-energies distinction, lest in doing so we merely compound one source of obscurity upon another. This is not to say that some comparisons may not be useful in some cases. I would agree with Spencer

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Theories of Distinction, 45. Later she adds further examples, such as those between a thing and a fictitious being (or any non-being) and between the matter of one entity and the form of another (86).

[131] I say 'almost' all because some distinctions in the Godhead, such as that among the Persons, do not hold only in virtue of being thought by God.

that the Scotistic formal distinction is the nearest correlative among the scholastics to Palamas' distinction between the divine essence and what Palamas calls God's natural energies, such as goodness, being, life, wisdom, and power.[132] However, that is not to say that these simply are the *same* distinction. For Palamas it is crucial that the natural energies precisely are energies (ἐνέργειαι) and thus are acts that God performs. For this reason creatures can participate in them, just as they can, for example, in the gifts of the Spirit.[133] Palamas operates with a very different conceptual framework than does Scotus, and in drawing comparisons between them we must not lose sight of these broader differences.

The best general description of the essence-energies distinction remains that which is implied by the meaning of the word *energeia* itself: it is the distinction between an agent and that agent's activity. In the case of God, however, we must recognize that the range of His *energeiai* is extremely diverse. As I have pointed out elsewhere, some are eternal and others temporal; some are contingent and others necessary; some are best conceived as 'realities' or 'energies', others as activities or operations, and yet others as attributes.[134] Rather than seeking to fit this multiform concept into categories that are foreign to it, we ought to seek to understand it in its own terms, in light of the sources and concerns that shaped Palamas' thought. Only in this way can we truly learn what he has to teach us.[135]

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[132] See M.K. Spencer, 'The Flexibility of Divine Simplicity' (above, n. 7).

[133] Of course, these two forms of participation are different, as Palamas explains in his treatise *On Divine and Deifying Participation*.

[134] See D. Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 272.

Narcissism beyond Pleasure and Inter-subjectivity without Meaning: Reading Maximus the Confessor, Gregory Palamas, and thomas aquinas today[1]

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This study is a systematic effort to understand modern narcissism-without-pleasure and intersubjectivity-without-meaning, with the help of the Maximian teaching on pleasure and pain, and the Palamite distinction between essence and energies. This is, at the same time, an effort to understand tradition in the context of a lively re-appropriation of the spiritual findings of the past. In order to express this, some new terms such as inter-meaningfulness are thus created with the help of modern Philosophy.

Introduction: The Strawberries of Tradition and the Blood of Interpretation

It was in Cambridge where Virginia Wolf, in 1923, started her famous lecture on modern literature with the phrase: 'Suddenly, around 1910, human nature changed'. Indeed, human nature had started changing long before Wolf's circle of artists and thinkers, along with other groups of intellectuals in Cambridge, such as the poisonous 'Apostles', realized it. If this change represents the 'self-sufficient humanism', its story has recently been told again, brilliantly, by thinkers such as Charles Taylor (*A Secular Age*) and Rémi Brague (*Le Régne de l'homme*).[2] In any case, even the Enlightenment's 'detached self' was strongly doubted: by Nietzsche and his change of ecstatic transcendence into will to power, along with the parallel re-evaluation of materiality; or by Freud and his (re-)discovery of the Unconscious, which is now decisively psycho-biological; and of course by Feuerbach, Hegel and Marx,

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[1] Half of this paper, in an earlier form, was published as '*Δι-εννοημάτωσις* or Inter-meaningfulness: rereading Wittgenstein through Gregory Palamas' and Thomas Aquinas' readings of Aristotle', in S. Mitralexis, ed., *Ludwig Wittgenstein between Analytic Philosophy and Apophaticism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 151–165. This half has undergone substantial changes.

[2] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Rémi Brague, *Le Régne de l'homme* (Paris: Gallimard, 2015).

and the wake of socialism; and later by Husserl and the Personalists, and their new grounding of inter-subjectivity.

However, this lack of any commonly accepted meaning concerning humanity which was suddenly discovered (or, perhaps, imposed) by intellectuals like Virginia Wolf is, in a sense, revealing. This is, in my opinion, the first sign of the great change that happened in the Western mode of existence during the 20th century; a change that took place within what I have recently called 'the ontology of the self-referring subject',[3] and finally allowed this subject to radically dispute human nature itself, since it gradually led to what we can call Narcissism, in a philosophical, and not only psychological, language. This happened because, as a spiritual phenomenon, Narcissism is not an affirmation, as many perhaps think, but rather a denial of human nature. Its closest philosophical concept is that of the will to power, as an unlimited internal transcendence, which always forces human beings to go beyond any essential limit, beyond their natural identity; the closest ethical concept here is perhaps MacIntyre's 'emotivism',[4] which unsurprisingly also results in the will to power. Narcissism culminates in evaporating human nature into a pure fantasy of power, an imagined spiritual omnipotence and pan-domination—Jean Luc Bresson's film 'Lucy' is an accurate description of it. Moreover, narcissism is not a denial of relation as it is usually thought, but is, on the contrary, the most common type of relation—it is an inclusion of any relation within the self, a sort of *monological reciprocity,* if you allow me this oxymoron.

Narcissism is not necessarily against tradition; as Anthony Giddens[5] has shown, modern man prefers an eclectic use of the latter, in a way that the dream of omnipotence is maintained and even reinforced. Sometimes these persons seem to be extremely devoted to tradition, which they totally destroy by dissolving it into quanta of power, both individually and as communities—'imagined communities', to use Benedict Anderson's[6] term. In these cases, tradition becomes a dangerous ideological salad of concepts contradicting each other, a weapon made of sacred texts always taken literally and killing imaginary or real opponents. It is also possible that tradition be rejected, in an alleged 'eschatological' way, in both the theological and the secular sense—the latter concerning a blind faith in an eternal and blissful progress (in a way already paved by Condorcet, and staying alive through modern lifestyle), while the former represents a kind of 'ecstatic' eschatology, the continuity

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[3] See my 'Being and Essence Revisited: Reciprocal Logoi and Energies in Maximus the Confessor and Thomas Aquinas, and the Genesis of the Self-Referring Subject', *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 72, no. 1 (2016): 117–146.

[4] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Duckworth, 2004), 23–35.

[5] Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Oxford: Polity Press/Blackwell, 1996), ch. 1. See my engagement with Gidden's thought in my *Οι Τρόμοι του Προσώπου και τα Βάσανα του Έρωτα: Κριτικοί στοχασμοί για μια μετανεωτερική θεολογική οντολογία* [The Terrors of the Person and the Ordeals of Love: Critical Meditations on a Post-modern Theological Ontology], (Αθήνα: Αρμός, 2009), 119–120, 144–145.

[6] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 1983).

of which with the theological past is constantly fading. However, mainly for cultural and historical reasons, it tends to become the most common attitude of many Orthodox theologians who cannot find ways to facilitate a fertile communication with their uncommitted intellectual environment.

But can we, after all this discussion, give an anti-narcissistic ecclesial definition of tradition that excludes some of the dangers described above?

In our post-Derridean times, where all the existential or ontological concepts, along with the texts they draw on, are suspicious of exercising an oppressive authority, and so they clearly need some de-construction, tradition can no longer be defined as merely a deposit of texts. However, it is true that the Christian tradition had never been defined primarily as a certain deposit of texts, but as a worshipping community, a Eucharistic assembly, where interpretation was precisely a Eucharistic interpretation (i.e., a description, a reference to, an announcement of a new divine mode of existence, brought into creation through Christ, by the Spirit, in the Church). The Greek word παράδοσις, coming from the verb παραδίδωμι or, in the passive voice, παραδίδομαι, means first, of course, a sort of complete and total offering, but it also means to surrender, both in ancient and modern Greek, either as a verb or as a noun. Thus, παράδοσις can be understood as a dynamic historical event of a constant decision on the part of a community or a man to surrender himself to the truth, which is, on the other hand, surrendered to us precisely through our surrendering to it.

This existential definition of tradition as *paradosis*/surrender is exemplified, excellently in my view, in a wonderfully bold phrase by Maximus the Confessor: ʽδῶμεν οὖν ἑαυτούς ὁλοκλήρους τῷ Θεῷ, ἵνα ὁλόκληρον αὐτόν ἀντιλάβωμεν' ('Let us then give the whole of ourselves to God, in order to receive back the whole of him')[7]. In this sense, *paradosis* is a mutual exchange of gifts, out of God's providential love, and man's grateful *antidosis*/counter-offering, or, as I have called this in the past, a *dialogical reciprocity*.[8] Thus, the essence of tradition/*paradosis* is freedom and love: a free and unconditionally loving divine offering on the one hand, and on the other a free and grateful human response as participation, or, better, participatory interpretation, on the other. This dialogical freedom gives us the chance to understand divine and human things in our own personal rhythm and way; Christ becomes each person's own Christ, according to Maximus' wonderful phrase—though not without sacrificing a part of our buffered self's vanity.

But, perhaps, even the term *interpretation* here must be understood, somehow, beyond Gadamer or Ricoeur, in a maximalist manner, as meaning the whole of human and worldly existence, which is given as an absolute gift—παραδίδεται—, and this precisely means that created nature, as a whole, surrenders itself to its ultimate

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[7] *Liber Asceticus* 43 (PG 90:953B). Author's translation.
[8] See my *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor's Eschatological Ontology of Dialogical Reciprocity* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010).

source and meaning, to its source of unperishable life, through and in the worshipping community. The Eucharist is the only ontological interpretation of creation and the only dialogical reciprocity/*paradosis* that we really have. In this sense, in a way, human nature, through this understanding of *paradosis*, is always new, always other, always more, enlightened as it is by its divine source. In this sense *paradosis*/tradition has to do with the life in the Spirit, and the continuity of this life in the Spirit within the Church, and it is not a repetition of ideas accepted in the past; it is possible for someone to be a contemporary Father of the Church in the Spirit, without having read the texts of the Fathers—this is why I sometimes do not like the Florovskian term 'Neo-Patristic synthesis', if by this we mean a sort of given matrix of concepts and meanings, which have to be exclusively followed, and un-critically repeated. On the other hand, it is utterly important to read the works of the great Fathers, precisely in order to fathom the deeply laborious and, thus, creative, existential way they have assimilated, in the Spirit, the written tradition; genuine theology is always new, always contemporary, always contextual, always surrendering itself to Christ, who is the only theo-logian, and having him surrendered to their total surrender. But this is far from being self-evident and easy. Because Christ's way of doing theology unavoidably passes through the Cross. From Christ on, theology is no more just metaphysics, but passion for doing the Father's will, which transforms our various ranks of varied death into life eternal and invincible meaningfulness.

Thus, I dare to say, paraphrasing Nietzsche, that the theologian has to read tradition with his blood: the strawberries of tradition need our blood of interpretation…

Beyond Pleasure and Pain

After this long introduction, let me now switch to my subject. First, how can we read Maximus the Confessor's doctrine on pleasure and pain today? For Maximus, this doctrine presupposes an internal split in man due to his autonomous use of the senses, not as a channel for God's spiritual beauty to be admired, but as a means for pleasure. Thus, pleasure was created, not by God, but by man, and this forced God to allow pain, along with death—which is the ultimate pain—to punish and educate human deviation[9]—since pleasure is, at its deep core, 'idolatry'.[10] Therefore, pleasure and pain do not initially belong to human nature, but they are both post-lapsarian, and they resemble the irrational natures, the former showing the corruption of human *prohairesis,* and the latter bringing the dissolution of human nature in order for this irrationality to be abolished.[11] In this way, an existential dialectic between pleasure and pain has been established within human nature, on

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[9] *Capita Quinquies Centenorum* V, 33 (PG 90:1361A).
[10] Ibid., IV, 75 (PG 90:1337B).
[11] Ibid., I, 65 (PG 90:1204C–1205A).

the common ground of *philautia,* which is then precisely defined in terms of this dialectic, as the endorsement of sensual, bodily pleasure and the avoidance of pain.[12] It is notable that Maximus defines pleasure, almost exclusively, as a matter of senses and as purely irrational (*ἐπιθυμία ἄλογος*),[13] pulling the inattentive mind towards this irrationality, to its detriment.[14] Thus, if the mind is trapped in the 'surface of things', it loses its natural divine object of contemplation and love, and becomes a prisoner of the sensual beauty of things, and their pleasures.[15]

So, it seems that for Maximus, to disengage the mind from the senses and make it their master is the only way to escape pleasure and pain and to transform pleasure into contemplation. However, things have become considerably more complicated today. On the one hand, man still does not want to quit pleasure, since it is part of his personal truth and his self-understanding passes through it—it is a part of the modern 'technologies of the self', in Foucault's[16] terms, though a great part of the so-called 'sexual revolution' of the sixties and seventies has now lost any revolutionary meaning and it is closely bound to multiple forms of frustration or even depression; nowadays, man finds himself searching for new forms of pleasure. On the other hand, and without the modern man feeling this as a contradiction, contrary to the Maximian *philautia*, modern narcissistic pleasure is not necessarily bound to sensual pleasure, but can be utterly painful and 'ascetical'—let us remember, for example, Weber's Capitalist, or Kenneth Gergen's modern 'saturated self', where the deepest narcissistic pleasure is connected with the most inexorable privation of both psychological and bodily pleasures. The final absolute affirmation of narcissism today, not only on the part of the modern lifestyle, but also on the part of modern Psychology (Freud, for example, would never agree with Kohut in accepting narcissism), along with its peculiar 'asceticism', shows that modern *philautia* is clearly part of a religious-like narcissism. *Philautia* has surmounted the temptation of pleasure! Finally, and entering now the realm of so-called 'spirituality', the self-referring subject is not simply ambitious, but he organizes his self-fulfillment, through his narcissistic desire of melting with the Ultimate Thing/Meaning/God, regardless of the existential cost, making it a part of his own self-development (something that can finally turn to become even paranoiac). This odd communion-without-participation is the narcissistic 'spirituality' *par excellence.*

Thus, *Philautia* or narcissism has nowadays become a sort of Kantian categorical order, regardless of pleasure, and even bound to pain! Thus, after the culture of continuous and unlimited pleasure in the post-war period, we smoothly passed to a sort of culture of narcissism *per se,* beyond pleasure and pain, or as a pleasure in

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[12] Ibid., I, 53 (PG 90:1197C–1200A).
[13] Ibid., V, 72 (PG 90:1377CD).
[14] Ibid., IV, 75 (PG 90:1337B).
[15] Ibid., IV, 2–6 (PG 90:1304C–1305B); II, 34–35 (PG 90:1233AC).
[16] Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1988).

itself, regardless of sensual or sentimental pleasure or pain. In this way, narcissism has nowadays become monstrous, and uncontrollably excessive—and it lies, indeed, beyond pleasure and pain. How then can we read Maximus on pleasure and pain today?

It was impossible for Maximus to know that a time would come when *philautia* would even exceed pleasure, and there would be a sort of *philautia* which is even opposed to pleasure. Of course, his idea was not that every bodily pleasure leads us unavoidably to *philautia*, needing a painful punishment to recover. The core of such a thought would perhaps be, in modern terms, that the absence of the other, through his *instrumentalisation*, in order to serve one's own narcissistic fantasy, transforms narcissistic pleasure into an idolatry of an autonomous selfhood, where, to follow Lacan, the subject's *jouissance* is, in its deep core, pure pain, as the absolute narcissistic fear, and the subsequent elimination of any criteria in order to tell the difference between pleasure and pain—these criteria being decisively inter-subjective. In any case, doxology is the other path left open, once the question of the ultimate meaning (i.e., of the divine presence within the created beauty, or, in our terms, of a *meaningful intersubjectivity*) is answered in the affirmative. The quintessence of St Maximus' teaching for us is thus always to search for this ultimate meaning (i.e., the *dialogical* divine presence behind any sort of pleasure and pain) rather than surrendering ourselves to this peculiar asceticism of narcissism. Pleasure and pain have somehow become identical today in the great painful pleasure of narcissism, which is the contemporary idolatry *par excellence*—and Maximus can be read as fighting precisely against any sort of idolatry which denies the divinity of creation for the sake of the fake divinity of the subject's narcissistic consummation.

Inter-meaningfulness: an inter-subjectivity-in-the-making.

Narcissism being a meaningless intersubjectivity, we need a way of establishing a meaningful intersubjectivity. We shall try to do this with the help of St Gregory Palamas. Once again, it is not self-evident that the essence-energies distinction, supported also by all the great Orthodox theologians of the 20th century (even Bulgakov finally identified his Sophiology with the doctrine of the uncreated energies), can be properly understood by the modern Western man, precisely because the modern understanding of the term 'energy' has nothing to do with what Palamas and so many of his spiritual ancestors and successors wanted to convey. Thus, while Palamas wanted to show, through this doctrine, that the Triune God—the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit—indeed enters into personal communion with created beings, a communion that takes place both inside and outside him, the modern understanding of energy is impersonal, and this means that it has nothing to do with intention, goal, and, in a word, meaning. However, as I will strive to show, the Palamite *inter-hypostatic syn-energy* between God and man, as I call it, mainly

aims at creating an *inter-meaningfulness* between them, a term that is the closest equivalent I can find to the Greek term *διεννοημάτωσις.* Indeed, in this perspective, through the term energy we return for ever to the realm of meaning, and we can thus form a true and meaningful intersubjectivity. But we will rely mainly on Wittgenstein, and secondly on Aristotle in order to prove this.

It is undoubtedly true that, as Wittgenstein himself repeatedly asserted, he never read Aristotle. And it was also of course impossible for him to have read any Palamite text, since, first of all, he was unable to read Greek. However, there seem to exist some fascinating proximities between the way the so-called second Wittgenstein understood the intersubjective constitution of meaning, and the Palamite understanding of the Aristotelian concept of energy in *Metaphysics Λ*. It is also important to compare this reading with Thomas Aquinas' assimilation of the same text and search for the consequences of such readings for modern thought.

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Let us start our investigation from Palamas. As I have claimed elsewhere at some length,[17] in order to explain the Palamite definition of the essence-energies distinction better, we must start with his initial endorsement of the Patristic distinction between essence and will in God. Gregory starts here from Justin Martyr and continues through Cyril of Alexandria, Athanasius the Great and Maximus the Confessor to John Damascene.[18] Thus, for Palamas, 'will is the energy of nature'[19] for God as well as for man. Gregory here consciously draws on Patristic sources. A whole series of Greek Patristic texts passes through his work, starting with the Cappadocians, along with Athanasius, Cyril, Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus and John Damascene, and ending with the Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils,[20] postulating the distinction between uncreated essence and uncreated energies in various terms. These are being defined as the multiple 'names' of God (Basil), or 'processions' (Dionysius), or 'participations' (Dionysius and Maximus), or as 'divinity' (Gregory of Nyssa, Anastasius of Sinai), or as the uncreated 'things around God' (Maximus and Palamas),[21] or as 'natural symbols' of God (i.e., of the same uncreated nature with God—Palamas with reference to Maximus)[22], or as 'continual and eternal glory' (John Damascene)[23], or as 'philanthropy and providence and

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[17] See my 'Striving for Participation: Palamite Analogy as Dialogical Syn-energy and Thomist Analogy as Emanational Similitude', in *Divine Essence and Divine Energies. Ecumenical Reflections on the Presence of God in Eastern Orthodoxy*, eds C. Athanasopoulos and C. Schneider (Cambridge: J. Clarke, 2013), 122–148.

[18] *Against Acindynus*, 1, 4, 10; 1, 7, 15–16; 2, 20, 97–98.

[19] *To Dionysius,* 8. All the translations of Palamite texts are mine.

[20] *Against Acindynus*, 2, 10, 37–53.

[21] *Against Acindynus*, 2, 10, 37–53.

[22] Ibid., 4, 5, 7–9.

[23] Ibid., 2, 16, 73.

goodness of God' (Palamas with reference to Gregory of Nyssa)[24], or as 'wisdom and power and art' of God (Basil)[25], or, finally, as the 'divine *logoi* of things' (reference to Maximus again).[26]

Thus, for the Hesychast saint, 'if there is no difference between divine essence and divine energy, then giving birth [to the Son]', or 'spirating [the Spirit] is no different from creating'.[27] That means that for Palamas, following the Greek Patristic tradition, it is impossible to establish a real distinction between God and the world, or a deep connection between them, without the concept of divine energies. In Palamas' vocabulary, however, this distinction does not compromise either the divine unity or the divine simplicity; in other words, this distinction simply means that God is always more than his essential expressions, as it only means that, paradoxically, divinity is not exhaustively expressed in its communion with creation, although it is divinity in its totality that comes in communion with beings. Or, in other words, this distinction means that God is always more than his essential expressions. Furthermore, as we will later see, created beings do not participate in God by nature, but through their own created energies.

However, this does not mean that energies are ontologically different from essence. On the contrary, there exists a fundamental ontological identity between essence and energies. For Gregory,

> when you hear the fathers calling the divine essence 'non-participated in' (ἀμέθεκτον), think that they mean that this is the essence as it is in itself, without expressing itself to the world. When you hear them calling it 'participated in' (μεθεκτήν) think that they thus mean that it is the procession and the expression and the energy, which pre-exists in God (…) But if you think that, through this energy, it is the very divine essence that expresses itself, though not thoroughly, you are not out of the terms of piety…[28]

Thus, Palamas asserts that 'it is possible to use the name of divine essence even for the energies', and 'it is impossible to consider energies as sorts of natures or beings different from the essence'.[29] Furthermore, Palamas claims, God in his wholeness of divinity is present in each one of the energies and, consequently, anyone who participates in any of these energies participates truly in God as he is,[30] since in each energy 'there is God in his fullness being present in his creatures, imparting himself

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[24] Ibid., 4, 9, 21.
[25] *Theophanes*, 9.
[26] *Triads*, 3, 2, 24.
[27] *Chapters 150*, 97–98.
[28] *Theophanes*, 17.
[29] *Against Acindynus*, 2, 17, 86; 2, 14, 63; 3, 13, 42.
[30] Ibid., 5, 27, 114.

to them and absolutely participated in, according to the image of the sunbeam, in a little part of which we can see the sun in its wholeness'.[31]

The final texture of the doctrine of energies is Christological. In his treatises *Against Acindynus*, Palamas refers explicitly to St John Chrysostom's teaching on the fact that Christ's possession of the Spirit does not mean anything other than the acquisition of the fullness of divine energies in his human nature.[32] For Palamas, this is parallel with St Cyril's position that, through the hypostatic union (which, of course, as an event, exceeds any simple exchange of energies), Christ gives his human nature all the energies of his divine nature,[33] possessed by him in common with the Father and the Spirit. This assertion is repeated in the Palamite *oeuvre*, thus establishing a Christology of the energies,[34] as he understands the Christ-event as the very foundation of his ultimate understanding of energies as dialogical events: in Christ we do not have a confusion of natures but an absolute and infinite hypostatic union through the perfect *perichoresis* of the two natures, expressed through the complete dialogue of created and uncreated energies in him. Christ's theandric energy is nothing other than a real and balanced dialogical syn-energy of his two natures through their respective energies, which, through the hypostatic union, perfectly co-exist and co-act. In other words, while we can affirm that every energy comes from the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit, after the Incarnation, energies as donations of the Spirit to created nature are received through this ontological/ dialogical syn-energy of Christ's two natures in his unique hypostasis.

It is thus crystal clear that, for Palamas, the energies are not 'essences and hypostases around God'.[35] This is why Palamas insists, in many passages, that the energies are not enhypostatic, as only the three Persons of the Trinity are.[36] There is only one sense in which the energies can be called 'enhypostatic, but not self-hypostatic': 'they are called so, because the Spirit infuses the energy into another person's hypostasis, where it can be seen',[37] or, in another understanding 'because the energy remains forever in the beings where it is sent'.[38] This stresses the permanently personal/dialogical/relational/participatory character of the energies, something that we will discuss below.

<div align="center">2</div>

It is perhaps here that a discussion of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ can start. We are going to deal with the question whether the 'Prime Mover' forms only a transcenden-

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[31] Ibid., 5, 26, 110.
[32] Ibid., 3, 7, 17.
[33] Ibid., 3, 5, 11.
[34] See, for example, his *To Athanasius of Cyzicus*, 22.
[35] *Against Acindynus*, 1, 7, 30.
[36] *Against Acindynus*, 1, 8, 22; 3, 13, 48.
[37] *Triads*, 3, 1, 9.
[38] *Dialogue Between Orthodox and Varlaamite*, 26.

tal pure actuality/final cause of creation, or both this actuality and also the efficient cause of creation. There is an important discussion among the experts concerning this problem. K. Oehler, S. Broadie, R. Brague and, in my view, especially A. Kosman and E. Berti, are perhaps the most important among them—although my interpretation goes a little further, as will become apparent below. Thus, for Kosman,[39] the very notion of circular movement within the Prime Mover implies energy *ad extra*, while at the very same moment, the Prime Mover can be conceived as 'unmoving' precisely because of this internal circularity. For Berti,[40] the Prime Mover is also an efficient cause precisely because as an *actus purus* it can act *ad extra* in a perfect way.

With regards to the question posed in the first lines of the previous paragraph, it seems that in the Greek East the latter option is the case, forming a line of thought, which, concerning its philosophical aspect, also comprises Iamblichus and Proclus, and, concerning its theological dimension, is composed of the work of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius the Areopagite, John Damascene. In fact, this series of authors is referred to by Palamas, in whose writings all this line of thought culminates. Of course, the passage read in this direction was initially the 1071b.[41]

According to this text, 'if there is something which is capable of moving things or acting on them, but is not actually doing so, there will not necessarily be movement; for that which has a potency need not exercise it', and so we gain nothing concerning creation 'unless there is to be in them (i.e., the Forms) some principle which can cause change'. Thus 'there must, then, be such a principle, whose very essence is actuality. Further, then, these substances must be without matter; for they must be eternal, if anything is eternal. Therefore, they must be actuality', so that the Prime Mover 'must, then, act in one way in virtue of itself, and in another in virtue of something else'.

In this way, we clearly see that actuality in this text is twofold: it is the inner actuality/energy of the Prime Mover, and its creative actuality/energy *ad extra*: 'For how will there be movement, if there is no actually existing cause?' Internally fulfilled existence becomes the efficient cause and energetic mover of creation:

> Therefore, the first heaven must be eternal. There is therefore also something which moves it. And since that which moves and is moved is intermediate, there is something which moves without being moved, being eternal, substance, and actuality. And the object of desire and the object of thought move in this way; they move without being moved. The primary objects of

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[39] Aryeh Kosman, 'Aristotle's Prime Mover', in *Self-Motion. From Aristotle to Newton*, eds M.L. Gill and J.C. Lennox (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 135–53.

[40] Enrico Berti, 'Unmoved Movers as efficient causes in Metaphysics Λ6', *Aristotle's Metaphysics Lambda*, eds M. Frede and D. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 181–206.

[41] Book 12, ch. 6, in W.D. Ross's translation.

desire and of thought are the same. For the apparent good is the object of appetite, and the real good is the primary object of rational wish.[42]

The way this unmoving mover moves beings is thus already made apparent. Even clearer:

That a final cause may exist among unchangeable entities is shown by the distinction of its meanings. For the final cause is (a) some being for whose good an action is done, and (b) something at which the action aims; and of these the latter exists among unchangeable entities though the former does not. The final cause, then, produces motion as being loved, but all other things move by being moved. Now if something is moved, it is capable of being otherwise than as it is. Therefore, if its actuality is the primary form of spatial motion, then insofar as it is subject to change, in this respect it is capable of being otherwise, in place, even if not in substance. But since there is something which moves while itself unmoved, existing actually, this can in no way be otherwise than as it is.[43]

Two other elements are thus added: first, the final form becomes the efficient cause through 'being loved', and secondly, its external energy produces changeable beings. There is no textual witness that this 'love' causing the world is reciprocal, but the unmoving mover, since he is mind, has life as his energy and this excellent life is imparted to beings:

And life also belongs to God; for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality; and God's self-dependent actuality is life most good and eternal. We say therefore that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration, continuous and eternal, belong to God; for this is God.[44]

This life is *νόησις νοήσεως νόησις* ('thinking as a thinking on thinking', in Ross's perhaps not accurate translation, since the Prime Mover in this text seems not to think on thinking, but on himself as thinking). As it is further explained:[45]

But evidently knowledge and perception and opinion and understanding have always something else as their object, and themselves only by the way. Further, if thinking and being thought of are different, in respect of which

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[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Book 12, ch. 9 in W.D. Ross's translation.

does goodness belong to thought? For to be an act of thinking and to be an object of thought are not the same thing. We answer that in some cases the knowledge is the object. In the productive sciences it is the substance or essence of the object, matter omitted, and in the theoretical sciences the definition or the act of thinking is the object. Since, then, thought and the object of thought are not different in the case of things that have not matter, the divine thought and its object will be the same, i.e., the thinking will be one with the object of its thought.

However, it is impossible to think of knowledge, or perception, or opinion, or understanding, without thinking, at the very same time, of the subject who knows, or understands, etc. whether this subject is identified with the object or not. So the Prime Mover's internal energy of thinking that realizes itself as life—through thinking on himself-as-thinking—moves beings, thus imparting this energy/life/thinking outside him, turning towards the world in an intentional way: briefly, that was the way Palamas, following the Greek Patristic line of thought, understood Aristotle. The problem of dialogical reciprocity or syn-energy between God and creation (along with that of Providence) remains of course unsolved by the Greek philosopher. There are also some other difficult problems here, as pointed out by some Aristotelian scholars. I do not simply mean the aforementioned problem of the existence of Providence here—it is true that only Franz Brentano was so bold as to claim such a position, which was convincingly refuted by Zeller and others—but also the problem of whether God possesses an objective knowledge of the world or not, according to Metaphysics. Starting from Hegel, this problem caused a great variety of answers, the most important of which being perhaps that of Kosman,[46] for whom the concept of *νόησις νοήσεως* does not simply mean a self-thinking self-consciousness, but also a need for intentional reference *ad extra*. First, however, this reference is not simply an act of understanding—objective or not—but an act of automatic radiation and imparting of life. Secondly, this reference seems to be only an internal requirement of Aristotle's theo-logic, just in order for God's self-thinking/acting to have an 'audience', a second 'pole', and for it not to be arbitrary or irrational—and not an intentional relationship (reciprocal or not) with beings existing outside him. This is the collapsing point of Aristotle's Metaphysics, and it is precisely here that Palamas can advance much further.

3

For Palamas, the saints unite with God, 'they become one with him'. If this happens 'by essence' that would result in Monophysitism (a confusion of created and

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[46] Aryeh Kosman, 'Metaphysics Λ9: Divine Thought', *Aristotle's Metaphysics Lambda*, eds M. Frede and D. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 307–26.

uncreated essences); if this happens 'by hypostasis' that would result, according to Palamas, in Sabellianism (one essence in many hypostases). What is left is to achieve union 'by energy'.[47] The term that is used to describe this union is *ἀνάκρασις*,[48] a term not easily translatable into English—we might translate it as commixture, if we take the meaning of the Greek word into account, which is that the elements commixed remain unconfused, although they indwell in each other. Palamas understands the deifying participation precisely as *ἀνάκρασις*. This is the existential content of the baptismal *huiothesia* (adoption) of man, in Christ, through the Spirit, when this adoption is consciously elaborated through grace. The body and the soul in their absolute unity of mind, desire, and affectivity, become co-eternal in this transform-ing psychosomatic vision of the uncreated light[49]—which is what we finally call union with God, a state where 'man becomes light, and sees through light, and sees himself through light, and whatever he sees is also light'. In other words, a state where the eschatological status of human nature in God seems to start here and now in order to be accomplished in the end times. This also changes our concept of historical becoming, which can thus become a becoming of creating common meaning, an inter-meaningfulness.

But the most important thing concerning the Palamite concept of deification, as a participational *ἀνάκρασις*/ascent to God through the divine energies manifested in Christ by the Spirit, is its absolutely relational/koinonetic character, beyond any monological Aristotelian/Neoplatonic divine intentionality. The energies themselves are 'relational and participatory'[50] (i.e., dialogical as analogical, for two absolutely connected reasons).

For Palamas, following Dionysius and Maximus, this is firstly due to the fact that the divine processions/participations/*logoi*, as expressions of the divine loving will, are deeply connected with the concept of analogy. This is a term which signifies a deep dialogue of synergy, or better syn-energy, since for the above authors, analogy refers not to a similitude of essences but to an analogous action between different agents in order for them to achieve union.[51] Thus, divine energy, as a participable expression of divine will, is dialogical, in the sense that it calls for an energetic/active response on the part of its recipients. This is the first way of understanding energies as dialogical/syn-energetic events of analogical participation, or, in our terms here, as events of creating common meaningfulness, or, even better, inter-meaningfulness, between man and God. What I want to initially signify through the term inter-mean-ingfulness, (which is the perhaps inaccurate English translation of the Greek term *δι-εννοημάτωσις* that I have in my mind) is precisely this syn-energetic process of

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[47] *Against Acindynus*, 3, 14, 51.
[48] Ibid., 2, 9, 28; 5, 4, 11.
[49] Ibid., 2, 3, 50.
[50] *Against Acindynus*, 1, 3, 6.
[51] See my *Eucharistic Ontology,* ch. 6, 3.

creating meaning, both divine and human, by the loving God and the responding man together, initially for the sake of each man's personal life; on the other hand, it is also God's offering to be given meaning by man, and become Abraham's and Isaac's and Jacob's God (i.e., a God who respects and perpetuates human otherness without dissolving it or absorbing it).

The second way of understanding energies, and through them, participation, as an analogical/dialogical syn-energy of inter-meaningfulness, is connected to the first. This again has to do with their relational character, as this is ultimately expressed in the ecclesial/koinonetic core of the Palamite understanding of participation. If energy exists only as an analogical syn-energy, this syn-energy does not have to do only with the vertical relation with God, but also with the horizontal relation of what we can call inter-meaningfulness between creatures. Gregory precludes any possibility of a merely intellectual analogical elevation/meaningfulness to God, as for him, this is only imaginary. Any real elevation to God has to happen by the grace/ energy of the Holy Spirit, in Christ, only as a promotion of reciprocal and not individual meaningfulness, and that means, in Palamas' words, that man has to bring with him 'every kind of creature, as he himself participates in everything and is also able to participate in the one who lies above everything, in order for the icon (image) of God to be completed'.[52] In this remarkable passage, horizontal participation becomes an absolute prerequisite of the vertical. In metaphysical terms, that means that it is only in the process of the realization of the ecclesial dialogical/analogical synergetic communion/meaningfulness that elevation to God can be achieved. There is no possibility of any private or solipsistic language or meaning before God, and, furthermore there is no possibility of any 'individual' vision of uncreated light, or participation in the divine energies (i.e., of participation in any process of inter-meaningfulness with God) without progressing at the very same time in a consubstantial, dialogical *perichoresis*/inter-meaningfulness of all other beings in me. In other words, the absolute way for the vision of God is the dialogical realization of an authentic ecclesial communion, as inter-meaningfulness; for example, through reciprocal prayer, friendship, and Eucharistic commemoration. If the others cannot find their meaning in me, through the ways just mentioned, it is impossible for me 'to see the divine light' (i.e., the final divine meaning-of-becoming-in-communion of all things in the Spirit) and enter into union with God. In order to become a syn-energy/dialogue/inter-meaningfulness with God, my action has to happen as a syn-energy/dialogue/inter-meaningfulness with the other, and with 'every kind of creature'. This is why for Palamas, as we read in his *Confession* (§7), the Eucharist, which is also called by him communion and synaxis (gathering) of all creatures, is placed above any ecclesial activity, since it is precisely in the Eucharist where the double analogy of this inter-meaningfulness/ dialogical syn-energy is accomplished.

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[52] *Against Acindynus*, 7, 11, 36.

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We can now include Wittgenstein into our discussion. In his second great philo-sophical work, the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein tries to emerge from his logical atomism, from the solipsism which he essentially accepts in the *Tractatus*, by creating what one might call a social phenomenology of language.[53] Thus, in the *Tractatus* solipsism is essentially accepted with the correction that, here, language does not express the world but shows it via its limits, and the metaphysical subject is regarded as the limit of the world—a non-extended limit between beings and Being, through language, in such a way that the solipsism is identified with a pure realism. On the contrary, in the *Investigations* 'private language' and any kind of solipsism are condemned. The concept of the 'language-game' is introduced,[54] with common lin-guistic rules and criteria of meaning,[55] which make the common linguistic proposals purely empirical (i.e., non 'philosophical'),[56] exercising a regulative pressure within the framework of specific 'forms of life'.[57] These forms dictate specific common lin-guistic usages and justify them absolutely, precisely within the set boundaries of their common usage. Being or the Good continue to remain inaccessible, hidden like hints at the surface grammar of the common language-games,[58] whereas philosophy continues to be unable to draw metaphysical conclusions apart from 'affirming only that which all accept'.

It is, I think, very interesting that although Wittgenstein appears to reveal the social character of language/meaning, he continues to deny it any access to the absolute. He is unable to discern any trace of ontology in this movement towards inter-meaningfulness (to use the term we have coined here) and consequently to attribute an ontological base and function to it. Thus, this sort of apophaticism risks working to the detriment of ontology.

The radical criticism, at any rate, of private language in the *Investigations* is especially significant because it deals a fatal blow to solipsism and the foundations of a theory of language that would have served precisely as an instrument of an atomistic, metaphysical, ecstatic possession of meaningfulness on the part of the subject. Defining such a language as 'those sounds that all the others do not un-derstand although I appear to understand them',[59] Wittgenstein regards the private language, and, subsequently the private meaningfulness, as the greatest enemy of the

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[53] See my 'From the Daydreams of a Private Religious Language to its Ecclesiology: Wittgenstein and Maximus the Confessor', in my book *Church in the Making: An Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality* (New York, NY: St Vladimir's Press, 2016), where the relevant bibliography is discussed.

[54] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), 259–268.

[55] Ibid., 7.

[56] Ibid., 54.

[57] Ibid., 85.

[58] Ibid., 217–41.

[59] Ibid., 269.

common 'forms of life', which, as common social realities, constitute the common truth of human life.

In our terms here, this double participational analogy of this inter-meaningfulness seems to be close to what the second Wittgenstein wanted to signify by replacing any remnant of philosophical metaphysics with a deeper *intersubjectivity-in-the-making*, as I would like to call it—or, as I have already called it elsewhere, 'interlinguality'[60]— and replacing metaphysical claiming with paying attention to everyday conditions where common meaning is created, in mutual understanding and responsibility, beyond any ecstatic solipsism.[61] If thus the mature Wittgenstein would like to speak of Christian theology, his only concern would be, perhaps, the hidden presuppositions of doing theology, the practical (i.e., ascetic) everyday ways of creating common theological meaning, as a syn-energetic inter-subjectivity-in-the making, by means of an analogical, reciprocally achieved and verified inter-meaningfuless. Paradoxically, this seems to be close to what Palamas taught about the practical and applied (ascetic, precisely in the sense of an anti-narcissistic self-denial) way the personal energies, divine and human, converge into a reciprocal syn-energetic meaning/life in Christ, where both human self and divine being, along with human beings between them, and between them and creation, unite, actively and not passively, without confusion. Of course, Palamas clearly goes much further in this direction, and re-founds a (now non-metaphysical) ontology beyond Wittgenstein.

<div align="center">5</div>

Let us now say a few words on Thomas' reading of Aristotle, in order to conclude this paper. For the reader of *Quaestiones disputatae De Potentia*[62] it is clear that, on the one hand, Thomas strives to avoid the dark, narcissistic aspect of an overflowing divinity, which produces the universe in a more or less unconscious way, but on the other hand, he seems to feel completely obliged to somehow combine the Biblical Creator with the Aristotelian Prime Mover. Thus, the divine operation does not have any real external relationship with what it creates in terms of reciprocity—this relationship only exists in the divine mind. This is another way for Thomas to express his Aristotelian conviction of *Sententiae*,[63] that, since an object can be an object of knowledge by a subject in a twofold way—either in connection with the subject's very being or simply as it is in itself—God knows everything only in the former way. Since his action is his substance, to return to our first text,[64] everything that is

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[60] Ibid.

[61] See Miltidiadis N. Theodosiou, *Η φιλοσοφία του Wittgenstein. Η στροφή στην ερμηνεία της και η αξιολόγησή της* [The Philosophy of Wittgenstein. The turn in its interpretation and its evaluation], (Αθήνα: Ευρασία, 2007), 337.

[62] Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae De Potentia* q. 3, art. 3.

[63] Ibid., I, 35, 2.

[64] Ibid., q. 7, 10.

included in this substance is totally alien to created realities. Thus, it is impossible to claim that God receives any additional good through the fact that he produces beings—his action is pure generosity, continues Thomas, referring to Avicenna. Finally, 'it is impossible for him [i.e., God] to be the subject of a real relation with a creature, even if a creature is the subject of a relation of which he is the end, in the way an effect is bound to its cause'. This technical expression does not mean that God does not create communion with creatures, but that this communion, first, takes place in him, and not outside him, and second, that it takes place in his own terms, and without imparting his own divinity to creatures—since they participate in a created similitude of it. Thus, in a way, we do not have two centers of true reciprocity when we speak of the communion between man and God; the center is in man, while, regarding God, reciprocity is taking place within him. This is different from what Palamas seems to mean when he claims that 'the energy remains forever in the beings where it is sent', as we saw above. If the divine energy remains as it is, and forever where it is sent, that means that here a permanent dual reciprocal human-divine process of real and authentic inter-meaningfulness is possible. But in Thomas' case, and in the terms that we have already established, we have a dictated meaningfulness on the part of God rather than an inter-meaningfulness, and in response, a human, created meaningfulness (i.e., divine meaningfulness changed into a subjective, human event, even supernatural, but not clearly uncreated, precisely when it reaches man). This is implied by the fact that beatitude, while it is uncreated on the part of God, is decisively created on the part of man. In Thomas' words:[65] 'The created intellect does not see the divine essence according to the mode of this essence, but according to its [the created intellect's] proper mode, which is finite'. When these views were secularized some centuries later, God became the Lacanian false Other of ideology, or the Feuerbachean fantasy of God in human mind—a view which derives precisely from the conviction that the Infinite is simply a function or projection of human intellect.

I do not claim that we cannot find a theory of participation in Thomas, but it seems that this theory also suffers from a strong philosophical/metaphysical influence, despite it trying to get rid of it. Thomas' reading of Aristotle is of course decisively Christian, but he nonetheless seems at times to need a Biblical complement, since he tends to exhaustively overstress God's unity, something which is not wrong, but becomes controversial when it happens at the expense of God's ontologically real and intentional energetic involvement in creation. Some years ago, and as a contribution to Athanasopoulos and Schneider's volume on the Uncreated Energies,[66] I wrote a

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[65] Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia* IV, 49, q. 2, 5, 3.
[66] Nikolaos Loudovikos, 'Striving for Participation: Palamite Analogy as Dialogical Syn-ernergy and Thomist Analogy as Emanational Similitude', in *Divine Essence and Divine Energies. Ecumenical Reflections on the Presence of God in Eastern Orthodoxy,* eds C. Athanasopoulos and C. Schneider (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2013), 122–48.

paper comparing Thomas and Palamas, where, while accepting Thomas' account of God's unity, I suggested a Palamite correction of Thomas' thought, concerning a possible better articulation of the doctrine of the distinction between divine essence and energies, so familiar to St Gregory and the Greek Patristic thought in general. Some convinced pro-Palamites thought that even a comparison between Palamas and Thomas would contaminate the former's theological wisdom. However, I think that it is precisely the opposite, and I will try to show that this is exactly what the Orthodox theology tried to do immediately after the first encounter between East and West (i.e., after the translations of Aquinas made by Kydonis). The foremost theologian of that period is of course Patriarch George-Gennadios Scholarios. I will make the following points, drawing on Scholarios' *Commentary on De Ente et Essentia*:[67]

1. According to Thomas, says Scholarios, 'there exists a relationship/ synthesis between being and essence in beings, analogous to that of *dynamis* and *entelecheia*'.[68] Being is the *entelecheia* of essence.

2. However, it is impossible to think of God as a synthesis, say, of matter and species, or nature and subject, or being and essence, or subject and accidents, etc.[69] Thus the divine essence, along with its *perfections or energies*[70] 'are not many things but one'[71] (and it is important to say that Thomas, according to Scholarios, admits both *internal ('natural') energies* in God, such as generation and procession, and *external ('willing') energies,* united with his essence, such as creation[72]—a distinction that can hardly be found in the Greek Patristic tradition and probably comes from Plotinus).

3. Furthermore, 'each of God's names corresponds/refers to something that exists in reality'.[73]

4. However, this means both that this distinction, on the one hand, is not real as a synthesis, and, on the other hand, that it is real in the sense that it really happens. In Scholarios' words: 'Divine essence is one thing (sc. according to Thomas); and its perfections or energies are also called things, not in the same way, but in the sense that they belong to that thing and are in that thing, and finally in the sense that they are real ($\pi\rho\alpha\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$); in this way, on the one hand, we do not have synthesis in God, between energies and divine essence, but, on the other hand, these are real and true perfections'.[74]

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[67] L. Petit, X.A. Siderides, and M. Jugie, eds, *Oeuvres Complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios,* vol. VI (Paris: Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1933).

[68] Ibid., 275.

[69] Ibid., 278.

[70] Ibid., 280.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid., 279.

[73] Ibid., 278.

[74] Ibid., 280.

5. Scholarios then attacks Varlaam and Akindynos, defending Gregory Palamas in a Thomist way. Varlaam's and Akindynos' mistake is that they argued that 'the energies cannot be distinguished from God's essence, but they are distinguished only by our mind, which creates terms in order to describe this unreal distinction'.[75] So, for them, this distinction is made only by mind (κατ᾽ ἐπίνοιαν μόνην).[76] But for Palamas and his followers this distinction is real (πραγματική), without abolishing God's simplicity, as happens with the distinction between essence and hypostases, which likewise does not disturb divine simplicity.[77]

6. Now, Scholarios claims that there also exist other Latin Fathers who would agree with Palamas on that point. It is obvious that he means here John Duns Scotus, as he makes this clear in another point of the same work.[78] Here he clearly aligns Thomas, Scotus and Palamas... This is the only positive reference of Scotus that he makes, since he opposes many times his views on the *Filioque*. Of course, he does not identify Palamas with Scotus, as some modern Western scholars did, in order to prove him totally remote and alien to Thomas—and oppose the latter to the former.

7. Scholarios suggests that, by denying any other distinction in God except the one 'made by reason', Thomas of course does not mean two different things—essence and perfections/energies in God—but a distinction 'of one thing and in this thing' (τοῦ τε πράγματος ὄντα καὶ ἐν τῷ πράγματι).[79] In this way Thomas stresses unity of essence and energy in God, as both belong together to the one divine thing/being, which is what the Patriarch asserts in the end.

8. In a similar way, Palamas, on the one hand, 'following the ancient teachers, and the opinion of our mother Church, asserts that divine energy and divine essence are indeed/really (πραγματικώς) distinguished, without considering the divine perfections/energies as (separate) things [...], but thinking of them as belonging to the thing and in the thing, that means real and not [independent] things (πραγματικά μᾶλλον ἢ πράγματα), [...] and not accepting their distinction as only made by mind' like Varlaam and Akindynos. On the other hand, like Aquinas, he 'distinguishes them according to the reason and in the theological discourse, which wants to describe what they are in their nature'.[80] Thus, according to the Patriach Scholarios, the distinction between essence and energies in Palamas is at the

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75 Ibid., 282.
76 Ibid., 283.
77 Ibid., 282.
78 Ibid., 180.
79 Ibid., 283.
80 Ibid., 285.

same time both real and made by mind (i.e., 'according to the reason and in theological discourse').

9. Furthermore, it is absolutely crucial to note that Scholarios, as he clearly claims in the foreword of his summary of the *Summa contra Gentiles,* is adamant to declare that Thomas is wrong, concerning his position on the procession of the Holy Spirit, but he is also incomplete in his doctrine concerning the real distinction between essence and energies. Here he emphatically stresses that only Palamas and the Greek Patristic tradition have properly understood the whole thing.[81] In a way, Palamas is a much better Thomas, since he showed that this real, but also 'made by mind', distinction, means a *real uncreated presence in the world*, and a real reciprocal relation between God and creation, where God is present as uncreated, and not in the form of a created grace, in order to allegedly fit with human finiteness. According to Thomas, God's unity somehow underplays his real synergetic *ekstasis*, although he admits that God's perfections or energies are real *inside* God; while for Palamas, both the issues of unity and that of distinction between essence and energies co-exist, along with the subsequent real diffusion of the divine essential energies in creation, which by grace transforms the mode of existence of beings into divine. Divine participation is thus not simply 'supernatural', but uncreated indeed.

Scholarios' dialogue with the West was not confessional but theological. He does not hesitate to reject Thomas' or Scotus' claims concerning the *Filioque* or the papal monarchical and universally jurisdictional ambitions, and he strongly and frankly believes, although for theological and not confessional reasons, that Palamas does not necessarily oppose Thomas in his account both of the unity of God's essence and the distinction between divine essence and energies. He nevertheless expresses the whole thing in a considerably more biblically accurate way. Perhaps that was the only way for him to show his conviction that Palamas was a universal teacher and not just a confessional apologist.

In this way, Palamite theology seems to be a fully-fledged theology of participation as intersubjective meaningfulness. It goes without saying that Thomas was likewise absolutely positively disposed towards inter-subjectivity, but his metaphysical onto-logical restraints did not allow him to articulate a true theological ontology of reciprocal presence/meaningfulness. If, as I have claimed elsewhere,[82] it is true

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[81] Vol. V, 2.

[82] See my 'Consubstantial Selves; a Discussion between Orthodox Personalism, Existential Psychology, Heinz Kohut, and Jean-Luc Marion', in the volume '*Personhood in the Byzantine Christian Tradition; Early, Medieval and Modern Tradition,* eds A. Torrance and S. Paschalidis, (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 182–196. See also my 'Being and Essence Revisited: Reciprocal logoi and energies in Maximus the Confessor and Thomas Aquinas, and the Genesis of the Self-referring Subject', in *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 72, no. 1 (2016): 117–146.

that, when the Thomist views were secularized, the modern self-referring subject appeared, then it leads us to think that perhaps Wittgenstein had precisely this sort of secularised ex-Thomist subject in his mind—along with this subject's imaginary way of constructing (private) language and metaphysical meaning—when he made his decisive anti-metaphysical turn toward what I called inter-subjectivity-in-the-making or what, following Palamas' understanding of dialogical syn-energy, we can even better call reciprocal meaning-creating *δι-εννοημάτωσις*/inter-meaningfulness.

We can stop here. It is important, I think, to read tradition with 'a soul and a body', as Rimbaud once wrote; but it is most important to read it while being surrendered to its living spiritual source. Then, the Spirit will always give new life and meaning to the letter.

St Gregory Palamas on the Eschatological State: Some Observations

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This paper serves as a brief and very preliminary exploration of a fascinating and under-explored aspect of St Gregory Palamas' teaching: the nature of the next life. While we are used to thinking of St Gregory as someone who fought for the reality of human experience of the breaking-in of the Kingdom, the *eschaton*, even in this life, we are perhaps less prone to ponder what he has to say about the next life. In this respect, Gregory offers a number of intriguing suggestions, notably in terms of the vision of God with the eyes of the spiritual body and human participation, not only in the Resurrection but also in the Ascension of Christ.

The whole thrust of St Gregory Palamas' teaching is dedicated to the proposition that the *eschaton* is not to be imagined as some sort of future state but as the underlying, undergirding, and all-embracing eternal reality of the cosmos—a reality that is absolutely accessible to us in this life, and which has a habit of breaking into this world and upsetting all our comforting notions of linear time and bounded space. This breaking-in of the alone real, the Kingdom, is of course more than mildly mind-boggling, and indeed incapable of exhaustive expression. As T.S. Eliot puts it: 'human kind / Cannot bear very much reality'.[1] But Palamas is at great pains to defend the possibility of the vision and ingress of the wholly actual, the eternal now, into this life—however unbearable that might be. To put it more simply, Palamas categorically affirms that human beings can see and experience God and his Kingdom both in this life and *a fortiori* in the next life. The *eschaton* is to be understood not in terms of spatial or temporal extent (that is as far off and/or a long time ahead) but as the ultimate and uttermost here and now.[2]

Palamas' conception of time and eternity is certainly nourished by the hymnography and iconography of the Orthodox Church. Among many possible examples, let me invoke the text of the divine liturgy of St John Chrysostom in

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[1] Thomas S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*: 'Burnt Norton', I.

[2] This paper was given at a colloquium on 'Imagining the Eschatological State' held at Wheaton College in the spring of 2017. It stands, as I say, as a very preliminary exploration of a complex theme that deserves closer and more sustained attention than I have been able to afford it here.

which, immediately following the recitation of the words of institution, the bishop or priest intones:

> Remembering, therefore, this saving commandment and all that has some to pass for our sake, the Cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand, and the second and glorious coming again […].[3]

It is all very well to remember the Cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day—but the second and glorious coming again? How are we to remember the second coming unless we understand the economy of salvation as a transhistorical event—something that has happened, is happening, and will happen—something that in a sense is always happening? A similar intuition is evident in the Book of Revelation's reference to 'the lamb slain before the foundation of the earth' (Rev. 13:8).

Multiple further assaults on what has been called the 'comforting step ladder of chronology'[4] can be found in the liturgical texts of the Orthodox Church. Consider the *troparion* appointed for the feast of the Annunciation or, as it has long been called in the English-speaking world, Lady Day:

> Today is the crown of our salvation and the manifestation mystery that is from all eternity. The Son of God becomes Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announces the good tidings of grace. Therefore let us also join him and cry aloud to the Theotokos: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee![5]

Note the eternal 'now' not only in the opening 'today' but also in the consistent use of the present tense. In this feast (as with all the great feasts of the Church) we are not commemorating some distant event but entering into Christ's ongoing and ever-present economy of salvation.

Palamas, in his own homily on the feast of the Annunciation, makes it clear that notions of past, present, and future collapse in the person of the Virgin: 'She is the cause of the benefits which preceded her, the protector of those which came after, and through her those good things which are eternal shall be received'. As the one who conceived the divine fire within her and was not consumed, she is

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[3] *Μεμνημένοι τοίνυν τῆς σωτηρίου ταύτης ἐντολῆς καὶ πάντων τῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν γεγενημένων, τοῦ Σταυροῦ, τοῦ τάφου, τῆς τριημέρου ἀναστάσεως, τῆς εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀναβάσεως, τῆς ἐκ δεξιῶν καθέδρας, τῆς δευτέρας καὶ ἐνδόξου πάλιν παρουσίας […].* See *Ἱερατικόν, Ἔκδοσις Ζ´* (Ἀθήνα: Ἀποστολικὴ Διακονία, 2009), 132.

[4] I borrow this odd but arresting metaphor from Ben Fowkes, *Communism in Germany under the Weimar Republic* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 172. As the title indicates, the subject matter of that book is quite different.

[5] *The Festal Menaion,* trans. Mother Mary and Archimandrite (now Metropolitan) Kallistos Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), 446.

both the burning bush from which God spoke to Moses and the tongs with which the Seraphim bore the live coal to Isaiah's lips. She alone, according to Palamas, is the boundary (μεθόριον) between created and uncreated nature—the one in and through whom God was able to unite himself to human nature and thus open to all human beings the promise of deification: 'God became human so that humans might be deified'.[6] As the means by which God became human, and thus the very ground and matrix of *theosis*, she is to be confessed as 'the beginning, source, and root of the hope stored up for us in heaven'.[7]

Consider also the Orthodox icon in which received notions of time and indeed space are collapsed. Readers of this journal will doubtless be familiar with the notion of reverse perspective in which certain objects are depicted bigger the further away they are (for example the Gospel book held by Christ *Pantokrator*). But reverse perspective is only one of the ways in which icons challenge received notions of time and space. Icons routinely combine a bird's eye view with a face-on presentation, or a two-dimensional figure with a three-dimensional background, or interior space with exterior features. Moreover, non-simultaneous events are routinely depicted on the same plane—as in the icon of the Nativity for example. In the icon, as in the liturgy, it is always 'now'.

To return to Palamas' teaching on the experience of the *eschaton*, it is worth underlining the fact that his strenuous insistence on the possibility of the vision of eternal, uncreated reality in this life came in response to some serious attacks on the very notion of properly religious experience. The prominent and erudite Italo-Greek monk Barlaam of Calabria, with whom he had already fallen out on a separate but related issue, took grave exception to some of the claims made by monks of Mount Athos and elsewhere, that it was possible, under certain circumstances, to see God as light. Barlaam found such claims appalling, especially when voiced by those he regarded as uneducated and ignorant monks. Barlaam attacked such rustics as *omphalopsychoi* ('those who have their soul in their navels') and Messalians—an ancient heresy believed to have dispensed with the sacraments of the Church and to have taught that prayer alone brings about the vision of God with the physical eyes.[8]

For Palamas, as for St Gregory of Sinai before him, the light witnessed in prayer by the Hesychast monks was to be understood as the very same light that shone from Christ on Thabor. The theophanies of the Old Testament should, similarly, be understood as true manifestations of God—the self-revelation of the uncreated to the created. Barlaam had no time for any of this. For Barlaam, it was absurd to suggest that the creature can see or in any way experience the Creator. For Barlaam there are,

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[6] Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* 54 (cf. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.19.1).

[7] Homily 14.15 (*On the Annunciation*). This and subsequent translations from Gregory are my own unless otherwise indicated. For the homilies, I have gratefully consulted Christopher Veniamin's *The Homilies of Saint Gregory Palamas* (South Canaan, PA: St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2002).

[8] The charge of Messalianism may also have targeted the Hesychast's somewhat reticent attitude to Church architecture and adornment.

properly speaking, no theophanies, no manifestations of God in this world. The best we can hope for is a kind of intellectual illumination similar to that vouchsafed to the philosophers of old. The light of Thabor cannot have been the light of divinity, but merely a created symbol standing for the intellectual illumination gifted by God to those he chooses.

In countering that it is indeed possible to see God as light, Palamas is led to specify that in seeing God, we do not see all there is of God. We do not see the essence of God, which remains forever hidden and inaccessible, but we see precisely that which God enables us to see: the revelation of his essence in his divine operation, activity, or energy. This energy is to be distinguished from the essence, even as it remains forever united with the essence. God remains one and simple. But I will not labour this point here.[9] Instead, I shall move on to what Gregory has to say about the nature of the human beings' experience of eschatological reality in this life and move on to consider how things might be different (or indeed similar) in the next life.

Palamas understands that the uncreated light of the Transfiguration is sensed and perceived by the spiritual senses.[10] There is no physical light to be seen on Thabor—a bystander would have noticed nothing particularly out of ordinary (apart from the stricken postures of the disciples). Palamas turns to Maximus for an assertion that the vision took place 'by a transformation of the senses' effected by the Holy Spirit.[11] It is by this transformation of the faculty of sense perception that the disciples are able to see the ineffable light. And it is this same transformation that allows the saints to see that same light in prayer—'transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit'.[12] That said, Palamas does allow, on the basis of the unity of the human being composed of body and soul, that spiritual perception is communicated in some mysterious way to the senses of the body—that, for example, a sensation of warmth or perception of visible light may accompany what is properly speaking an experience of the spiritual or intellectual senses. One also finds in Gregory a sense of the thinness of the veil between God and man in such states—a veil he calls a 'transparent' or 'crystal membrane'.[13]

There are almost innumerable other instances in which Gregory affirms the possibility and reality of the vision of God in this life. The vision of the Apostle Stephen,[14] for example, was a spiritual illumination apprehended by the spiritual

[9] See my essay on 'St Gregory Palamas on the Divine Simplicity' forthcoming in *Modern Theology*.
[10] Homily 34 (*On the Transfiguration*). See also my article on the spiritual senses in Palamas and others: 'The Spiritual Senses: Monastic and Theological' in *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls: Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*, eds S. Harvey and M. Mullet (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 2017), 301–12.
[11] Homily 34.8.
[12] Homily 34.13.
[13] […] διεφαίνετο γὰρ οἷον δι' ὑελίνων ὑμένων ἡ θεία δύναμις διαυγάζουσα τοῖς ἔχουσι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας κεκαθαρμένους. Homily 34.14.
[14] 'But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God".' (Acts 6:55–56) (RSV).

or intellectual senses and communicated to the body. Sometimes this inner illumination can even be physically manifested upon the body. This is why Moses' face shone as he came down from Sinai and why Stephen's face shone like that of an angel—in both cases being the result of an inward participation in the divine light.[15] The vision of Stephen was a vision of the glory of God—that is to say a vision of God in his divine glory or energy. This is the same glory or energy that was revealed to the disciples as light on Thabor, and indeed to Paul on the road to Damascus. These visions are to be understood as unifying and deifying in accordance with the declaration of the Psalmist: 'In thy light shall we see light' (Ps. 36:9).[16] Time and time again, argues Gregory, scripture witnesses to the fact that the vision of God as light is indeed a vision of God himself, if, to be sure, a vision of God's energy and not of the essence itself.[17]

And this vision, this experience, is, quite literally, deifying. Deification begins in this life even if it is to be perfected only in the next life. While deification may be construed as an eschatological process it is certainly not restricted to the next life. One might use the term 'realised eschatology' here, but I do not think it gets us to the heart of what Palamas is trying to express: the unfolding and inflowing of the Kingdom within human history.[18] But the historical course of the Hesychast Controversy gave Gregory little leisure to consider how things might be different in the next life. While Barlaam's anti-Palamite successors had rather more subtle takes on issues such as the character of the light of the Transfiguration, the Controversy remained centred very much on the possibility of a vision of God in this life and on issues surrounding the essence-energies distinction. There was relatively little controversy concerning the next life.

Palamas does, however, make several important and intriguing observations on the next life. I shall, in what remains of this brief essay, draw attention to three such observations. Firstly, and this is perhaps wholly to be expected, he suggests that the spiritual body will be more permeable to the vision of God than even the transformed faculties of a disciple on Thabor or a Hesychast on Athos rapt in the vision of divine light. A spiritual body will see and enjoy the vision of God both spiritually and bodily. Down here the senses must be transformed in order that the soul might see the divine light, notwithstanding its embodiment in solid, mortal flesh. Much of the time the heaviness of our flesh suppresses the spiritual senses and makes us incapable of seeing the divine light. But with a spiritual body, all this is changed:

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[15] *Triads* I.3.30–31; cf. *Triads* II.2.12–13.

[16] *Triads* II.3.27.

[17] Cf. also *Triads* II.3.66; III.3.4–5.

[18] Cf. John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (London: Faith Press, 1964), 194. Palamas' vision certainly does not correspond to the use of the term in C.H. Dodd and others, where it stands for an effective downgrading and deconstruction of the whole notion of eschatology. With Palamas, the *eschaton* is a powerful and ever-present reality, poised at any moment to break into our limited and time-bound reality.

In the blessed existence of the age to come […] the body will receive an angelic dignity. With the victory of the spirit, the body will be so subtle that it will no longer seem in any way material and will no longer impede the operations of the intellect. For this reason they [the sons of the resurrection] will also enjoy the divine light with their bodily senses.[19]

With such unimpeded vision, even the thin 'crystal membrane' is done away with.

Palamas' second observation about the next life is, I think, rather more interesting and perhaps even somewhat surprising. In short, he affirms that resurrection pure and simple will not necessarily entail the vision of God, given that it also applies to sinners for whom resurrection is but a prelude to the second death which is, of course, far worse than the first. As he writes to the Nun Xena:

Even though at the regeneration to come, in the resurrection of the righteous, the bodies of the godless and sinners will also be raised up, yet they will be given over to the second death, age-long chastisement, the unsleeping worm (cf. Mark 9:44), the gnashing of teeth, the outer, tangible darkness (cf. Matt. 8:12), the murky and unquenchable fire of Gehenna (cf. Matt. 5:22), in which, as the prophet says, the godless and sinners 'will be burned up together and there will be none to quench the flame' (Isa. 1:31). For this is the second death, as St John has taught us in the Revelation (cf. Rev. 20:14). Hark, too, to the words of St Paul, 'If you live in accordance with your fallen self, you will die, but if through the Spirit you extirpate the evil actions of your fallen self, you will live' (Rom. 8:13). Here he speaks of life and death in the age to be: life is the enjoyment of the everlasting kingdom, death age-long chastisement.[20]

But for those raised unto salvation, the outlook is, happily, rather better:

And for those who experience it the consequence of this resurrection will be true incorruption and eternal life with God: they will become spiritual instead of non-spiritual, and will dwell in heaven as angels of God (cf. Matt. 22:30). As St Paul says, 'We shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall be with the Lord for ever' (I Thess. 4:17). The Son of God, who in His compassion became man, died so far as His body was concerned when His soul was separated from His body; but this body was not separated from His divinity, and so He raised up His body once more

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[19] *Triads* 1.3.36.
[20] *To Xena* 11 (trans G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard, and K. Ware in *The Philokalia* 4 [London: Faber and Faber, 1995], 296).

and took it with Him to heaven in glory. Similarly, when those who have lived here in a godly manner are separated from their bodies, they are not separated from God, and in the resurrection they will take their bodies with them to God, and in their bodies they will enter with inexpressible joy there where Jesus has preceded us (cf. Heb. 6:20) and in their bodies they will enjoy the glory that will be revealed in Christ (cf. 1 Pet. 5:1). Indeed, they will share not only in resurrection, but also in the Lord's ascension and in all divine life.[21]

It is this promised participation in the Ascension that I find particularly interesting.

As he lived, died, rose again, and ascended, so all of us live, die, and are resurrected. But not all of us will attain to the ascension, but only those for whom 'to live is Christ, and to die for him is gain' (Phil. 1:21), those of us who, before they died, crucified sin through repentance and a life lived in accordance with the Gospel. After the common resurrection, they alone will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (cf. I Thess. 4:17).[22]

In a sense, Christ's Ascension is a greater mystery than his Resurrection. In celebrating his Ascension 'we celebrate the passage of our nature in him, not just from the subterranean realm up to the earth, but from the earth to the heaven of heavens, and beyond that to the throne of him who is master of all.'[23]

Other resurrections and ascensions are of course encountered in scripture and tradition but, Palamas declares, 'we celebrate none of them as we do the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension, because we do not and will not participate in them'.[24] This participation in the Ascension is a distinctive and arresting feature of Palamas' account of the next life.[25]

Thirdly and lastly, let me note Palamas' embrace of the doctrine of infinite progress or *epektasis*. Taking Dionysius (rather than Gregory of Nyssa) as his proximate source of inspiration, Palamas alleges that there is no question, but that the experience and contemplation of God is an infinite pursuit, beginning in this life and continuing in the next. In the next age, those who are counted worthy will advance infinitely as they draw ever closer to God, their capacity to enjoy his grace growing as they advance tirelessly in their ascent to him. Beyond apophatic theology, beyond even the *ekstasis* that lies far above apophatic theology, there begins a higher

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[21] *To Xena* 14–15 (trans G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard, and K. Ware in *The Philokalia* 4, 297–98).
[22] Homily 22.16 (*On the Ascension*).
[23] Homily 21.1 (*On the Ascension*).
[24] Homily 21.4 (*On the Ascension*).
[25] Alas, Palamas does not merit mention in Douglas Farrow's *Ascension Theology* (London: T & T Clark, 2011).

contemplation of light. In such contemplation, one who has through ascetic effort and prayer reached the very summit of human possibilities is illumined and ravished by the Holy Spirit in ways which ultimately exceed human comprehension or expression. I shall allow his own words on this score to stand as a fitting conclusion to this preliminary and tentative exploration of his vision of the eschatological state.

> This contemplation has a beginning and something following that beginning that is sometimes fainter, sometimes brighter, but has no end, for its progression is infinite as is the ravishment of revelation. Illumination is one thing but sustained vision of the light and the realities which are in the light is quite another thing: a vision in which far off things appear to the eyes to be near and the future appears as present.[26]

[26] *Triads* II.3.35.

Divine Essence, Divine Persons, and Divine Energies in Gregory Palamas: A Methodological Approach

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In the present study, which is based on Gregory Palamas' work *Περὶ θείας ἐνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως* (On Divine Union and Distinction), it is our aim to present a methodological proposal for an approach to the texts of this Christian theologian, bearing in mind, on the one hand, the preceding tradition and teaching of Eastern Christianity and, on the other, the specific thematic directions taken by the text. The central thrust of our analysis is the question of the union and distinction between the divine essence, the divine persons, and the divine energies. Moreover, through a rational organization of the concepts, we attempt to establish a theory concerning theological metaphysics in order to demonstrate that they all reflect the same ontological reality: that is, the Holy Trinity. As regards the structure of our study, we examine the following categories: 1. the uniform manner of divine creativity and a cognitive approach thereto; 2. created things are not divine 'procession', but the results thereof; 3. God creates without multiplying; 4. the participated exist before the participating; 5. the divine as transcending any number; 6. the divine names are not an empty sound; 7. on the kinds of distinction; 8. on hypostatic distinction; 9. on the uncreated nature of the divine hypostases. These are issues which first touch upon the field of ontology and then that of epistemology.

Introduction

This study lies chiefly within the compass of methodology. In particular, it aims at presenting a methodological proposal for an approach to the texts of the Christian theologian Gregory Palamas. The proposal is concerned with how to locate and

classify into chapters the concepts used by Gregory according to the principle of logical sequence and organic succession. As criteria, we have taken two factors, one general and the other specific. The general factor is the dogmatic teaching of Eastern Christianity, as formed by tradition, and the terms which this imposes on any scholar. The specific factor is the thematic direction of the text under examination. In a general framework of examination, these two criteria are mutually contiguous and function in a complementary manner. The general illumines the course of the specific. In turn, the specific affirms—sometimes axiomatically—the prevailing principles of the general. Therefore, irrespective of whether they appear successively or in composition, the deductive and inductive methods establish a full and cohesive argument or a syllogistic process.

As the text for analysis, we have chosen Palamas' treatise *On Divine Union and Distinction,*[1] which is concerned with the well-known issue of the union and distinction between the divine essence, the divine persons, and the divine energies.[2] We will not, however, deal exclusively with this issue itself. Employing a quasi-phenomenological approach, our analysis will, to some degree, set this issue to one side; though this, of course, does not mean that its dogmatic foundations and its ramifications will be overlooked. What will also concern us is how—on the basis of the principles of Christianity—we might achieve a rational classification of its concepts, and thus construct and develop a theory of theological Metaphysics. In order to do this, we shall employ a method of genetic emanation. We shall examine how much, according to our classification, each previous concept is the genetic source of that which immediately succeeds it; and, conversely, how far each of the succeeding ones is a genetic product of that which immediately precedes it. Our aim is to demonstrate that all the concepts belong to the same logical unit and that they reflect the same ontological reality—that is, the Holy Trinity—as 'remaining' and as 'procession', to use Neo-Platonic terminology, as transcendence and productivity respectively. It is self-evident that these are concepts which belong to the realm of Dogmatics and are not associated, at least not directly, with Ecclesiology and Ethics.

We wish to note that we have attempted similar approaches in previous studies[3] in which we analysed the following general categories: 1. Pseudo-Dionysius as a

[1] The text in question is included in the second volume of the Greek critical edition by P. Christou et al., *Γρηγορίου του Παλαμά Συγγράμματα* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Κυρομάνος, 1994), 69–95.

[2] This issue is one of the central issues of the Areopagitic tradition, the main axes being Maximus the Confessor and George Pachymeres. See, for example, Melchisedek Törönen, *Union and Distinction in the Thought of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). The same issue was raised by the representatives of Neoplatonism, Proclus (see, for example, *In Platonis Parmenidem*, 742.24–760.17) and Damascius (see, for example *De Principiis* 1.1–46.8). Cf. Joseph Combés, 'Damascius lecteur du Parménide', *Archives de Philosophie* 38 (1975): 33–60.

[3] See, for example, Christos Terezis and Lydia Petridou, 'The theory on 'unions – distinctions' as a paradigm of Gr. Palamas' methodology' *ΣΧΟΛΗ: Ancient Philosophy and the Classical Tradition* 11:1 (2017): 117–32; 'Ontological and gnoseological questions in Gregory Palamas according to the Christian theory on unions and distinctions', *Philotheos: International Journal for Philosophy and Theology* 16 (2016): 85–98.

disciple of the Apostles; 2. Pseudo-Dionysius as inspired by God; 3. faithful adherence to Dionysius' principles; 4. the distortion of Pseudo-Dionysius by Akyndinos; 5. the mystical and evidential element of theology; 6. the division of God into created and uncreated; 7. the reduction of the energies into created phenomena or their admixture with the essence; 8. uncreated essence-uncreated energies; 9. the distinctions correspond to the unions and the uncreated; 10. the energies as providences are without beginning and prefigurations of beings, but not essence; 11. the processions belong to the three divine Persons in common; 12. the volitional character and the polymorphism of the divine 'processions'; 13. the divine distinction as a beneficial 'procession'; 14. the paradoxes that emerge from the notion that the distinction is created; 15. the divine—and not the created—are united and distinguished. The non-union or distinction of the created from God; 16. created things as a source for knowledge of the divine energies.

In the present study, we will examine the following categories: 1. the uniform manner of divine creativity and a cognitive approach to it; 2. created things do not themselves constitute divine procession, but rather the results thereof; 3. God creates without multiplying; 4. the participated exist before the participating; 5. the divine as transcending any number; 6. the divine names are not an empty sound; 7. on the kinds of distinction; 8. on hypostatic distinction; 9. on the uncreated nature of the divine hypostases. These are issues which first touch upon the field of ontology, then that of epistemology.

The Uniform Manner of Divine Creativity and a Cognitive Approach to It

Insisting strictly on the self-founding integrity of the divine hypostasis, Gregory Palamas notes, in the form of an irrefutable conclusion, that, although God produced many essences which differ among themselves—despite any obvious points they may have in common—he himself, in his essence, retains an absolute state of unity, remaining, as regards that which defines its selfhood, entirely undiscernible and un-revealed. In his view, though, the sensible world provides certain specific data related to the predicates in the divine which can be utilized in a cognitive/theoretical manner. The argumentation is particularly careful, and is expressed as follows: the many and varied essences in nature most certainly do not bring us gnoseologically closer to the divine essence, since there is not the slightest parallel between them. We do, however, recognize its specific powers and energies and the—initially internal and, thereafter, productive—distinction of almighty God,[4] which follows their

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[4] See Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως 29, 90.14–22. This is an argument which, from the ontological data, stems from human observation motivated by analogy. In this regard, Jacques Lison observes that Palamas does not specify the particular nature of the distinction between divine essence and divine energy, and that his approach is more rational and epistemological than factual in his analysis (*L'Esprit répandu* [Paris: Cerf, 1994], 153). It is easy to see, however, that this distinction, as part of superlative theology, may not be gnoseologically approached. The state of unutterability is retained and theological realism is domi-

manifestation. On the above terms of the co-existence and circumincession between the unity and the distinction, we can understand sufficiently well the following text from Dionysius the Areopagite: ʻμένοντος (sc. τοῦ Θεοῦ) δὲ οὐδὲν ἧττον ἐκείνου, καὶ ἑνὸς ἐν τῷ πληθυσμῷ, καὶ ἡνωμένου κατὰ τὴν πρόοδον καὶ πλήρους ἐν τῇ διακρίσει, τῷ πάντων εἶναι τῶν ὄντων ὑπερουσίως ἐξηρημένον'. ʻGiven that he (viz. God) remains undiminished, and one in the multiplicity, and unified during the procession, and complete in the distinction, by being supra-essentially exalted above all beings'.[5] In other words, we observe the emphasis on the locative and qualitative difference of the divine essence from created beings and, by extension, that the created cannot participate therein. It can therefore be understood that the properties of the super-essentiality and its remaining within its ontological boundaries, constitute, under any approach, a hyper-plenitude which, because of the absolute difference of the two ontological levels, is non-transferable. Given that there is no kind of hierarchy in the Holy Trinity, these properties also belong to the divine hypostases, in their common ʻprocession', which is, however, not revealed from the beginning. It is precisely to this property of non-transferability to the first transcendental level that divine distinction also belongs, as, in a sense, a self-regulating mode of existence.

Moreover, according to Palamas, the transcendentality of the Holy Trinity in relation to the totality of created beings is due to the fact that, because of its self-sufficiency, it does not admit any exogenous reception and is entirely independent. This radical, distinct presence is due, by ontological and logical implication, to the structure of the relationships which it has developed—entirely on its own initiative—with everything it produces. It is, therefore, an ontological reality to which nothing is added by the many beings which have derived, and continue to derive, from its creative manifestation. The metaphysical is completely independent of the physical, in the perspective of that strict monism which, on a horizontal and vertical scale, strictly defines the procedures. At the same time, the Holy Trinity remains permanently in its unity, lacking nothing, and, as such, does not move to acquire anything new in essence or energy, not even to gain self-awareness or self-actualization.[6] Consequently, any being that lacks nothing cannot be other than complete. ʻΤὸ γὰρ ἐκ πολλῶν τῶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ παρηγμένων ὄντων μηδὲν προσλαμβάνον, ἀλλὰ μένον ἕν, ὡς μηδενὸς προσδεόμενον οὐ προσλαμβάνει. Τὸ δὲ μηδενὸς προσδεόμενον πλῆρες

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nant. Moreover, it should also be noted that exceptionally advanced scientific efforts are required to clarify the distinction between matter and its energy in the sensible world.

⁵ See *De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:649B). The Christian and Neoplatonic ʻremaining-procession-reversion' scheme is quite clear in this passage, with the third term being elaborated in other parts, mainly linked to the teleological/eschatological divine planning, which created beings will assimilate consciously and will willingly activate. On this, see Stephen Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), especially on the Neoplatonist angle 55–57 and 225–27 on the Christian scheme. See also, René Roques, *L'Univers dionysien, Structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys* (Paris: Montaigne 1954), 283.

⁶ In connection with the Holy Trinity, see Vladimir Lossky, *Essai sur la Théologie Mystique de l'Église d'Orient* (Paris: Cerf, 1944), 43–64.

ἐξ ἀνάγκης'. 'For it has taken nothing from the many beings proceeding from it, but remains one; as being in need of nothing, it adds nothing. What is in need of nothing is necessarily complete'.[7] And in the broader context, the Godhead possesses the property of completeness from the outset (i.e., in a self-founding mode), without being affected by time at all.

These transcendental situations also apply to the undiminished outpouring of the undiminished transmissions of the Holy Trinity, upon the manifestation of which it experiences no abstraction or diminution, due, once again, to its super self-sufficiency. And on this basis, whatever is not diminished is also not susceptible to abstraction, while, at the same time, whatever is diffused by preserving its transcendence while not suffering diminution is, according to its ontological idiolect, complete. Palamas concludes that the ontological reality whose 'processions' and transmissions have the property of completeness, possesses the properties of being irreducible and without diminution, precisely by ascending to the source which it expresses. Extending the above, Palamas emphasizes that the Holy Trinity is not only absolutely complete, but also, according to the principles of superlative theology, transcends even that which we regarded as complete in its essence.[8] The differences, then, between the uncreated and the created become broader; therefore, there appear valid research and interpretative data for the definition—insofar as this is possible—of their particular content on the basis of strict epistemological delineations. And the 'processions' make a major contribution to clarifying the ontological particularities.

Created Beings are Not Divine 'Procession' but rather the Effects Thereof

Palamas thus stresses, as he does in other parts of his work, that intellectuals who place the divine 'processions' in the category of created things are making invalid logical extensions and are producing confusion. Their error can be traced to their contention that, in the multiplication of distinctions, God himself is multiplied, since he produces the many created things from his own self. The things of the created world, however, are not 'processions' through which the divine is multiplied. They are entirely located on the level of results, through which, insofar as this is possible, any productive manifestation of God becomes known to human awareness.[9] The

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[7] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 29, 90.22–91.2. The whole scheme of things here is linked to the non-negotiable concept that God creates by reason of the impulse of his will, not from any necessity. See, merely as an example, Nikos Matsoukas, *Κόσμος, ἄνθρωπος, κοινωνία κατὰ τὸν Μάξιμο Ὁμολογητή* (Ἀθήνα: Γρηγόρη, 1980), 47–67. As regards the way in which theological epistemology is composed also of informed critical observations on the limits of the scope of natural theology as a prerequisite for integrated theological thought, see Nikos Nisiotis, *Προλεγόμενα εἰς τὴν θεολογικὴν γνωσιολογίαν* (Ἀθήνα: Μήνυμα, 1986).

[8] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 29, 91.2–10. Cf. *De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:649C). Here we have an initial situation analogous, in absolute integrity, to 'super-self-sufficiency'.

[9] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 7, 74.7–11. It should be noted that every divine 'procession'

prospect that is expressly rejected is the inclusion of beings in the divine essence and, by extension, its enforced multiplication from the outset, or its subordination to the ontological necessities of its own being. The prospect of an eternal co-existence is explicitly rejected, since pantheism would result, not as an emanation, but rather pre-existing as a 'remaining'. Therefore, the theoretically legitimate argument which can be sustained is that God is multiplied without being separated together with his energies, which can perpetually and limitlessly intervene *ad extra* under the conditions expressed by his will, as a projection of his absolute freedom.[10] Active causality regulates everything.

In order to imbue the above with a perspective of epistemology and onomatology, the Christian theologian recalls that Dionysius refers to common and unified names for the divine distinction. He understands these names in the sense that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit hold them in a united and self-founding way. Nevertheless, even from his manner of expression, it is clear that the purpose of his words is not to deal with matters related to the divine essence, nor with that union which refers to their absolutely transcendent state, nor with matters related to the Triune hypostatic distinction. His focus—a theoretical choice that flows from the whole structure and perspective of the treatise *On the Divine Names*—is on the divine distinction during the common 'processions' and manifestations of the three Persons. And, indeed, to support this reasoning, the Areopagite adds:

> Καὶ ἵνα σαφῶς περὶ πάντων τῶν ἑξῆς προσδιορισώμεθα, διάκρισιν θείαν φαμὲν τὰς ἀγαθοπρεπεῖς τῆς θεαρχίας προόδους. Δωρουμένη γὰρ πᾶσι τοῖς οὖσι, καὶ ὑπερέχουσα τὰς τῶν ὅλων ἀγαθῶν μετουσίας, ἡνωμένως μὲν διακρίνεται, πληθύεται δὲ ἑνικῶς καὶ πολλαπλασιάζεται τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνεκφοιτήτως.

> And, in order that we may first distinctly define everything that follows, we call divine distinction, as we have said, the beneficial processions of the Godhead. For, given to all beings and surpassing the participation of all good things, it is distinguished as being united, but proliferates singularly, and is multiplied from the One without emergence.[11]

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has an individualized ontological property, while each being is a synthesis of the manifestation of many 'processions'. See George Pachymeres, *Παράφρασις εις το De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:677B): 'ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς τὸ ἐναντίον γίνεται. Οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν ἑνὰς κυρίως, ἀλλ' αἱ διακρίσεις τῶν στοιχείων προϋ-ποῦσαι, σύνδρομοι γινόμεναι καὶ ἑνούμεναι δευτέρας τὰς ἐκ τῆς συνθέσεως ἑνώσεις ἐργάζονται'. It should be parenthetically noted that the reference to elements basically concerns those natural reasons which, as everlasting created cores, feed new processes and which have obviously arisen through special combinations of the divine energies. However, unity is dominant in any ontological plane and is understood in its various forms in which it appears, based on the principle of analogy, which results in two or more meanings.

[10] On the divine energies, see V. Lossky, *Essai sur la Théologie Mystique de l'Église d'Orient,* 65–86.

[11] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 27, 88.12–28. Cf. *De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:649B). The Areopagitic expressions have a clear narrative tone, which is chosen in order to make more vivid that which cannot be described and categorized by human cognitive centres or by strictly structured scientific discourse. It is a widely-made choice in treatises on metaphysical issues.

This text of the so to say self-constituted dialectical conjunction of opposites provides Palamas with the opportunity to uphold the general belief in the Eastern Christian tradition that, according to the logic of the Areopagitic writings, the terms 'processions' and 'manifestations' are not given as predicates to created beings but rather exclusively to the divine energies, the result of whose manifestation is every created being, in a particular way based on the creative plan.[12] This difference is the basis for the hesychast theologian's explicit objection to the fact that, in an inconsistent manner which does not adequately filter the ontological facts, Barlaam and Akindynos identified the energies or 'processions' with created things. It is clear that he rejects their reasoning here because they have not grasped that God maintains his unity undiminished, regardless of any development in 'procession'. This is a unity related to essence, persons, and 'processions', a self-founding state that radically excludes any confusion or identification with entities of another ontological nature.[13] At the same time, it reaffirms that God's multiplication is beyond any theoretical conception in terms of the products which result from his creative energies. Unless this were so, then pantheism would be, under the conditions of emanation, the dominant ontological state, in the form of a pyramidal development of the divine essence, and with the ontological identities being a fact, despite their successively inferior character.

God Produces without Multiplying

Reinforcing the above, Palamas stresses that the Areopagite's writings formulate the view that '*πολλαπλασιάζεται τὸ ἓν ἐκεῖνο ὄν διὰ τῆς ἐξ αὐτοῦ παραγωγῆς τῶν πολλῶν ὄντων*' 'one thing is multiplied through the production of many things from it'. According to the context of this extract, it follows that the beings that belong to the category of created things, and which God produced from the state of non-being, are many and possess a variety of hypostatic properties. And although God presents a multiplicative production, he himself maintains his unity (i.e., his essence) in a state which is neither manifested nor participated. '*Αὐτὸς* (sc. *ὁ Θεός) τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνεκφοιτήτως οἴχεται, δηλονότι κατ᾽ οὐσίαν*'. 'He (sc., God) departs oneness without going forth, that is, in essence'. And immediately the Christian theologian poses a question which could also, in terms of rhetoric, not be formulated: does the Areopagite's text maintain that the one is multiplied, in the sense that created beings are added to its existence? Without question, his answer is negative, since the text he is referring to excludes the idea of counting the created among the uncreated, seeing them rather as completely heterogeneous.[14] Moreover, it must not

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[12] On created things, see V. Lossky, *Essai sur la Théologie Mystique de l'Église d'Orient,* 87–108.

[13] See, *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 27, 88.28–31. Cf. Pachymeres, *Paraphrasis of De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:676C–677C).

[14] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 28.89.4–8. Cf. *De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:649A–B).

be forgotten that only imperfect beings—or those striving to acquire the complete-ness that corresponds to them—are in need of addition. In such cases, the hypostatic relativism is pervasive and is completely tied to becoming, which, indeed, is inter-woven with the particular created field that expresses a particular projection of the divine production.

Palamas then moves on to Maximus, noting how the Confessor focuses with more clarity on divine multiplicity, even utilizing metaphorical expressions in his formulations on the issue when he explains the following: *'πληθύνεσθαι λέγεται ὁ Θεὸς τῷ καθ᾽ ἕκαστον εἰς παραγωγὴν τῶν ὄντων βουλήματι προνοητικαῖς προόδοις πολλαπλασιαζόμενος, μένει δὲ ἀμερίστως ἕν, ὥσπερ ἥλιος ἀκτῖνας πολλὰς ἐκπέμπων καὶ μένων ἐν τῇ ἑνότητι'*. 'God is said to be increased by being multiplied through the providential processions through which he willingly produces each one of the being, but, however, he remains undividedly One, just as the sun emits many rays but remains its unified self'. Palamas considers that, in the context of these discursive descriptions of Maximus, we should examine the relevant concepts in Dionysius, who did not claim that the divine is multiplied by the addition of many beings, but through production and whatever comes from this new ontological action, with the exclusion of an essential or any other mixture. In Dionysian texts, then, it is proposed—if not directly, then at least by the context—that there is a mutual cate-gorization between the providential 'procession' and the divine will, with the strict proviso that what has been produced, as forming the structure of natural theology, constitutes the sole ontological and logical starting-point for any human references to the realm of the divine. What is produced, then—on the ontological basis that it is many in number and forms—constitutes the only guarantee (even with the possibility of intellectual and, by extension, cognitive error) of demonstrating the special and specific transcendental, and simultaneously productive presence of the divine powers and 'processions' which are distinguished from any other state and are defined exclusively by internal conditions. It is precisely these powers that Dionysius referred to in the plural, introducing at the appropriate point the parameter of divine multitude.[15] According to the broader context, it becomes clear that this multitude represents the infinite richness of the divine essence, which with extremely cautious

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Pachymeres, *Paraphrasis of De divinis nominibus*, 2, 11 (PG 3:673D–676B): '…*καὶ πολλαπλασιάζονται μὲν αἱ δωρεαὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς καθ᾽ ἕκαστον, μένουσι δὲ ἀνεκφοιτήτως εἰς τὸ ἕν*…' Note that the One-Good or the Holy Trinity may be perceived 'as a universal', but not based on pairs of 'genus-species' or 'whole-parts', in which, if not the identities, at least the similarities are taken as given and therefore refer to a common ontological field. See also R. Roques, *L'Univers dionysien*, 306, 309–10.

[15] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 28, 89.9–20. Cf. *In Librum De divinis nominibus Scholia*, 2, 11 (PG 4:232C). In parentheses, it is important to note that the multitude is, of course, introduced into the divine realm for the additional reason of adequately justifying the multitude in the sensible world, but without introducing a structural parallelism between the two worlds. And this exclusion is due, among other things, to the fact that in the divine world there is a multitude of particularities, while in the sensible world there is a multitude of composites, perpetually increasing in number.

approaches, could also be seen through the prism of the Platonic Academy's 'indefinite dyad'.

Palamas actually recalls that, in the Dionysian corpus, the 'processions'/powers are called participations and paradigms of beings, which, as archetypes, exist from the very beginning in a true manner before they emerge as the active—in an absolute way—state of God. To put it another way, they are, in a distinct and constructive perspective, transcendent and coherent *schemata* which give to creation every ontological element necessary for its composition and structure, as well as—in other terms—divine wills which, through their intentional and benevolent manifestation, produce the created beings and determine their function and their mode of existence. In the context, however, of both the close relation and the difference between the apophatic/inexpressible and cataphatic/apprehensible sides of God, Dionysius gave the term 'processions' to both the undiminished transmissions as well as the divine gifts, thereby preserving the opposing states, despite the inevitable participations that develop. Moreover, he assigned a special name to each in order to make their particularities clearer, as well as the difference between them. With these names, which are numerous due to the fact that the divine gifts are infinite, he demonstrated that each 'procession' is uncreated but also distinct from the divine essence. In particular, he supported his view that the divine essence is uncreated on the fact that it exists before beings (a priority in time, so to say) and that it is their productive cause. In all three cases, each 'procession' possesses elements of absolute or relative preconditionality as regards the created (in the sense of the initiative for communications rather than that of a lack which is to be made complete). However, the Areopagite distinguished the 'procession from the essence', because it is a projection and, at the same time, differs from all the other projections. And because 'processions' are a multitude, they differ from the essence, which is one, in the sense of its infinite inner richness, so unity is in no way reduced. Concluding his reasoning, the Christian theologian formulates the logical principle of difference, stressing that things which are different from one another, obviously meaning the created beings, must necessarily differ when compared to something else. Ὀυδὲ γὰρ ἔστι πρὸς ἓν ἀδιαφόρως ἔχειν τὰ διαφέροντα πρὸς ἄλληλα'. 'For nothing is without difference towards one if it has differences with others'.[16] Obviously, such a situation does not apply to the metaphysical world except in the light of the distinction. The theoretical basis which ultimately emerges, however, is that the priority of the uncreated over the created is not only logical, but also temporal, or more correctly, in starting point, that is to say self-foundation over the above-foundation, and so the internal difference in every world will function in a particular manner in each case. At the same time, it is to be said that every divine 'procession' is not a condition different from an ontological

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[16] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 28, 89.20–90.4. Cf. *De divinis nominibus*, 2, 5 (PG 3:644A). See R. Roques, *L'Univers dionysien,* 274.

property of God, since it is the divine energy itself in its exemplification. The term 'procession' is also indicative of the process of God's motion towards beings as an *ad extra* manifestation from himself. It should also be noted, in parentheses, that this is not a 'procession' of beings from God's bosom, because, possibly according to the Origenist model, the opposite would inevitably denote co-eternality between uncreated and created, with pantheism dominating all of the *ontogeneses*, both as 'remaining' and as 'procession'. Priority, therefore, as an expression of the separate—according to Platonic models—is the dominant term of ontology functioning as a relationship.

The Participated Exist before the Participating

As a clarification to the above, Palamas adds that it is ontologically necessary for the participated, as original ontological reasons and prerequisites, to pre-exist the participating, as results, drawing the terms of their being from principles which transcend them. In a similar way, the metaphysical states that declare potential, as an opening of their participation for communication, are participated by all created beings and that is why they exist before them. And, on the basis of the ontological difference that exists between metaphysical and physical, they are also uncreated. Thus, none of the beings produced has an uncreated character, because it does not belong to the realm of the Beyond, not even in an original 'potential state'. *'Αἱ δὲ μετοχαὶ μετέχονται παρὰ τῶν κτισμάτων πάντων... Καὶ μὴν οὐδὲν τῶν κτισμάτων ὑπέρ τὰ ὄντα ἐστί'*. 'And the participations participate in all created things... And none of the created things is above the beings'.[17] Therefore, the Holy Trinity is not defined by any relationship existing in the realm of beings, such as arithmetic, both as a measure and as a quantitative and proportional comparison, or ontic development of a genus in its species.[18]

The Divine as Transcending All Numbers

The relationship of 'one-many' in the divine realm is not a state of association and distinction that might be treated strictly numerically, because this would incorporate it into secular patterns of measurement, difference, increase and reduction, supremacy and dependencies. The final result would be the development of polytheism. Palamas observes that the Holy Trinity is above number, more than

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[17] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 13, 78.1–5. On the question of the participation of the physical in the metaphysical, see. J. Lison, *L'Esprit répandu*, 133–141 and 161–172.

[18] The issue of 'unparticipated – participated – participating' is found extensively in representatives of the Neoplatonist School particularly in Proclus (412–485) See *Institutio theologica,* pr. 23, 65, 67, 99, 109. Cf. Eric R. Dodds, *Proclus: The elements of theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 233–36. For a more systematic discussion on the fact that the One is unparticipated and the henads participated, see the first six chapters of the third book of Proclus' treatise *Theologia Platonica*.

the monad is, because it is not counted with the multitude, not even as its starting point-source. And vice versa, it is above the monad, more than what a number could be, since, even if it is assumed to be divisible, it does not receive anything other than its existence. If, as epistemologically appropriate, we express ourselves in a literal, not analogical meaning, it is not even one, and clearly transcends that one which is to be found in so many ways among created beings. This absolute superiority is due to the fact that the Supreme Principle is unique and does not depend on something superior to it or something that would complete its mode of existence and the name of the One can be attributed to it, in absolute terms for it does not depend on relationships, solely in the sense that it is super-united in a self-founding manner.[19] This explicit apophaticism certainly does not mean that every name with which human speech describes the presence of the Holy Trinity is empty of content. But it has a relative meaning, because it arises exclusively from how the created mind perceives the divine, so there is no precise accuracy. In any case, the metaphysics of immanence as the source of natural theology is the evidence for any possible ascent to the metaphysics of transcendence, provided that analogy constitutes the valid epistemological method.

The Divine Names are Not an Empty Sound

Subsequently, and following a consistent theological realism, Palamas notes that, with his theonyms, Dionysius does not use terms without any true content, but, rather, what is denoted by these predicates is a particular ontological definition. It is precisely here that the relationship of signifier-signified is based absolutely on an objective basis. Ὅ δὲ μέγας Διονύσιος ἐν δυσὶ πρὸς τοῖς δέκα βιβλίοις ἐξύμνησας ταύτας (sc. τὰς θείας ἐνεργείας), οὐ γὰρ ἁπλῶς διάκενον ἦχον ὀνομάτων, ἀλλὰ τὰ ὑπὸ τούτων σημαινόμενα ὑμνεῖ'. 'The great Dionysius having in two of the ten books hymned them (sc., the divine energies) praises them not through empty noises of names, but by what these mean'.[20] The issue here is crucial for what is the correspondence of the thinking to the being and for the meaning of the divine names. It seeks to overturn the initial realism of the name and to give the emphasis to the

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[19] Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως, 26, 87, 23–28. On the relationship between God and numbers and the multitude see Pachymeres, Paraphrasis of De divinis nominibus, 13 (PG 3:988B–993).

[20] Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως, 11, 76.30–33. Any discussion developed here must exclude the proposal for the explicit metaphysical reality of names. This quasi-nominalistic suggestion can in no way be viewed as the absolutization of the particular and makes it necessary to deal with two points: a) the metaphysical designation of the names as the possible correspondence of created thinking to uncreated acting; and b) their logical definition (i.e., how far and under what conditions their specific declarative expression is valid, to the extent that their true correspondence can be validated with what exists and is performed in the divine realm). It would be a particularly interesting research project, both for historical and systematic reasons, to examine whether Palamas makes use of the discussion of names and definitions which Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa developed in their dispute with Eunomius.

realism of the metaphysical world before any conceptual or nominal description. The divine names are the most sublime of human constructs; that is, they reveal how deep thinking can penetrate the divine mystery. As initiates, people have their initiatives and do not remain in the position of passive recipients of divine gifts and messages. From this point onwards, the conditions are secured for an in-depth examination of the issue of internal divine distinction in the light of the divine hypostases/persons in their energy possession/projection. It should be noted at the outset that this distinction does not violate in the slightest the absolute unity of the divine substance, which is completely equally possessed by the three hypostases in a self-founding mode.

On the Kinds of Distinction

Palamas, then, makes the point that for Dionysius the prime distinction is not the hypostatic but the energetic one. We would add, as a general overview, that the hypostases function mainly within the Trinity, while the energies are, basically, projections, though this does not in the least affect their self-founding coexistence. According to Areopagitic teaching, divine energies are not identical to the divine essence (because the essence is one and does not come from another entity), nor to the divine hypostases. Even though they (adopting an arithmetical approach) are not more than three, none are derived from any other cause, nor are there elements of productive relationship and hierarchical structures among them. All that has been determined from the outset is that the Son is begotten of the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, though in terms which do not denote ontological subjection or perpetual dependence. There is, indeed, a cause-and-effect relationship, though not from the point of view of secular relationships or determinations, or of the relationship of the divine with the created worlds. The Christian theologian's emphasis given on the distinction, as regards the energies, reflects a fact based on what actually appears to be the most challenging difference, without the introduction of even the slightest separation. The energies introduce the concept of the multitude as, in a manner of speaking, *a priori* divine self-development, and are the real presences that best denote both the dynamic side of the Holy Trinity and, at the same time, the starting-point for the appearance of something different from what it is.[21] Indeed, we might note that one form of otherness also occurs with the distinction between the three divine Persons, which, of course, is defined entirely by the categories of thought of the thinking subject, since each Person expresses a divine particularity or the particular way through which the common divine essence exists and through which the absolutely common divine energies are manifested.

[21] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 31, 92.3–8. Cf. George Papademetriou, *Maimonides and Palamas on God* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994), 60–65.

On Hypostatic Distinction

In his next theoretical clarification, Palamas notes that a perceptive reader might observe that divine distinction is threefold as regards the hypostases if he or she approaches with sufficient attention the content of the God-inspired theological science on this subject matter. Without question, the reader will find that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as real supra-essential hypostases and, by extension, transcendental names, are clearly distinct among themselves. Therefore, as regards their hypostatic properties, no change, transmission or commonality in general can be introduced into their realm, since they do not share predicates-names, but only to mutual relations, which, however, are not only of a referential nature but possess ontological content from the outset. On the other hand, the property of each hypostasis, as regards its strictly particular presence, lies in the field of its self-causation. And the above work under two conditions. The first is that, despite the fact that, as regards the commonality of their essence, the three hypostases dwell within and penetrate each other without the slightest variation, they yet retain their properties unmixed and unconfused, which is precisely why they are unique. The second is that, despite the fact that the Father is the cause of the existence of the Son and the Holy Spirit (though explicitly not in the secular sense of their 'having been caused'), the hypostatic properties are neither transferable nor receivable. Any transfer or reception would abolish the hypostatic uniqueness and introduce hypostatic duality. So, in the context of their personal or hypostatic relationships, the sole principle, source, and root of the Son and the Holy Spirit is the Father, a relationship that cannot be valid vice versa. It should be noted that, in each case, there is exclusively one relationship and two hypostases with ontological states of equivalence. '… *Διακέκριται γὰρ τὸ τοῦ πατρός ὑπερούσιον ὄνομα καὶ χρῆμα, καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, οὐδεμιᾶς ἐν τούτοις ἀντιστροφῆς ἢ ὅλως κοινότητος ἐπεισαγομένης…*''…For the Father is distinct in his supra-essential name and capacity, as are the Son and Holy Spirit in theirs and this cannot in any way be reversed except by saying that they are all alike…'[22] This observation leads us, albeit indirectly, to the fact that the Son and the Holy Spirit are divine by respectively having been born and having proceeded from the Father, since their properties were not acquired but pre-existed. With the above evidence, we feel justified in concluding our present study with reference to the uncreated character of the three divine hypostases, within the context of a non-flexible monism, that is, one which originally demonstrates the internal richness of the divine unity.

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[22] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 24, 86.25–35. For the strictly personal definition of the hypostatic properties, see Gregory of Nyssa, *Greogorio frairi de discrimine essentiae et hypostasis* 3–5 (PG 32:328B–336C).

On the Uncreated Nature of the Divine Hypostases

In the development of his arguments, and concerning the thorny issue regarding what belongs to the category of the uncreated, Palamas takes as the starting point for his reasoning the view of his opponents, that only the divine essence is uncreated and that everything else around it belongs to the category of created things. Against this view, he raises the question as to whether the processes of 'remaining' and 'circumincession' between the three hypostases are essence. The purpose of this question is to define whether states that denote identity and particularity between the hypostases belong to the same ontological category. 'Remaining' denotes immobility, a state that belongs to the essence, while 'circumincession' corresponds to the manner of the relationship of the hypostases, that is, the reciprocity that they have in spite of their particularity. And it is obvious that circumincession as a personal movement cannot belong to a necessary mode of the presence of the essence, because this latter has specifications as to what it ontologically (though not in terms of hierarchy) determines, and because, before all else, it is common, neither belonging to a particular hypostasis, nor to any of them to a different degree.[23] However, it should be noted that it is not legitimate to claim that there is separation or succession between the divine hypostatic relationships or between the divine hypostases, because this would remove the self-founding unity. The relationship would then be defined as a situation developed later, which would obviously put unity itself at stake.

Extending his reflections, the Christian theologian wonders whether we will place the divine hypostases among things created, given that we accept that they are not themselves the divine essence. Such a position would be justified if our intention was to avoid turning the three hypostases into something composite, or the uncreated into many, and introducing conditions that would 'threaten' the divine unity. That case would lead into polytheism even those who consider the divine hypostases and their mutual circumincession to be uncreated, the ultimate consequence of which would be that Christianity and Neoplatonism would be indistinguishable. Indeed, Palamas notes that the reasoning concerning polytheism and its implications constitutes the accusation launched by Barlaam and Akindynos. His view, however, is that, here too, the accusation rebounds on those making it, and he places them in the circles of those who introduce polytheism and, by extension, atheism, since they separate the one God into created and uncreated. It is precisely this confusion which results in the divine states being drawn into the class of created things, even though

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[23] See Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως, 23, 86.5–8. On the content of the term 'remaining' in the Neoplatonic School, see Proclus, *Institutio theologica*, pr. 25–39, 28.21–42.7. Werner Beierwaltes, *Proklos: Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1979), 118–63. See also Jean Trouillard, *L'Un et l'âme selon Proclos* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1972), 78–106; idem, *La mystagogie de Proclos* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982), 53–91; E.R. Dodds, *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, 212–23.

Barlaam and Akindynos themselves considered them to be uncreated, including first and foremost the divine essence and secondly the divine hypostases.[24]

Moreover, using as his starting point the arguments of both his opponents, Palamas raises the following question: how is it feasible for the divine hypostases to be uncreated when the manner in which they communicate and interpenetrate is such that it does not have this property? In other words, Barlaam and Akindynos claim that the reciprocal motions of the hypostases must be ontologically separated from themselves as well as from their essence. In his assessment, their error is clear both as regards their ontological starting-points and their reasoning. Their misdirection arises from the fact that it is philosophically, theologically, and scientifically accepted that motion and energy bear absolutely the properties of the essence to which they belong and from which they come. '*Πῶς γὰρ ἂν εἶεν ὑποστάσεις ἄκτιστοι, ὧν ἡ πρὸς ἀλλήλας περιχώρησις κατ᾽ αὐτοὺς οὐκ ἄκτιστος; … Πῶς δ᾽ ἂν οὐσία εἴη ἄκτιστος, ἧς ἡ ἐνέργεια κτιστὴ τυγχάνει κατ᾽ αὐτούς;*' 'For how can there be uncreated hypostases if their interaction is not also uncreated? … And how can there be an uncreated essence, if, according to them, its energy is created?'[25] All in all, therefore, anything that touches upon the divine essence, be it a hypostatic presence or a projection of energy, possesses from its ontological prefiguration the property of being uncreated, which it retains also in those cases that describe relationships. As a whole, though, there is no way at all that these can be subject to terms of priority. If, for example, the relationship of the three Persons was one which arose later, how would the original commonality of their essence and energies be explained? What would be the impulse for them to communicate with each other? The logical implication arises purely and simply from the ontological data: since the divine hypostases possessed the divine essence and divine energies from the beginning and without hierarchical distinction—as well as, obviously, divine will—they have already put into effect their communication, which, in the context of a non-static monism, is implemented in three ways, which represent the qualitative horizontal articulation of spirituality and do not lead to a quantitative sum total. The term 'three', tacitly of course, expresses the dynamic self-referencing within the deity which excludes any development towards polytheism and promotes modes of relationships inaccessible to people, entirely beyond anything they can conceive by analogy.

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[24] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 23, 86.8–17: '…*Πῶς γὰρ ἂν εἶεν ὑποστάσεις ἄκτιστοι, ὧν ἡ πρὸς ἀλλήλας περιχώρησις κατ᾽ αὐτοὺς οὐκ ἄκτιστος*'. Cf. J. Lison, *L'Esprit repandu*, 148–49. The views mentioned here correspond to those referred to above concerning ditheism and could easily lead to a theory of cosmic gods, as this was developed by the Neoplatonist Proclus (on this, see the sixth book of his treatise *Theologia Platonica*, as well as the countless references in *In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria*).

[25] See *Περὶ θείας ἑνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως*, 86.17–22. On the relationship between divine essence and divine energies in Palamas, see, for example, G. Papademetriou, *Maimonides and Palamas on God*, 41–48.

Further Remarks

On the basis of what we have examined and taking the entire discussion developed in this particular treatise *On Divine Union and Discrimination* into account, we consider that we can make the following further remarks. We would say that Palamas attempts a rational structuring—and, indirectly, the validation—of Metaphysics, to which he attributes both an ontological/ theological and an epistemological/methodological character. In the first dimension, he attempts to form a set of articulations, though not anything by way of a genetic process, and nothing on the model of ontological dependencies/hierarchies such as those founded by the Neoplatonists. The ontological states of 'essence', 'energies', 'movements', 'processions', 'providences', and 'hypostases' are combined together within a strictly structured pattern within the context of which are maintained the priorities and sequences, defined as logical, which are not to be understood independently of the factor of their mutual reciprocity. They are actually sequences of strict boundaries and, at the same time, of unbreakable syntheses. In the second dimension of Metaphysics, he accepts the Platonic view—and in part that of Aristotle—that the distinction of ontological levels necessarily defines a distinction of epistemological/ theoretical methods. We could, therefore, argue that, to a certain extent, he uses logical/mathematical thought in order to describe the divine energies and the proof of *reductio ad absurdum* to refer to the divine essence. In other words, the ontological does not appear in his texts in strictly inelastic terms, an open presence that necessarily also drives the method. Of course, these are not vertical sections, but rather exemplifications capable of articulating a comprehensive and detailed picture of the divine realm. As a result, Ontology maintains its primacy and epistemology acquires meaning and credibility only in so far as it is involved in a strict correspondence with it. In general, essence, as a fixed and given situation, and function, as an expression of a dynamic of interventions, are dominant in succession, not because human thought necessarily assigns them a particular mission, but because this is imposed by a regulatory order of ontological processes. Such suggestions are explicitly excluded from Eastern Christianity. Only what is obvious is related to an arrangement in the contiguity of the various levels of the presence of the Holy Trinity. The above notwithstanding, we believe that we should not also exclude the variation of using the ontological/theological dimension of Metaphysics in such a way as to lay the foundations for the epistemological/methodological one. Within the process of proof, there are organic epistemological needs, such as, for example, the consolidation of ultimate principles, with the result that reference to theology is inevitable as being the authentic and imperishable criterion for the foundation of any issue. In this sense, theological constants provide something that is necessary and inevitable for human thought.

Finitude and Deification:
Maximus the Confessor's Eschatology as Systematic Metaphysics

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From the position of Saint Maximus the Confessor's eschatology, conceptual pairs which address specific theological problems, such as *logoi-tropos* and natural will-gnomic will, also function as mirrors of each other, together clarifying the fundamental principles of the Confessor's eschatology as well as demonstrating the systematic character of his thought. Following the tradition of figures such as Sherwood and Zizioulas, the paper takes the opposition between Maximus' logic of end and Origen's logic of beginning as a starting point to describe Maximian eschatology as systematic metaphysics. The cosmic finitude of eschatology is an 'incomplete ontology' (Loudovikos) of crucifixion and resurrection, according to which the void of soteriological incompleteness (*viz.* that the creation is not yet deified) receives an objective meaning in the *eschaton*. The fallen *tropos* of being as deep ontological contingency is guided by the incarnation of the Logos, and, by extension, the *logoi*, thus instantiating the 'fundamental meaning' (Louth) of eschatological history. In other terms, history is the eschatological antagonism between, on the one hand, the gnomic will as the reduction of freedom to the complete ontology of immanent perpetual choice and, on the other, the natural will that determines the ethical mission of man as the total transformation of the cosmos, *theosis*.

Introduction

In his *Lectures on Christian Dogmatics*, Zizioulas writes that Saint Maximus the Confessor 'took the cosmology of Origen and made it eschatological, transferring its reference from the beginning to the end, thus dethroning Plato'.[1] The introduction of eschatology into cosmology engenders a new metaphysical model. Maximus' transformation of the theological and philosophical tradition is occasioned by the depth of the difference between beginning and end. Although there is no doctrinal formulation of eschatology in Orthodoxy,[2] the basic metaphysical premises of eschatology,

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[1] John D. Zizioulas, *Lectures on Christian Dogmatics* (London: Continuum, 2008), 130.
[2] Cf. Andrew Louth, 'Eastern Orthodox Eschatology' in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. J. L. Wells (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 233.

and more specifically the Maximian eschatology, may be approached through the logic of this shift.

A hypothesis of this paper is that a 'reference to end'—as that which establishes the overarching unity of Maximus' eschatology—has a dual function: end as *telos* and end as finitude. Whereas the eschatological *telos* of the creation is deification, the precondition of deification is a radical concept of cosmic finitude: the *eschaton* as 'the last things'.[3] In other words, understanding the systematic metaphysical character of Maximus' eschatology entails understanding how the eschatological-cosmological concept of finitude informs the eschatological-ethical concept of deification, and *vice versa*.[4]

The sections of the paper will explore this hypothesis as follows:

1) The eschatological model of *cosmology* is in the first instance defined by its metaphysical commitment to a logic of end (i.e., cosmological finitude). On the basis of Maximus' critique of Origenism in, for example, the *Ambigua*, the writings of, *inter alia*, Zizioulas,[5] Sherwood,[6] and Louth,[7] have portrayed Maximian eschatology as the Orthodox 'corrective' to an Origenist protology. In the tradition of these interpretations, the logic of cosmological finitude shall be developed in terms of its affinity with a logic of Crucifixion, namely, what Louth identifies as the placement of Christology at the centre of the Maximian eschatology, which, in turn, differentiates it from general Origenist

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[3] In the following passage, Maximus formulates the link between *telos* and deification as follows: 'The mystery of Christ is the ineffable hypostatic union of the divine and the human, which leads to the total identification of man with divinity by virtue of the hypostasis (of the Logos)..., whereby the difference of the natural remains unchangeable. This is, above all, the end of the divine plan and of those about whom God reflects accourding to which all creatures, all that which God creates is unified in him....In relation to this end God created the essences of all beings'. *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* 60 (PG 90:621A), trans. Ignatije Midić, 'Историја и Есхатон: Есхатологија и постојање' [History and Eshaton: Eschatology and Existence], *Sobornost* 9 (2015): 3.

[4] Accordingly, for Hans von Balthasar it is in 'Maximus' work of correction' of Origenist protology that 'finitude is no longer evil', but intrinsic to deification, 'to union with God'. *Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2003), 135. In this sense, the Maximian eschatological corrective proposes the finitude of finitude, the finitude of the world of death, which does not annul finitude, but separates it from its distortion (the conception of finitude as evil), such that, as argued in this paper, finitude moves from paradoxical incomplete finitude to complete finitude, to the union that is its *telos*. For Sherwood, 'it would seem therefore that it is legitimate, even necessary, to seek the truth of man...in his supernatural finality and to understand his actual condition in relation to the Fall, provided only—and this of utmost importance—that this end and this condition are not metaphysicized' (*St. Maximus the Confessor: The Ascetic Life, The Four Centuries on Charity* [New York, NY: The Newman Press, 1954], 54). Insofar as Sherwood develops this thought of a Maximian 'truth of man' in juxtaposition to the Origenists, 'metaphysicized' here can be understood as a general Origenist metaphysical necessity conferred to the Fall, whereas for Maximus, it is the 'supernatural finality' of eschatology that marks the contingency of the fallen state of the creation. That is, the 'actual condition in relation to the Fall', is the contingency of the Fall, and it is precisely this contingent fallen state that is disclosed as contingent, viz., as finite, in the eschatological *telos,* the 'supernatural finality', of deification.

[5] J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures on Christian Dogmatics*.

[6] Polycarp Sherwood, *The Earlier Ambigua of St. Maximus the Confessor and his Refutation of Origenism* (Rome: Herder, 1955).

[7] Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London: Routledge, 1996).

protologies.[8] In other words, following Loudovikos's description of Maximus' eschatology as an 'incomplete ontology',[9] the Confessor's postulation of an entirely counter-intuitive vision of finitude, according to which finitude is itself incomplete, is understood as an ontological gap that is at the same time a soteriological symptom of the motion towards deification.

2) At the centre of Maximus' eschatological model, the motion towards 'end' implies the primacy of a concept of history. Thinkers such as Guy Lardreau,[10] Karl Löwith,[11] Carl Schmitt,[12] and Jacob Taubes,[13] have argued in their studies of monotheistic eschatologies that there is a fundamental sense in which the notion of history is inseparable from an eschatological model, in a way that eschatology *creates* history. This claim can be understood as a thoroughly Maximian insight, insofar as history for Maximus is not temporal, but semiotical: eschatological history creates cosmic meaning through the commitment to cosmological finitude, the meaning of 'end'.

3) The semiotics of history may be further clarified through the *logoi-tropos* conceptual pair. The *tropos* concept entails that Maximus adheres to an exceptionless variation of ontological contingency in his system: the contingency of being as such. What is decisive for Maximus, however, is that the contingency of being does not *a fortiori* problematise or eliminate a concept of meaning (*logoi*), as for example in models motivated by nihilism.[14] Instead, Maximus performs a synthesis, whereby total ontological contingency does not imply the liquidation of meaning, but rather informs the meaning of the cosmos: the contingency of the fallen state of the creation.

4) The meaning of contingency can be made more precise through Maximus' Christological distinction between the natural will and the gnomic will. Maximus contrasts the natural will—the authentic account of human freedom, the freedom of Christ *qua* man—with the gnomic will, the reduction of the act of freedom to the act of choice. The opposition of natural will and gnomic will describes both the eschatological struggle constitutive of history and its non-dialectical resolution, namely, the transformation of the cosmos

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[8] Ibid., 64.

[9] For more on this, see Nikolaos Loudovikos, *Психоанализа и православна теологија: о жељи, свеобухватности и есхатологији* [Psychoanalysis and Orthodox Theology: On Desire, Universality, and Eschatology], trans. M. Rašović (Belgrade: Pravoslavni bogoslovski fakultet, 2010).

[10] Guy Lardreau, 'Apocalypse et resurrection selon quelques texts syriaques', *Apocalypse et sens de l'histoire, Actes du Colloque tenu à Paris les 11–12–13 juin 1982. Cahiers de l'Université Saint-Jean de Jérusalem 9* (Paris: Berg International), 181–201.

[11] Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

[12] Carl Schmitt, 'Three Possibilities for a Christian Conception of History', *Telos* 147 (2009): 167–70.

[13] Jacob Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology,* trans. D. Ratmoko (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

[14] Cf. Ray Brassier, *Nihil Unbound* (London: Palgrave McMillan, 2008).

according to the natural will, the latter being 'wholly deified, in its agreement with the divine will'.[15]

5) Maximian Christology, which at once establishes the anthropological prototype for man, conceives the freedom of the human being entirely in terms of an ethical principle: freedom as ethics. Maximus' conception of freedom means that the ethical mission of man is *theosis*, a form of ethical absolutism, instantiated in the Incarnation of the Logos, that overcomes the contingent fallen state: the eschatological finitude of the fallen creation and the resurrection that is its deification.

Logic of Crucifixion

Eschatology clarifies the divine plan (*βουλή*) of the creation. Accordingly, it ascribes an objective meaning to the creation.[16] Whereas both beginning and end propose a variant of *βουλή*, the position of end entails that the objective meaning is inseparable from a concept of finitude. For Maximus, 'we must not only be *crucified* to the world but also the world [must be *crucified*] to us'.[17]

Beginning and end are not symmetrical concepts; one is not the inverse of the other. The triad from *Ambigua* 7, which defines Maximus' eschatology, *becoming-motion-rest,* is therefore not the reversal of the Origenist triad *becoming-rest-motion*.[18] For Maximus, these are opposed logics.[19] On the one hand, the logic of end uncoils the logic of beginning, so that the entirety of the cosmos becomes a directed force. On the other hand, this line is fully informed by the rupture of crucifixion and eschatological end. Skliris writes that for Maximus 'the end which attracts is not natural maturity, but the *eschaton,* which presents nevertheless a gap of radical discontinuity…eschatology at the same time confirms teleology and "crucifies" it'.[20] Maximian eschatology is irreducible to teleology, in the sense that the acute eschatological *telos* implies the extremity of a break, which, accordingly, cannot be thought of in terms of that which this *telos* is ascribed to. The eschatological *telos* is not immanent to the logic of the world; instead, it is precisely

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[15] Maximus the Confessor, *Opusc.* 7, 80D. A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 185.

[16] 'Without reference to the *eschaton*, the entire *oikonomia* loses its meaning'. John D. Zizioulas, 'Towards an Eschatological Ontology', unpublished paper delivered at King's College, London, 1998. Retrieved May 1, 2016 at http://www.resourcesforchristiantheology.org/towards-an-eschatological-ontology/

[17] Maximus the Confessor, *Questions and Doubts,* trans. D.D. Prassas (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), 149.

[18] On the opposed triads, for example, cf. A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 67.

[19] Dragoş Bahrim describes the difference in the ordering of the Maximian and Origenist triads as follows: 'this is not just a matter of a simple change of positions, because Saint Maximus changes even the meaning of the concepts'. 'The Anthropic Cosmology of Saint Maximus the Confessor', *Journal for Interdisciplinary Research on Religion and Science* 3 (2008): 21.

[20] Dionysios Skliris, 'The Philosophical Implications of Maximus the Confessor's Eschatology', *The Fountain and the Flood: Maximus the Confessor and Philosophical Enquiry Workshop: XVII International Conference on Patristic Studies,* eds M. Vinzent and S. Mitralexis, (Leuven–Paris–Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2015).

the 'world that must be crucified', so as to disclose its *telos*. This *telos,* as the soteriology of deification given in the Incarnation of the Logos, is in absolute 'discontinuity' with a fallen creation. Eschatology is the 'incomplete ontology' of a creation that is in motion towards deification.

In his study of eschatology, Taubes describes the eschatological vision of the cosmos as the inauguration of 'a straight line in one direction. The direction of this straight line is irreversible… the purpose of this unidirectionality lies in the direction itself. The direction is always toward an end; otherwise it would be directionless. The end is essentially Eschaton'.[21] From the position of eschatology, the creation is now thought of as a type of vector. As directed, the linearity of the *cosmos* at once implies a concept of end. The end itself is not part of the line. It induces the motion of the latter, but also indicates the gap towards which the creation, as directed force, is oriented. The fact that the line is determined by end prioritises the qualitative dimension of force. The line in its irreversibility towards end, marks the singular content of this end,—which is called purpose by Taubes. The movement of the creation takes on a qualitative dimension, as the end is that which the creation is not. The cosmic motion at the centre of Maximus' triad clarifies the authentic soteriology, which belongs to eschatology.

If an overturning of Origenist protology is necessary, this is because, in Zizioulas' terms, Maximus' 'transfer of reference' is not a shift of direction, but an establishment of direction, an establishment of reference. The logic of beginning is a logic of return. In the cyclical nature[22] of the protological model, the creation becomes the centre, since it is always that which is to be recovered in its prelapsarian state. As opposed to establishing a reference, protology is entirely self-referential. The logic of beginning excludes the break which is required for a reference that, in Loudovikos's terms, would be an 'ecstatic reference',[23] a reference that goes beyond itself. The immediate failure of protology is its inability to establish this break in two interrelated senses. It elides the absolute separation between God and the creation that is the foundation of pure monotheism and the apophatic core of Orthodoxy. The protological self-reference to the initial idealised state stands in opposition to the ecstatic reference *qua* total break: the source of the creation in that which is apophatically transcendent to the creation.[24] Consequently, the logic of beginning maintains the domination of the

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[21] J. Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology,* 3.

[22] A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 67.

[23] Nikolaos Loudovikos, 'Analogical Ecstasis: Maximus the Confessor, Plotinus, Heidegger and Lacan', retrieved May 1, 2016 https://www.academia.edu/20373350/_Analogical_Ecstasis_Maximus_the_Confessor_Plotinus_Heidegger_and_Lacan

[24] As Louth explains, '(P)erhaps the most fundamental revision Maximus demanded of the Origenist cosmology concerned its conviction that originally there had been a state of perfection, from which the rational beings fell (and to which they would eventually be restored), whereas Maximus' becoming-movement-rest much more accurately captures the condition of created beings. First, they come to be. This is itself a change, a form of movement, so becoming immediately issues in movement, and it is the purpose of movement to find rest'. *Maximus the Confessor,* 64.

pole of the First Adam,[25] the protological emphasis on expulsion and return.[26] The end, in contrast, marks the rupture of the entire creation. The instantiation of the eschatological straight line is determined by the pole of the crucified New Adam as opposed to the expelled First Adam. Beginning against end is a logic of expulsion against a logic of crucifixion. Crucifixion abrogates the self-reference of the creation in the simultaneous continuity and discontinuity of the line marked by end. For Maximus:

> all visible realities need the cross, that is, the state in which they are cut off from things acting upon them through the senses. All intelligible realities need burial, that is, the total quiescence of the things which act upon them through the intellect. When all relationship with such things is severed, and their natural activity and stimulus is cut off, then the Logos, who exists alone in himself, appears as if risen from the dead.[27]

The cross cuts into a putative homogeneous cosmology, and the economy of self-reference is broken. The generative and affective field of a relational immanent ontology, the thoroughly self-sufficient causal relationship at the basis of a physical model, is now interrupted by the void of burial. It is in this sense that Loudovikos calls Maximus' eschatology an incomplete ontology. Finitude opposes its intuitive definition as something that is complete: for example, a finite complete set. On the one hand, finitude circumscribes the creation. Eschatological end is cosmological end, as there is no exception to that which is crucified. On the other hand, finitude punctures the illusion of a complete ontology. Finitude denotes an outside in the sense that the drawing of a limit also simultaneously marks an outside to the limit. But the limit here reintroduces itself into the heart of that which is limited and shatters it. The limit does not preserve the integrity of that which is bound, but dissolves it. Cosmic finitude indicates the gap in the cosmos through which the Logos 'appears as if risen from the dead'.[28]

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[25] 'Both Adam and Christ can recapitulate all humanity because humanity is a unity, a whole….a concept that Origen had already hammered home in his anti-Valentinian polemic'. Ilaria Ramelli, T*he Christian Doctrine of Apokastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 416. Following the protological logic, Adam possesses the recapitulative function and, therefore, according to the initial 'state of perfection' (A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 64) of the creation maintained by this same logic, Christ only recapitulates Adam (i.e., the domination of the Adamic pole) in opposition to the Maximian Christocentric eschatological corrective.

[26] Louth accordingly writes, referencing Origen: '"for the end", as Origen repeatedly stated, "is always like the beginning"'. *Maximus the Confessor,* 64.

[27] *Centuriae de charitate I.* 67 (PG 90:1108B). G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherwood, and K. Ware, trans., *Philokalia*, vol. 2, (London: Faber & Faber, 1981), 127.

[28] This description is inspired by Philipp Valentini ('Hole in One! Three Historical Ways through which Desire has Organized the Theo-Political Difference between "Intellect" and "Spirit"'. *Political Theology: The Liberation of the Postsecular?* [Conference Paper, Liverpool: Liverpool Hope University, July 2015]) and his development of Lacan's concept of hole and its monotheistic dimension.

Consequently, the finitude of the creation is not immanent to the creation. If this were the case, that which is finite would transcend its finitude so as to establish its own limit, in the sense that that which is limited also informs its limit.[29] For Maximus, there is no reciprocal or dialectical determination between a form and its boundary. This would have the consequence of denying the unilateral determination of the Logos 'who exists alone in himself' on the creation. The depth of the concept of finitude that is present in eschatology would also be lost. The death of the world comes from the outside just as the Incarnation of the Logos comes from the outside. For Maximus, the eschatological world-end is 'supernatural'. The death of the world is not the world's own death; it is not the immanent limit of the world. Finitude comes from an exteriority, ending the world not according to the logic of the world, since this would re-inscribe the self-reference of the world, the creation as a complete ontology, but according to the transcendence of the Logos. The eschatological death of the world takes finitude in its strongest sense. If finitude is also an expression of contingency, that which is finite cannot be necessary for its own finitude. Finitude is not the world's own inherent limit, but just as the cosmos is created, so is this limit. Finitude is not a predicate; it is rather the essence of the creation as created.[30] Maximus writes that 'whatever has no end ($\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda o\varsigma$) to its natural activity is also not complete, not perfect ($\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\iota o\nu$)',[31] to which von Balthasar adds the commentary that 'to wish to eliminate this finitude under the pretext of attaining a more intimate ontological identification with the Infinite, would mean destroying the deepest meaning of the creature's being'.[32] The finitude of the creation reiterates the apophatic logic of extreme transcendence, 'the chasm ($\chi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\mu\alpha$) that separates God from the world',[33] as well as the subordination of the creation to the Creator. Eschatologically, however, this finitude is paradoxically *incomplete*, insofar as the creation is in motion towards its perfection, its deification. The entire logic of an eschatological model entails that this *telos* has, in a decisive sense, not yet been realised.[34] The eschatological treatment of finitude in the first instance separates that

[29] e.g., the Hegelian account of finitude.

[30] If the eschatological limit of the world repeats the limit which is the finitude of the creation as created, the limit as such is also tied to essence by Dionysius the Areopagite, on the basis of the link between limit and justice: 'Justice, as distributing things suitable to all, both due measure, and beauty, and good order, and arrangement, and marking out all distributions ($\delta\iota\alpha\nu o\mu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$) and orders for each, according to that which truly is the most just limit'. *On Divine Names*, Caput 8, Section VII, trans. J. Parker, (London: James A. Parker, 1897). Retrieved at http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/dio/dio11.htm

[31] *Ambigua* (PG 91:1120A), trans. H. von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy,* 155.

[32] Ibid., 155.

[33] Ibid.

[34] In this light, Loudovikos's terminology of an 'incomplete ontology' complements his account of Maximus' eschatological ontology as dialogical reciprocity (cf. *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor's Eschatology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity* [Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010]): the eschatological dimension of this ontology *qua* reciprocity is precisely indicative of the latter's incompleteness, insofar as the Eschaton is something that is still not yet *historically* completed (i.e., the future aspect of the Eschaton, which, understood as the 'last things', is the completed finitude—deification—of the creation).

which the creation is, from that which it is not, but in the last instance finitude means that the creation must be thought of according to that which it is not, according to 'the Logos who exists alone in himself'.

For Maximus, the eschatological world-end is the cosmic crucifixion of the creation, its finitude; but finitude at once indicates the dependency of the creation upon that which it is not. This source outside itself marks ontological incompleteness, an ontological gap through which the Logos 'appears as if risen from the dead'. Given that the source of the creation is an absolute exteriority, that upon which the creation is dependent appears as immanent with the Incarnation of the Logos, but as a *gap within immanence*: ontological incompleteness *qua* incomplete finitude of the creation.[35] The eschatological conception of cosmic finitude as incomplete finitude accordingly discloses cosmic *telos* as deification—the mystery of crucifixion and *a fortiori* the mystery of resurrection, which is contained within the Incarnation of the Logos.

History as Semiotic

The Incarnation of the Logos is the historical fracture between beginning and end. For Maximus, the cross does not only appear in history, but creates history. History is not a temporal concept, but semiotical. History is the unfolding of a precise meaning, disclosed in the Incarnation of the Logos, which instantiates the direction towards the end.[36] The finitude of the creation is the meaning of the creation and that towards which the creation is directed. Meaning as history is the consequence of this finitude, crystallised in crucifixion, which marks a tension between the creation and that which it is not, the fallen state and the soteriology of cosmic deification: *theosi*s.

The Origenist protological emphasis on the expulsion of the First Adam contains an inadequate soteriology, in that it implies the devaluation of the postlapsarian. In the orientation towards the past of protology, the consequence of this logic is that all that which comes after the beginning and the Fall is trivialised. The past as dominant in the sense of a golden age conveys that, that which follows origin loses any meaning, insofar as it is only a symptom of degeneration, a mistake. The logic of beginning evokes a logic of the cycle. If origin is inscribed as an idyllic point, a

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[35] Following Loudovikos's use of Lacan in relation to Orthodox theology and the explicit reference to Lacan with the term ontological incompleteness, Maximian eschatology as an incomplete ontology could also be further conceptually illustrated according to Lacan's logic of *pas-tout*.

[36] H. von Balthasar accordingly writes: 'Maximus expressly says that the Incarnation—more precisely, the drama of Cross, grave, and Resurrection—is not only the midpoint of world history but the foundational idea of the world itself... Maximus does not intend to demonstrate a necessity (for the Incarnation) in the metaphysical sense, but rather (to point to) the meaning of history itself—all history'. *Cosmic Liturgy*, 134.

pure passivity of the cycle towards the status of the postlapsarian takes root. Rest accordingly occupies the central position in the Origenist triad.

With its establishment of a direction towards the end, eschatology determines that that which occurs after the Fall is not reducible to degeneration. As Louth observes, protology elides struggle, whereas Maximus' eschatology commits to the primacy of struggle.[37] This difference is inherent to the respective logics of protology and eschatology. According to the latter, the postlapsarian shifts from the status of error to the terrain of an antagonism between a fallen state and a soteriological moment, which infers that the creation still possesses a meaning in its struggle to realise the eschatologico-soteriological end. Following Zizioulas's gloss of the Maximian eschatology as a 'Fall from End',[38] the passivity of the cyclical is annihilated in the name of this directed struggle. If the creation in its fallen state is ultimately that which it is not—namely, that it is not deified—this incompleteness is taken, in its strongest sense, as a total break, since it also has never been. Eschatology entails, in Zizioulas's words, 'an unfinished reality'.[39] The Fall from beginning is the 'absence of a true and unexpected creativity'[40] according to the logic of the continuous cycle. The Fall from End substitutes cyclical repetition with a fissure that instantiates linear direction. History is this ontological incompleteness that never was complete. The Incarnation of the Logos as a break in history that inaugurates history is the disclosure of this incompleteness.[41] With the exigency of Incarnation, a form of meaning is engendered. The disjunction transpierces everything, creating an axiology according to which even a fallen creation is a reserve of value, insofar as it moves towards deification.

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[37] Thus, Louth draws a distinction between Maximus' eschatology and Origenist protology in terms of the former's emphasis on ascetic struggle, a struggle that Louth diagnoses as lacking from the latter: 'In (Maximus') view, the only truly satisfactory philosophy is "true judgment concerning reality and activity, supported by ascetic struggle". (*Ambigua* 1108A)'. *Maximus the Confessor,* 66. From the position of Maximus' eschatology, and following the dominant eschatological dimension of Maximus' thought, ascetic struggle becomes eschatological struggle, the antagonism of history, and history *qua* antagonism (i.e., what Louth terms 'asceticism for all'): '(A)s Maximus makes clear in his *Mystagogia*...the ascetic struggle in responding to God is not simply an individual matter, it is part of the process of overcoming the divisions that have shattered the cosmos as a result of the Fall—ascetic struggle has cosmic significance'. *Maximus the Confessor*, 23.

[38] Cf. Dionysios Skliris '"Eschatological Teleology", "Free Dialectic", "Metaphysics of the Resurrection": The Three Antinomonies that make Maximus an Alternative European Philosopher'. *Maximus the Confessor as a European Philosopher,* eds S. Mitralexis et al., (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017).

[39] J.D. Zizioulas, 'Towards an Eschatological Ontology'.

[40] Nikolaos Loudovikos, 'Ecstatic or reciprocal meaningfulness?: Orthodox Theology between Theology, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis', https://www.academia.edu/20373696/Ecstatic_or_Reciprocal_Meaningfulness_Orthodox_Eschatology_between_Theology_Philosophy_and_Psychoanalysis, 1.

[41] Accordingly, the ontological incompleteness of Maximian eschatology contrasts with ontological completeness in Origen: 'In the Commentary on John XIII.37, 262.5 ff., Origen considers the question whether the rational creature created by God was incomplete (*ateles*) when placed in paradise. It would not, however, be reasonable to call him who was able to work the tree of life and everything which God planted and caused to spring up as "incomplete". So perhaps he was complete in some way (*pos*) and became incomplete through the transgression'. Caroline P. Bammel 'Adam in Origen' in *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick,* ed. R. Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 77.

The end, at once, is closer to the creation than its fallen state. It is in this sense that Zizioulas writes that Maximus 'turns us around from the past to the future so that the eschatological community became the centre of ecclesiology again. This single eschatology incorporates the logos, beings, and the world as realities that come to us from the future'.[42] Whereas future as end means that the reality of the world comes from outside, the founding of the eschatological community annuls the equation of these concepts with a putative distantiation. The future is a future that is in the present. The Maximian concept of *kairos*, although *prima facie* indicating a temporal concept, is, instead, a soteriological subversion of time. In Manoussakis's words, *kairos* is 'vertical and discontinuous';[43] it transforms the apparent distance of end into a fissure that undercuts the patina of immediate and experienced temporal categories. The 'kairology' of future and end alleviates any strict delineation of time, in that time becomes so diffuse that it, as it were, evaporates.[44] Eschatology abrogates what Heidegger would term a 'vulgar understanding of time'; the eschatological dimension of Orthodoxy effaces the intuitive structure of temporality. The implication of *kairos* is therefore not only the elimination of any intuitive understanding of time, but the annulment of time as a fundamental concept for eschatology. This is in direct contrast to the protological model, where the elevation of the prelapsarian first stage *qua* idealised past grounds the entire model. That which has structure in protology is time, or rather, time gives the defining order of that which is—the concept of ages which are dominant in cyclical models of the cosmos. The shift from beginning to end, initiated by Maximus against the Origenist protology, is not temporal in character, as the effect of this logic distorts time in such a way that it is no longer recognisable as anything that can be called time.[45] If time exists so that everything does not happen at once, the Orthodox understanding of temporality makes the opposite claim—everything does happen at once.[46]

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[42] J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures on Christian Dogmatics,* 131.

[43] John Panteleimon Manoussakis, *God After Metaphysics: A Theological Aesthetic* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 59.

[44] Mitralexis observes that the Maximian conception of non-linear time is rooted in the non-linear time of scriptural grammar: 'Maximus notes that the tenses used in Scripture are often entangled, with past tenses being used in place of future tenses and vice versa', *Ever-Moving Repose: The Notion of Time in Maximus the Confessor's Philosophy through the Perspective of a Relational Ontology* (Berlin: Freie Universitaet, 2014), 206.

[45] 'Temporal language, the language of continuity and consecutiveness in the divine *oikonomia*, is decisive for Maximus since it conveys the prophetic drama of revelation; but it is likewise limiting in its capacity for disclosing the truths of *theologia*. The phrase in 1 Cor 10:11 bears this out. These are "ages", Maximus notes, obviously not as we normally conceive them, but ages purposed "for the outworking of the mystery of God's embodiment". Paul means that the Incarnation is a final goal of the totality of time, not that the incarnation has put an end to a series of ages, simply to be followed sequentially by a new series. Moreover, the aorist tense in 1 Cor 10:11 and (we can imply) the futurity of the ages indicated in Eph 2:7 are relativized in the pure *simultaneity* of the incarnational mystery itself'. Paul M. Blowers, 'Realized Eschatology in Maximus the Confessor *Ad Thalassium* 22', *Studia Patristica* 32 (1997): 260.

[46] As Constas writes, the aesthetics of the Byzantine Icon, such as icons of the Last Judgment, present time in this disjointed and synchronous manner. *The Art of Seeing: Paradox and Perception in Orthodox Iconography* (Holy Cross, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2014).

In Maximus' eschatology, two types of end are operative, which can be thought of as being layered upon each other. There is a historical end, which is demonstrated in the linearity of eschatology. This is the concept of a cosmos directed towards that which it is not, the centrality of motion in the Maximian triad. But this is only an outer level of Maximus' eschatology. The linear history of eschatology is constantly ruptured. The *eschaton* possesses a linear historical dimension in that it establishes history; yet history is created according to the instantiation of the end of historical time, the negation of this same history. 'The eschatology of presence' (Zizioulas)[47] is the bursting forth of transcendence as that which the creation is not in a unilateral sense, such that on a deeper level, the world always ends every moment. The *eschaton* occurs perpetually, as, for example, in the liturgy of the eschatological community[48] as well as in the lives of the saints, who—one may say—see the world not from the position of historical time, but rather from the position of the end of the world that occurs in every instance.[49]

The straight line of eschatology is semiotical because it is a marker of void—that the creation is not yet deified. The unidirectional form of the creation recapitulates the content of the fallen creation as that which it is not. The Incarnation of the Logos indicates the objective meaning of this void—the incomplete ontology of eschatological finitude *qua* that which the creation is not, which also determines the creation. The objective meaning of void is the motion towards deification as the history of the cosmos. That is, history *qua* eschatological is a history of the cosmos as a history of a soteriological void, but it is precisely this 'active emptiness',[50] which takes on a purely objective meaning, inducing the soteriological motion: the meaning that is the 'theo-drama' of history as the movement towards cosmic deification.

Meaning and Contingency

The conceptual pair *logoi* and *tropos* formulates the eschatological motion towards deification from the position of a synthesis of meaning and contingency. For Maximus, contingency does not, in an intuitive way, abolish meaning. Rather, it directly informs meaning according to the eschatological and soteriological logic of the end of the fallen cosmos.

The *logoi* determine the 'fundamental meaning'[51] of the creation. Maximus writes that they 'pre-exist...what has come into existence'[52] and 'proceed from the

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[47] John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997), 174.

[48] Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures on Christian Dogmatics.*

[49] Thus, the eschatological dimension of Maximus' hagiology, for example: 'By achieving (the termination of evils) through voluntary mortification, the Saints commend themselves strangers and exiles from this life'. *Ambigua* (PG 91:1157CD), A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 125.

[50] P. Valentini, 'Hole in One!'.

[51] A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 68.

[52] Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua 7* (PG 91:1085A), trans. N. Constas, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers, Vol. 1: The Ambigua* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

divine will'.[53] The *logoi* are thus distinct from the act of creation. The creation does not exhaust the *logoi,* that is, the *logoi* are irreducible to the instantiation of the creation, as the procession indicates a hiatus. The ordering does not alienate the creation from the *logoi*, but rather upholds the unilateral determination of the Logos with regards to the creation. The pre-existence of the *logoi* followed by the act of creation maintains the separation of transcendence from immanence. If the *logoi* would be instantiated simultaneously with the act of the creation, this would imply a complete ontology, an immanence of meaning that no longer finds its source beyond itself. At once, the pre-existence of the *logoi* preserves the fundamental meaning of the creation against its liquidation in the fallen state. What occurs with the Fall is, in this sense, the confusion of this ordering. The creation is alienated from the *logoi,* from its fundamental meaning, because the hiatus itself is obviated. The *logoi* are distorted,[54] insofar as the creation appears cut off from transcendence, not in a sense that maintains their separation, but which annuls it. In the absence of the ordering series that ascribes a precise meaning to the creation, all exteriority to the creation is extinguished in a self-referential immanence. This is the exact inverse of the Maximian image of burial which describes the ontological incompleteness of the eschatological model.

The *tropos* and *logoi* pairing evokes the soteriological dimension of eschatology. *Tropos*, for Maximus, is contingency. It designates, in its most basic sense, a 'mode of being'.[55] In Maximus' eschatology, *tropos* as general mode of being takes a particular form—the alienated state of the fallen creation. Yet the fallen state as a mode of being is itself contingent. The fallen world is a *tropos* of being, which is characterised by soteriological incompleteness. The *logoi* appear as void, namely, as that which the fallen creation is not. The eschatological basis of the *logoi-tropos* relation entails that the concept of meaning is doubled, appearing twice in this model. The *logoi* as fundamental meaning are separated from the contingency of *tropos*. They constitute a separate pole in relation to the modes of being and remain unaffected by the latter. Yet, with the Incarnation of the Logos, they now appear as an imperative, which undoes the disunity of *logoi* and *tropos*. The *logoi* are, through the Incarnation of the Logos,[56] injected directly into the *tropos* of the contingent being, which gives the cosmos its form as a directed force. Eschatological history becomes the meaning that is found in overcoming the contingent fallen state. The contingent *tropos* of soteriological void is now the objective meaning of void, which is the deification of the cosmos according to the fundamental meaning of the *logoi.*

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[53] Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua 7* (PG 91:1085A).

[54] A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 68.

[55] Cf. Jean-Claude Larchet, 'The Mode of Deification', in *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor,* eds P. Allen and B. Neil (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[56] In other words, Maximus' 'Christocentric cosmology'. cf. Torstein Tollefsen, *The Christocentric Cosmology of Saint Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Accordingly, the soteriology of deification is intertwined with the finitude of creation. The introduction of eschatology into cosmology is a transformation of the cosmological model, whereby the cosmos is that which is no longer fundamental for cosmology: the contingency of the cosmos, and, *a fortiori*, the contingency of being. The eschatologisation of cosmology maintains that the necessity of that which is, is no longer apparent, since that which is—in classical ontological terms, being *qua* being—is reduced to *tropos* as mode of being. For Maximus, being is entirely reducible to a mode, to this contingency. Maximus does not posit *tropos* as a species of being which could then be paired with the genus of a general concept of being. Instead, all ontology is thought of in the first instance according to contingency, and thereafter bound to the index of a fundamental meaning as the *logoi,* which precedes the primordial ontogenesis of creation. In this sense, being is nothingness, the nothingness of its contingency, which is recapitulated in an eschatological finitude that is always present.

This logic repeats the deep ontological contingency present throughout Orthodox doctrine, which, decisively, does not rescind a concept of meaning. The eschatological annulment of the necessity of the creation mirrors itself in the cosmogonical doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, which vitiates the immanent source of the cosmos and the self-sufficient ontology of being *qua* being. The apophatic commitment of Orthodox theology entails that ontology is not a fundamental concept in her metaphysics. God as nothingness and divine darkness forces metaphysics to break from the matrix of being *qua* being.[57] Maximus develops this idea when he describes the instability of being (τὸ ἄστατον) as the persisting nothingness of the creation. The instantiation of the cosmos that brings the creation into being does not eradicate nothingness. The act of creation is more fundamentally understood as the contingency of creation, which marks the nothingness of being. The nothingness of being does not annul the *logoi*, which precede the act of creation. In the fallen state, the void at the base of being is precisely from where the *logoi* 'appear as if risen from the dead'. The objective meaning of void as the overcoming of the fallen state is dependent upon that which is transcendent to being and thus in the last instance undetermined by being. It is this exterior as well as unilateral determination which generates the motion towards deification. The historical and cosmic mission of man as motion towards eschatological end unifies fundamental meaning and contingency, *logoi* and *tropos*. The creation is oriented towards that which, in its fallen state, it is not,—however that which it is not is precisely that which the creation 'is'.

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[57] Cf. my article 'The Apophatic Dimension of Revelation' in *Mystical Theology and Continental Philosophy: Interchange in the Wake of God,* eds D. Lewin, S.D. Podmore, and D. Williams (London: Routledge, 2017) for an interpretation of apophaticism as a non-ontological metaphysics (i.e., a metaphysics where the absolute cannot be posited in terms of an ontological concept, and the systematic corollaries of the initial apophatic commitment).

For Maximus, the Fall is contingent, it 'exists at the level not of *logos,* but of *tropos'.*[58] But the Fall is also a contingent necessity[59] from the position of eschatology, insofar as the eschatological commitment to world-end is the commitment to the end of the fallen state. The necessity given to eschatological end follows from the contingent necessity of the Fall. But the latter is ascribed a further contingency according to the logic of eschatological finitude. Finitude namely prosecutes a break in this series before it becomes a tautology. This recalls the 'retroactive causality' that Zizioulas identifies in Maximus.[60] The contingent necessity of the Fall is taken as given in the first instance by the necessity of eschatological end, but is then eviscerated in this same end, which in the last instance separates contingency from necessity. The Maximian sequence of necessary meaning followed by contingent being, eschatologically becomes a gnosiological principle of thinking of that which is as that which it is not. The *tropos* as a mode of being is not thought of in terms of being, but in terms of the fundamental meaning instantiated in the *logoi,* which lie beyond the horizon of any ontology.

The apophaticism of Maximus' eschatology severs the traditional philosophical link between metaphysics and ontology. This cut does not inaugurate a limit for thought, but rather functions as an imperative for a transformation of thought away from its overdetermination by any concept of being, an apophatic unknowing[61] occasioned by the deep unity of the *logoi*, the Logos and the eschaton[62]—which at once discloses the ethical mission of man.

Eschatology of the Natural and Gnomic Will

Maximus' defence of the Chalcedonian doctrine of Christ's divine and human will logically flows over into eschatology. If eschatology denotes both the creation's contingency and its meaning, the natural will and gnomic will distinction is also entirely eschatological. The doctrinal exploration of the mystery of Christology is consistent with the exploration of the mystery of eschatology.

While on the level of Christology, the distinction of the natural will and gnomic will entails the exclusion of the latter from Christ, on the level of the creation, this

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[58] A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor*, 56.

[59] Cf. S. Žižek, 'Interview (with Ben Woodard)' in L. Bryant, N. Srnicek, and G. Harman, *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism* (Melbourne, VIC: re.press, 2011); and J. Van Houdt, 'The Necessity of Contingency or Contingent Necessity: Meillassoux, Hegel, and the Subject', *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* 7.1 (2011): 128–141, for accounts of contingent necessity.

[60] For a description of Zizioulas' retroactive causality, cf. Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 90.

[61] In other words, the epistemology of mysticism.

[62] Larchet provides the following formulation of the conceptual affinity in Maximus between finitude and the *logoi* of creation: '(the) essential reason, the one that fundamentally defines and characterises it, but also its finality, the *scopos* for which a being exists, briefly its reason of being in a double meaning of principle and end of its existence'. *La divinisation de l'homme selon Saint Maxime le Confesseur* (Paris: Cerf, 1996), 113. D. Bahrim, 'The Anthropic Cosmology of Saint Maximus the Confessor', 14.

distinction marks its basic antagonism. The natural will describes the freedom of Christ as man and, in consequence, the authentic freedom of man. The rejection of the gnomic will in Christ is the eschatological and soteriological extinction of the gnomic will in man. For Maximus, 'the natural will is the essential desire of things according to nature',[63] whereas 'the gnomic will is the self-chosen impulse and movement of reason to one thing or another'.[64] According to the *logoi* that provide the order of the creation, and which are newly communicated in the abrogation of the alienation from the *logoi* that is the Incarnation of the Logos, the natural will is the freedom of the world that is undetermined by the world. The gnomic will, in contrast, implies a complete ontology. It is the entirely immanent pseudo-freedom of an economy of perpetual and self-sufficient choice. The natural will invokes a break with the militancy of its line: the uncompromising character of authentic human will as the will 'according to nature', which recalls the vector of eschatology. These are two separate accounts of the person which, in a fallen world, are set against each other. The natural will as the authentic freedom of man given in the Incarnation serves as corrective to the gnomic misrecognition of freedom and instantiates the soteriological mission. If Christ is, according to Florovsky's gloss of Maximus, 'the heart of the world existence—not only in terms of redemption, but also in terms of the creation of the world',[65] the Confessor's rejection of the gnomic will in Christ presents the fallen creation as the reign of the gnomic will as well as its eschatological overcoming.[66]

The linear character of the natural will means that the exercising of freedom by man is not trivial, but effectuates total cosmic transformation. The Adamic decision for death, which inaugurates the fallen world, is clearly only possible because of freedom. Yet the introduction of death into the world is a counterfeit or distorted form of freedom, insofar as the decision for death introduces necessity into the world as the necessity of death. This is a counterfeit necessity, since the world is fundamentally unnecessary; it remains, in Maximus' terms, a *tropos*. The world's only immanent, illusory necessity can be death, as death also places constraints on the world, but only through some type of absence, a corrupted form of the fundamental contingency of being. Maximus' eschatology does not maintain a tension between, on the one hand, the freedom of man, and, on the other, a concept of nature which, taken as a form of necessity, restricts freedom (e.g., Berdjajev),[67] but rather nature, the creation, in its lack of necessity and the transformative oppor-

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[63] *Opuscula Theologica et polemica* 14 (PG 91:153A–B). P. Sherwood, *The Earlier Ambigua of St. Maximus the Confessor*, 201.

[64] OTP 14 (PG 91:153A–B). P. Sherwood, *The Earlier Ambigua of St. Maximus the Confessor*, 201.

[65] George Florovsky, *Byzantine Fathers of the Sixth to Eighth Centuries* (Moscow: Palomnik 1992), 200. K. and M. Zinkovskiy, 'Hierarchic Anthropology of Saint Maximus the Confessor', *International Journal of Orthodox Theology* 2, n. 4 (2011): 44.

[66] Maximus equates the gnomic will with evil: 'For evil consists in nothing else than this difference of our gnomic will from the divine will' (*Opusc*. 3, 56BC; A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 60).

[67] E.g., the argument in his *The Meaning of the Creative Act* (San Rafael, CA: Semantron Press, 2009).

tunity this lack entails, is consistent with this same freedom. The contingency of the Fall reverses into freedom as necessity—the necessary eschatological end of the contingent fallen state. The misrecognition of freedom and the struggle to overcome this misrecognition constitutes the eschatological meaning of the creation. The Maximian eschatology understands the contingent necessity of the Fall as a misrecognition of human freedom—the gnomic will—such that the proper exercise of freedom becomes the termination of the fallen state—the soteriological dimension and the *telos* of deification inherent to the eschatological position.

Whereas eschatology suggests the abolition of freedom in the inevitability of the last things, this commitment to finitude is consistent with the freedom of the natural will. Eschatology becomes inevitable because man misrecognises his freedom. The misrecognition of freedom as the gnomic will is the negation of freedom and thereby introduces the determinism that is present in eschatology. Eschatology becomes necessary, as it is grounded not in the world, which is contingent, but in that which is not the world. The form of this determinism, unlike protology, does not invoke passivity. Eschatological determinism follows the logic of the martyr. The eschatological conception of this 'descent into hell' is an active confrontation, which ultimately shatters and transforms the (gnomic) world.[68] Because eschatology does not locate the meaning of its soteriological mission as entirely immanent to the creation, a conflict appears between the entirely self-referential immanent world and that which transcends it. From this follows that for Maximus, 'Christian life is viewed as a spiritual war against the power of evils which employ the material world as a weapon against human beings'.[69] With the Fall, the creation is mobilised against itself in the form of an internecine war, although this entirely endemic or internal war is shown to be illusory from the position of the side which opposes the hegemony of the world. The rejection of the gnomic will in Christ clarifies the terms of this spiritual war as the rejection of the creation's wholly immanent struggle and thus wholly immanent conception of itself, that is, as being *qua* being. The latter entails the perpetuation of the choice between 'one thing and another', the immanent bind of man to the world that is the exhaustion of freedom within a complete ontology. Maximian spiritual war against complete ontology is thus eschatological war. The eschatological orientation towards the end is the end of this struggle, but also the end of the world that goes beyond the world. Eschatology liberates this end, not only as the end of the world, but as an end that opens onto an outside against the absolutisation of the world. The distinction between the natural and gnomic will as distinction between anthropological and, in the last instance, cosmological visions, animates the meaning of history and determines the field of eschatological war. It

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[68] Once again, relevant here is Louth's identification of the importance of struggle in Maximus' eschatology.

[69] *Quaestiones et Dubia, in Corpus Christianorum*, 165, TLG 165. K. and M. Zinkovskiy. 'Hierarchic Anthropology of Saint Maximus the Confessor', 55.

is in this spirit that Berdjaev writes: 'I would formulate as follows the eschatological problem, which war and the catastrophes of history present: history must end, because within the limits of history the problem of the person is unresolved, his unconditional and utmost value'.[70]

Freedom as Eschatological Mission

Contemporary commentaries in the literature on Maximus, which question the natural and gnomic will distinction on the basis that Maximus ascribes an overtly fallen quality to the gnomic will, pacify the eschatological context that determines the entirety of anthropology. According to these interpretations, the gnomic will is intrinsic to human freedom, since freedom is reciprocal with choice.[71] The degraded status which Maximus confers to the gnomic will overlooks the putative lived experience of human freedom.[72] These rehabilitations of the gnomic will accordingly occlude the eschatological war over the status of freedom and the axiology of the person that informs the meaning of history. In such accounts, the problem of freedom is separated from the Christological, cosmological, soteriological and eschatological dimensions that are *unified* through Maximus' *division* between the natural and gnomic will.

From the position of the natural will, the reduction of freedom to the perpetuation of individual choice subordinates the effect of freedom and, in consequence, trivialises freedom. The gnomic will conceives freedom as choice and intends to preserve the structure of freedom of choice. Choice only generates further choice and thus reproduces itself in the logic of self-reference and a complete ontology. The natural will, in contrast, entails a militant concept of freedom as the total transformation of the cosmos. Freedom is meaningful only if it has an effect.[73] Recalling the distinction between the natural and the gnomic will, concerning the world of democratic liberal capitalism, Yannaras writes that

> freedom is thought of as the possibility of unlimited choice: the ability to choose among different ideas, different convictions, different political

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[70] Nikolaj Berdjaev, 'Война и эсхатология', *Путь* 61 (1939–40): 3–14.

[71] Cf. Ian A. McFarland, 'Naturally and by Grace: Maximus the Confessor on the Operation of the Will', *Scottish Journal of Philosophy* 58, n. 4 (2005): 410–433; David Bradshaw, 'St. Maximus the Confessor on the Will', in *Knowing the Purpose of Creation through Resurrection*, ed. M. Vasiljević (Alhambra, CA: Sebastian Press, 2013), 143–57, *inter alia*.

[72] 'Maximus preserved (the gnomic will's) positive aspect, especially in his earlier writings, because, again, it bespoke the existential and experiential dimension of creaturely desire and will'. Paul M. Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor: Jesus Christ and the Transformation of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 123.

[73] Much more still needs to be said on how Maximus' concept of gnomic will completely anticipates the (neo)liberal and democratic definitions of human freedom as individual choice, a prophetic vision of counterfeit freedom that informs the historical reality of eschatology and the signs of the times.

parties, newspapers, etc. The right of the individual to unlimited choice…
The freedom that interests me is the one which frees us from the constraints
of the created world'.[74]

Maximus' eschatology, which takes the end as axiomatic, clarifies the only effect
with which freedom may be equated. According to the *logoi* of an absolute transcend-
ent truth, natural will locates freedom in the break from and annihilation of the
bonds of the (gnomic) fallen state of man, that is, in the *theosis* of soteriological and
eschatological transformation.

If the freedom of the natural will appears as a violation of an intuitive definition
of freedom, this is because the latter lacks an absolute sense of ethics. Maximus'
linking of freedom *qua* natural will to the soteriology of *theosis* establishes the cen-
trality of an ethical principle to his eschatological metaphysics.[75] The meaning of
the creation, which follows from the eschatology of the natural and gnomic will, is
meaning as ethics. Meaning is not exhausted in language and ethics is not equivalent
to particular, contingent intents or norms, but, instead, meaning is entirely ethical.
Even Wittgenstein, who in a sense helps inaugurate the particular twentieth-century
current that liquidates meaning in language, will later oppose this same approach
with his remark that if there existed 'a book about ethics which really was a book
on ethics this book would, with an explosion, destroy all the other books in the
world'.[76] Absolute ethics shapes the hierarchy of knowledge, in that ethics becomes
the meaning and centre of knowledge; in the last instance everything vanishes in this
centre. This link of meaning and ethics is, in other terms, a militant form of ethical
non-naturalism,[77] whereby ethics is irreducible to the world, but the world at once
is entirely reducible to ethics. Ethics in Maximian eschatology binds how the world
is to how the world should be.[78] The transition from is to ought, for Hume, marks
the problem of a gap that paralyses ethics. Maximus will introduce this gap into the
world, according to which the history of the world becomes the transformation of
the world that is its deification.

Following Maximus' conceptual logic, freedom as ethics signifies that an ethical
problem is constituted by the absence of choice. The gravity of ethics is not the
result of ethics presenting us with a choice, but rather of ethics occluding choice. It

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[74] Christos Yannaras, 'Towards a New Ecumenism', *Sourozh* 70 (1997): 22.

[75] For the centrality of ethics in Maximus' thought, cf. Aleksandr Đakovac, *Ontologija i etika u svetlu
hristologije svetog Maksima Ispovednika* [Ontology and Ethics in the light of the Christology of Saint
Maximus the Confessor], Doctoral Dissertation (Belgrade: Univerzitet u Beogradu, Pravoslavni Bo-
goslovski Fakultet, 2014).

[76] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *A Lecture on Ethics* (West Sussex: Wiley, 2014), 46.

[77] Louth clarifies Maximian freedom as ethics with reference to the freedom-ethics connection
developed by Irish Murdoch, cf. A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 60.

[78] Cf. Lars Thunberg (*Man and the Cosmos: The Vision of St. Maximus the Confessor* [Yonkers, NY:
St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997], 143) for an account of the Maximian ethical 'ought' in terms of the
soteriologico-eschatological transformation of the cosmos.

is only when a choice has *prima facie* been made—that is, when the ethical situation of lack of choice is no longer crystalline—that the retroactive structure of the choice appears and the unethical takes a form of trauma, which is mistaken as the anterior fracture of ethical decision. If there is no choice according to the ethical absolutism of the natural will, but there is nevertheless a dichotomy of the natural and gnomic, this appears incoherent, since against the natural will's lack of choice, there is a putative fracture of choice which delineates either the gnomic or natural. But this dichotomy is itself occasioned by the gnomic, fallen state of the creation. Freedom is not choice but the exercising of the natural will within a world that, as fallen and gnomic, is itself, in a fundamental sense, illusory. For Maximus, 'there is only a deiform understanding imbued with divine knowledge, and a single disposition of will and purpose that chooses only virtue'.[79] Maximus' eschatological formulation of freedom contains within itself its fallen distorted variation (the reference to choice), which is nevertheless overcome within this same description. According to its divine source, the 'singular disposition of will and purpose' implies that there is no choice against this will and purpose. A choice between gnomic and natural will only appears from the perspective of the former and not the latter; yet because the gnomic will is ultimately illusory,[80] absent from the 'only deiform understanding', so too is this choice. This is the same illusion that surrounds death. Resurrection after death means that death does not exhaust the creation, even though death is in the world; but there are no *logoi* of death, as there are no *logoi* of the gnomic will. Death as well as the choice of the gnomic will only surface from the position of the fallen cosmology, whereas they vanish from the position of the *eschaton,* which is determined by the truth of the Logos.

For Maximus, freedom is ethics, insofar as authentic freedom is the freedom of the effect, the eschatological mission of man in history to realise deification. In symmetry to the cosmological 'transfer of reference' from beginning to end, freedom is conceived according to the same operation of transfer. Freedom is not thought from the position of the antecedent, that is, in terms of a potentiality to produce effects. Instead, freedom is formulated in terms of end. Authentic freedom is determined by the singularity of its effect, namely, as the freedom to realise *an* effect, the eschatological end *qua* deification.

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[79] *Orationis Dominicae expositio,* G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherwood, and K. Ware, trans., *Philokalia*, vol. 2, 295.

[80] 'There is not really any "gnomic" will at all, for the process of formulating an intention (*gnômê*) as a necessary stage in coming to a decision and acting on it is not part of the "mode of existence" of a divine Person at all, who is not to be thought of as deprived of knowledge of the good'. A. Louth, *Maximus the Confessor,* 59.

Conclusion

The systematicity of Maximus' eschatology means that cosmology is ethics and ethics is cosmology.[81] The centrality of a cosmological concept of finitude, which defines the eschatological model as such, is conjoined by Maximus to the ethical mission of the human being. On the basis of the eschatologico-cosmological and eschatologico-ethical synthesis, that which ends, in this sense, never was: the fallen world of death. According to this terminus, what is disclosed is the ontological contingency of the fallen state and thus the meaning of the ethical mission. The prosecution of this mission, following the natural will of the Christological prototype, realises authentic freedom as a freedom of the effect, the overcoming of the fallen cosmos: the eschatological motion from an incomplete finitude to the rest of a complete finitude, which is the deification of the creation. For Maximus, in the *eschaton*, the apophatic chasm between God and creation remains, but the creation is now deified in the completion of its essence, the *logoi* of the creation. Eschatological finitude as the finitude of the fallen state is at once the realisation of the finite essence according to which the creation is created. If the conceptual reciprocity between finitude and deification entails that that which ends in the *eschaton* is the contingent fallen state of the creation, eschatological *telos* is the soteriological cosmic martyrdom of the entire creation and its resurrection.

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[81] In other conceptual terms relevant to Maximus' system: macrocosm and microcosm.

BOOK REVIEWS

Church in the Making: An Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality
BY N. LOUDOVIKOS

Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2016, pp. 296. ISBN 978–0–88141–509–4

Introduction

In an essay originally published in 1948, Fr Georges Florovsky noted that, whereas the Orthodox conciliar tradition produced no formal definition or doctrine of the Church, this was not because of any confusion or obscurity regarding the question, but because the experiential reality of the Church was so overwhelmingly self-evident that it required no explanation.[1] Yet, what may have been self-evident in the patristic and Byzantine period no longer seems to be quite so obvious, and theologians now regularly question the nature of the Church, along with its purpose and relevance in the modern world. Despite the proliferation of various ecclesiological models and theories, many questions regarding the nature, identity, unity, structure, orders, and ministries of the Church remain largely open and under discussion, and these are not merely academic questions but to the contrary express a genuine and widespread crisis.

Church in the Making addresses these questions in ways that are exceptionally fresh and creative, and which should insure this book an important place in the large and complex body of ecclesiological literature produced over the last century and a half. The central problem, as Loudovikos sees it, is that hierarchy and institutional structure have come to dominate the vision of the Church, and as a result have become unwitting vectors in a vicious cycle: disproportionate emphasis on the Church as an institution invariably provokes a range of subjective, spiritualizing, charismatic and therapeutic reactions.

Far from being a merely general study of ecclesiology or episcopal primacy, *Church in the Making* is at once a meticulous and far-reaching exploration of these questions based on often brilliantly perceptive readings of patristic sources, in particular the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor. The author's reading of these sources brings new categories and concepts into prominence—or rather new understandings of traditional categories—such as 'imitation', 'consubstantiality', and 'participation' (all of which require careful parsing), which aim to move beyond the facile and false dichotomy of so-called 'therapeutic' ecclesi-

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[1] Georges Florovsky, 'The Church: Her Nature and Task,' *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky,* vol. 1 (Vaduz: Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1989), 57; originally published in *The Universal Church in God's Design: An Ecumenical Study* (London: SCM Press, 1948), 43–58; the quotation appears on page 43.

ology and 'eucharistic' ecclesiology. In place of these, Loudovikos endeavors to articulate what he calls an 'ecclesiology of participation', which he argues is at the root of the patristic consciousness of the Church, making it a truly apostolic, catholic, and universal vision of the Church.

As Loudovikos emphasizes throughout the book, the Church is not something that simply 'is' or 'exists' in a static, self-contained form or structure, but is rather something that unfolds in a process of becoming, constituted as a continual dialogue or 'reciprocal exchange' (a Maximian phrase) between the created and the uncreated, bound together in the unity of created nature and recapitulated in the created human nature of Christ. From this point of view, and as will be discussed below, the Church is a participatory extension of divine consubstantiality into creaturely consubstantiality in and through the person of Christ. This has a range of theoretical and practical consequences for the Church, not least of which is the Church's unity, which is not something that is imposed upon it institutionally 'from above' but is realized in each and every order and charism of the Church, and which is simply expressed by—but not produced or grounded on—the charism of the episcopacy.

Church in the Making thus seeks to reclaim the lost territory between the extremes of an institutionally reductive and existentially ineffective episcopal bureaucracy, stereotypically associated with the sacerdotal-monarchical state institution of the Vatican, and its dialectical opposite in the anti-institutional, disembodied, charismatic and gnostic Christianity associated with some forms of Protestantism, many of them uniquely American.[2] In the author's words: 'Orthodox ecclesiology today seems to stumble between these two ecclesial models, the modern (secular, institutional, authoritarian, unregulated)' and the 'primitive (spiritual, communal, eschatological)', noting that the 'most important Orthodox theological trends of our age tend as a rule' to fall one-sidedly between only 'one of the two members of each of the following pairs', namely, 'between sacramental piety and ascetical piety, between an intellectual theology and one that is experiential, between the Eucharist and noetic prayer, between the bishop and the monastic elder, and between the parish and the monastery'. In short, a full-blown bifurcation between what modern scholars of sociology and religion have identified as a deep division between 'institution' and 'charisma'.

Church in the Making

Church in the Making is a revised and expanded version of a book originally published in 2002 in Greek, called *An Apophatic Ecclesiology of Consubstantiality*, which the author presents as the third volume in a trilogy. The book is comprised of eight studies, the first of which the author considers 'foundational' for the seven

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[2] On which, see Harold Bloom, *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

that follow, which are 'subsidiary applications and extensions' of the first study. (After a brief survey of the book's contents, this review will focus on the first study.) The second study applies the principles established in the first study to the concept of 'communion' in Roman Catholic ecclesiology (with particular attention to the work of Karl Rahner and the ecclesiology of Vatican II). The third study focuses on the 'ontology of power', and considers how the lack of an ontologically grounded theory of the social has led to deep and destructive divisions between social life and social power. Here the author works with an eclectic mix of theorists including Hegel, Durkheim, Karl Popper, and Cornelius Castoriades. The fourth study, using the same principle of 'ontological consubstantiality', corrects the 'panentheistic archetype' operative in Russian philosophical ecclesiology and Sophiology, which the author describes in a long arc from Plotinus, through German Idealism, to Soloviev, Florensky, Khomiakov, Bulgakov, and Lossky. The fifth study continues the discussion of the previous study by applying Maximus' notion of 'analogy' to creation. Understood as a dialogue or an unfolding reciprocity, creation is constituted as an 'analogy' of consubstantiality between creatures and Creator, realized in union with the incarnate Logos through the Spirit. The sixth study presents an 'ecclesial ontology' of language, bringing Maximus the Confessor into dialogue with Ludwig Wittgenstein. The seventh study addresses the 'ecclesiological sin' of nationalism (described as 'one of the most dangerous temptations for the Church over the last centuries'), and engages a wide range of ancient and modern theorists, from Augustine to Hegel, and from Horkheimer to Benedict Anderson. The final, concluding study returns to the binary opposition of 'therapeutic' vs. 'eucharistic' ecclesiology, re-evaluating them both through the categories of 'image' and 'imitation', which were presented in detail in the first study.

Church in the Making: Study One

Rather intriguingly, the first study begins with an extended reference to Robert Silverberg's 2000 science-fiction novella, *Sailing to Byzantium*. Set three hundred years in the future, Silverberg's dystopia is an artificial world where human consciousness has been uploaded into virtual 'bodies' designed by computer programs. The technologically assisted separation of nature and 'person', along with the pseudo-ecstasy of the mind from the body, serves as an apt metaphor for the study's initial discussion of a gnostic, disincarnating, Platonic flight from the material world and the body. Loudovikos contends that such an ecstasy from 'nature toward a radical and absolute narcissistic imagined being' has become the 'only mysticism' available to the modern world. Orthodox theologians are not immune from this 'great sailing away from nature', and unwittingly promote the notion of the human

as 'purely a bare hypostasis, a person without nature'.[3] Not unlike the extremes of 'institution' and 'charisma', the modern construction of the 'monism of the subject' has called forth its opposite, namely, the 'mysticism of its deconstruction'. Here Loudovikos radicalizes the problem, and calls not only for the deconstruction of the secular subject but also for the deconstruction of 'the subject of the (introspective, psychological) religious quest', so that it might 'enter into objective structures far more primeval and profound'. As Loudovikos will go on to explain, these 'objective structures' are the sacramental structures of the Church, which are freely received into the life of the faithful, not in a psychological manner but ontologically in an 'ecclesialization of the inner human being'.

In order to establish his argument on solid historical and theological foundations, Loudovikos next turns to early patristic sources concerned with the nature of the Church. The sources in question are not numerous and have been the object of scholarly scrutiny from at least the early modern period. Loudovikos nonetheless manages to find fresh meaning in these classic texts by reading and rethinking them in new frameworks. For him, the *Didache,* the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, the *Apostolic Tradition,* and the writings of Cyprian of Carthage variously reflect a 'deep assimilation of the structural to the charismatic', or an ecclesial community in which episcopal office is 'validated by its conformity to the prophetic office', or in which ecclesial offices embody 'deep human relations', and are not 'structural replacements or substitutes for them'.

The author makes a strong case that these works are best seen as "existential-spiritual documents", and not constitutional charters for authoritarian administrative structures. Any episcopal 'primacy' they describe is qualified as an 'eschatological primacy', which does not refer to the 'end of the world', but signifies the concrete realization of the fundamental direction of being in Christ understood as 'self-sacrifice and self-emptying'. In all these sources, Loudovikos sees profound ontological connections between institution and charism, which in earlier periods were not conceived of as two fundamentally different realities. When properly understood, these early sources point the way to overcoming the bifurcation that has compromised and impaired the proper functioning of the Church as a unified body.

Loudovikos identifies the source of this bifurcation in the theology of Origen, who, under the influence of Platonism, divided the 'external' from the internal', so that the material culture of the 'external' liturgy was reduced to a temporary and insufficient manifestation of what is inward, genuine, immaterial, and enduring. Origen likewise subjected the Eucharist to this division, as well as the idea of the Church as a whole, since it is 'natural that this kind of approach should also be accompanied by analogous ecclesiological models'. Whereas Origen sees a 'spiritual

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[3] In his 1926 poem, *Sailing to Byzantium,* Yeats describes consciousness as 'fastened to a dying animal' (i.e., the body), and which longs to be 'gathered into the artifice of eternity,' affirming that 'once out of nature, I shall never take my bodily form from any natural thing.'

goal' beyond the visible Church, Ignatius of Antioch sees both this goal and the visible Church as being the same. Origen is thus responsible for an 'ecclesiological dualism', and Loudovikos asserts that any modern dichotomy of institution and charisma 'will seek support in the Origenian dichotomy between the visible and the noetic Church', that is, the binary opposition of institutional structures and existential-spiritual charisms.

A sweeping judgment like this, however, can only be made on a relatively high level of abstraction, and thus would be difficult if not impossible to substantiate on the basis of Origen's writings. Yet Loudovikos's larger point is valid, though not because of the distinction between the 'inward' and the 'outward'. For this distinction, Origen consistently invoked the authority of the Apostle Paul's teaching regarding the 'inward' and 'outward' man (2 Cor 4:16), along with the Pauline hermeneutical notion that the (outward) 'letter kills' while the (inward) 'Spirit gives life' (2 Cor 3:4-6). Thus it is not simply the distinction between the visible and the invisible that is the problem, but rather the misconceived cosmology and dualistic metaphysics in which Origen framed it.[4]

Loudovikos rightly finds a more fully integrated ecclesial model in the writings attributed to Macarius of Egypt, which locate the visible Church, the inner Church of the heart, the heavenly Church, and the eschatological Church all on a single, unified continuum. He might have also noted that the Macarian tradition was prone to its own deficiencies and extremes, typically of a charismatic, anti-institutional character, which were condemned by various church councils.[5] Neither tradition, in its principle, was entirely balanced, and each required the counterweight of the other.[6] Through a long and complex process of reception and revision, the Origenist and Evagrian emphasis on the 'mind' was successfully integrated with the Macarian emphasis on the 'heart', primarily through the efforts of Dionysios the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor.[7] It is to these great thinkers and theologians that *Church in the Making* now turns.

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[4] Origen's thought, which is complex and not always internally consistent, resists simple categorization; for a more positive estimation, see Daniel Boyarin, 'Origen as Theorist of Allegory: Alexandrian Contexts', in *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory,* eds R. Copeland and P. Struck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 39–54.

[5] On which, see Columba Stewart, *Working the Earth of the Heart: The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to AD 431* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

[6] The notion of opposing schools of the 'mind' and 'heart' in Eastern Christian spirituality was established by Irénée Hausherr, 'Les grands courants de la spiritualité orientale', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1 (1935): 121–28. Hausherr's thesis, which remains influential, was simplistic and exaggerated, but nonetheless corresponds very generally with different emphases found in some of the sources. Of course, the integration of the biblical concept of the 'heart' with the Greek vocabulary of the 'intellect' was a process that had already begun in the theology of Paul; on which, see Robert Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of their Use and Conflict Settings* (Leiden: Brill, 1971).

[7] For Maximus the Confessor's revision of Evagrius, see Maximos Constas, 'Nothing is Greater than Divine Love: Evagrios of Pontos, Maximos the Confessor, and the *Philokalia*', in *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: A Volume in Honour of Metropolitan Kallistos Ware,* ed. G. Speake (Oxford and Berlin: Peter Lang, 2016), 57–74.

Dionysios the Areopagite

The patristic writers of the first three centuries variously approximated but did not produce an adequate conceptual framework for ecclesiology. According to Loudovikos, the first writer to 'articulate ecclesiology in terms of ontology' was Dionysius the Areopagite. Loudovikos offers an insightful and important reading of the Areopagite's ecclesiology, which is a comparatively neglected area in the study of the *corpus Dionysiacum.* He takes a nuanced view of Dionysius' use of Greek philosophy, which resulted in the 'Christianizing of philosophy' and the 'Hellenization of ecclesiology'. Any and all philosophical elements found in the *corpus* have been 'assimilated to the perspective of the transformation of their existential content', inasmuch as Dionysius rejects the 'intermediate divisions of the hierarchy', which the philosophical tradition had identified as lower divinities.

Loudovikos argues that, for Dionysius, created existence is 'expressed not only as order, or as objective being, but also as an existential fact of becoming'. On the one hand, there is 'the objective fact of being, with its framework and its law (i.e., hierarchy), which is absolute and unshakeable'. On the other hand, 'there is also an "interior" dimension to the hierarchies, in which the external, objective and structural elements are interiorized' (which aligns Dionysius with the Macarian tradition) so that the emergent 'reality is simultaneously both dynamic and static, both social and spiritual, both structural and mystical'. This is an astute reading of the *corpus Dionysiacum* and an important corrective to the reductive, one-dimensional focus on hierarchy. Dionysian ontology is indeed committed to *both* 'being' *and* 'becoming', because while created beings have specific, unalterable natures (which signals the Areopagite's rejection of Origenism), these natures are dynamic and endowed by the Creator with the capacity to unfold and progress toward their eschatological goal, which, as Loudovikos notes, deeply informs their inner, rational structures. That this process unfolds within the Church, where it is ordered to the Eucharistic synaxis, results in a vision of the Church in which 'beings have been ecclesialized'.

It follows that charisma and clerical orders are disposed in a dynamic, hieratic arrangement. In contrast to the Neoplatonic pattern, in which the 'sanctifying powers of the hieratic order' unfold on the level of ontology, in Dionysios they 'depend absolutely on their participation in God, or rather on God himself' who acts 'through the agency of the hieratic orders'. Each priestly rank is thus 'valid as a reference to the whole', inasmuch as it 'subsists and operates with God', being a 'unified manifestation of the divine energy universalizing the particular charisms'. Each priestly rank 'presents the whole of God's universalizing activity in each of its particular grades', in a 'specific manifestation, or rather, charism proper to itself'.[8] The same phenomenon is evident in the sacraments, each one of which is a locus and point of convergence for the other, so that 'baptism is completed in chrismation

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[8] I.e., the Dionysian notion of 'analogy', which, as the author explains in detail, was subsequently developed by Maximus the Confessor.

which is perfected in the Eucharist, while baptism and chrismation are the mode whereby the Eucharist is received'. This convergence is 'strengthened by the existential interior structure of the orders as reciprocally gift-giving'. This means that grace is not 'conferred or received unless it can be presented anew to the other divisions', a movement which begins and ends in the self-giving of God and the return of creation to him in the Eucharist, which is the 'fundamental pattern of a eucharistic ontology'.[9] Here, the emphasis on the differentiation of these gifts does not imply the insufficiency of any particular one of them but to the contrary 'implies a deep communion of all of them in each one', which is the very basis for the resulting ecclesial ontology. Loudovikos discovers in the Dionysian synthesis an initial, 'summary interpretation of the primitive experience of the Church', emphasizing the 'objective' function of a particular order in the hierarchy, along with the demand for the personal holiness of those conferring and receiving the sacraments.

Though Dionysius marks a clear advance on the development of Orthodox ecclesiology, Loudovikos argues that the Areopagite did not sufficiently address a number of problems posed by his system, given the complexities (both theoretical and practical) which arise in a synthesis of the structural and the existential. Instead, ecclesiology 'reaches its fullest expression only in the theological thinking of Maximus the Confessor'.

Maximus the Confessor

According to Loudovikos, Orthodox theology has remained too narrowly focused on Dionysian ecclesiology and has 'not yet exploited the extraordinarily suggestive theological lines opened up by St Maximus the Confessor'. He describes Maximus as the 'greatest ecclesiologist among the Fathers', who brought the 'early Church's ecclesiology to completion'. This was done through an 'appropriation and correction' of both Origen and Dionysius. The key, he argues, is found in Maximus' 'novel treatment of the central difficulty in Dionysius' ecclesiological system', namely, the relationship between 'an apophatic charismatic existentiality and ecclesial structure'. Here the word 'apophatic' does not simply refer to 'negative theology' in a reductively linguistic sense, but encompasses the negation of all *stasis*, whether it is objective or subjective, internal or external, institutional or charismatic. It is the corrective, in other words, to the reification of either extreme in the polarization of charisma and institution, along with any ecclesial office, charism, symbol or sign taken as an end in itself.

The argument begins with a reading of the *Mystagogy.* At the outset of this work, Maximus emphasizes the simultaneous immanence and transcendence of God,

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[9] On which, see Nikolaos Loudovikos, *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor's Eschatological Ontology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity,* trans. E. Theokritoff (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010).

who is at once the very 'being of beings' and 'beyond all being', and thus is 'more fittingly referred to as nonbeing'. Loudovikos describes this theological principle as the 'preface to a phenomenological quest for the essence of the Church as the image of God.' This might be true, but Maximus has a more immediate reason for invoking this principle, namely, to establish the limits of theological language before embarking on the various analogies between God and the Church that are central to the *Mystagogy*. This follows the qualification that Maximus imposed on himself with respect to the ecclesiological discourse of the anonymous elder (mentioned in the work's preface). Maximus acknowledged that he could not fully or accurately convey the words or meaning of that discourse, which in turn becomes a larger qualification about the limits of all language and all representation. Ending the preface on this apophatic note, the Confessor subsequently takes up the notion of God as Cause, so that the Church, as the 'image' of God, becomes the locus of the divine causal structure and its providential activity. All things are united to each other and to God inasmuch as they have God as their Cause, who is not only their point of origin but also their final, eschatological goal.

Presenting the Church as the 'mode and locus' of divine activity, Maximus is not content merely to provide a description of the Church's institutional structure, but makes the 'existential and the ontological interior to each other'. Here Loudovikos might have also cited another passage from the *Mystagogy,* which presents intelligible and sensible realities not in separation but as interior to each other:

> The entire intelligible world impresses itself mystically in the entire sensible world in symbolic forms. And the entire sensible world exists in the entire intelligible world simplified in the form of the *logoi* in accordance with the knowing power of the intellect. The sensible world is present in the intelligible world by means of the *logoi,* and the intelligible is present in the sensible by means of figures, yet their function is one.[10]

As Loudovikos notes, Maximus presents the 'mode of ecclesial being' not as something parceled out between structural and existential categories, but as a 'dynamic fact of participation in the divine being', which is brought about by the apophatic negation of *stasis* (mentioned above). The result is that rather than provide us with a 'way of defining the Church', we are given simply a perspective, an existential vantage point from which we can 'only observe the way in which the Church's being is constituted in Christ through the Spirit', a notion which underlines the title of the book, *Church in the Making*.

In his ecclesiological interpretation of Maximus the Confessor, Loudovikos relies on the related categories of 'consubstantiality' and 'imitation'. The use of 'con-

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[10] *Mystagogy* 2 (CCSG 69:16–17, lines 241–47); cf. the parallel passage in the *Responses to Thalassios,* Qu. 27.4 (CCSG 7:193, lines 44–48).

substantiality' here (and elsewhere) refers to the ontological unity of creatures and creation as a whole, which takes place in, and through, and by virtue of Christ's (created) human nature, which is absolutely critical to the entire formulation. It is a Christological consubstantiality that, through Christ, grants creation a share in the life of the consubstantial Trinity. Christological consubstantiality is also what enables Maximus to go beyond the ecclesiology of Dionysius, whose own Christology is relatively muted.

As the Body of Christ, the consubstantial Church both participates in and 'imitates', in a mode proper to it, the very activity of God, and thereby realizes consubstantiality among created beings. The category of imitation means that the Church is a 'mimetic structure imitating the activity of God', and Loudovikos sees this as the primary mode of the Church's 'participatory and apophatic constitution'. Imitation is thus closely tied to consubstantiality, and is the 'second decisive term in the Maximian corrective appropriation' of Dionysius and Origen.

Through consubstantiality and imitation, the Church is the 'image' of God, 'fulfilling God's eschatological will for the consubstantial unification of beings in Christ through the Spirit', which is why this condition is properly termed an 'eschatological consubstantiality'. God's activity in and through the Church unfolds on several levels as the Church extends to include not simply human beings but the entire created order of 'visible and invisible essences', which are also unified through the Church and find their proper end in God. This event of unification is the 'providential binding together' of all things to God as their Cause and End, an ontological convergence that is a 'pure and unconfused identity of movement and existence', an 'absolute ontological communion without confusion or conflation of the natures'. This not only demonstrates the relation of all things to their common Cause, but it also reveals the 'consubstantiality of created beings, not by negating the differences of their natures, but by joining them without confusion in a harmonious and undivided identity'.

The Church as the 'image of God' is the first of several analogies that Maximus explores in his differentiated account of the Church. In the second analogy or image, the Confessor moves from the theological to the anthropological, noting that the Church is also an 'image' of the human person, because the human person himself has been created according to the 'image and likeness of God' (Gen 1:26). Loudovikos argues that, in particular, the Church is the 'eschatological mode of the human person's unity', while the human person is the 'consubstantial mode of the unity of the Church'. Through the processes of transformation available in the Christian life, the person becomes a 'mystical Church', with his or her body, soul, and mind symbolically corresponding to the physical aspects of the church building. The body (the outer narthex) is purified and enriched through the keeping of the commandments; the soul (the interior space of the nave), is engaged in more cognitive and contemplative projects; while the mind (as the image of the inner sanctuary) turns

toward the mystical vision of God. In this way, the visible Church, which is itself a manifestation of ecclesial life and order, is 'existentially introjected' in the physical life and consciousness of the believer, being ordered and unified through eschatological reference to its divine cause.[11]

From this, it follows that the human person becomes an 'iconic representation of the consubstantial mode of ecclesial unity', demonstrating existentially the 'supernatural and spiritual identity of the Church's charisms'. In this way, theology, anthropology, and ecclesiology converge as the charisms of the Church—the priestly, the ascetical, the contemplative, as well as the institutional—are unified through created natures as these are 'taken up consubstantially into their eschatological unity in Christ'. When unified through the dynamic of its eschatological orientation, creaturely consubstantiality creates the possibility for the Church to eliminate the gap between institution and charism, having found a deeper ontological context for both of them. The result is that 'each charism or ecclesial structure constitutes a consubstantial manifestation, in communion with all the other charisms.' Each charism is an 'imitation of or participation in a specific and consubstantial divine energy,' an 'ecclesial iconization of God' in the orders and charisms of the Church.

By virtue of their natural consubstantiality, which is consubstantial with the divinized human nature of Christ, and ordered to their proper eschatological end, the diversity of charisms in the Church exists in a perichoretic mode through which each is present and internal to the other. 'Each abides interchangeably in the other', in the words of Maximus, so that each exists 'reciprocally in the other, guaranteeing that the Church remains one and the same in both: one, whole, integral entity in each one and severally and in all of them together'.

For Loudovikos, the reality of consubstantiality overcomes any ontological dialectic between what is 'charismatic' and what is 'structural' or 'institutional', since consubstantiality insures that every charism or order or ecclesial ministry unfolds and expresses the whole of ecclesial being. Through the apophatic process of participation, both the charismatic and the structural share in God's own activity, and thus become productive of consubstantiality. Moreover, each and every activity contains all the others in a consubstantial action, unifying all things ecclesially within it. This principle has important consequences for understanding the nature of the episcopal charism, which the bishop does not bear as some separate or isolated power. 'On the contrary, the charism of the bishop, in virtue of having only an eschatological primacy, is the first to teach consubstantiality to all the other charisms'. The bishop's charism is not reducible to mere outward coordination or management,

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[11] These themes were touched on in the discussion of the Macarian corpus, which Maximus was familiar with. Loudovikos perceptively notes that this 'existential introjection is not a merely psychological process' but is the 'existential personal reception of the Church, by deliberate choice through grace, as the now existential content of the human being.' It is an 'introjection' of the Church with its structures and sacraments, the 'ecclesialization' of the inner human being, which he sees as an 'ontological refashioning' of humanity's personal being.

but 'ontologically contains all the other charisms just as they contain it'. It follows that there is no 'primate' in the Church as the 'pinnacle or center of a structure that images the last things', but only as the 'stimulus of a consubstantial perichoresis from below of all the other charisms within each one of them'.

Whatever 'structure' can be posited within such a framework can never be a mere given, a fixed and static datum, but is a living, active fact of participation in the uncreated activity of God. The ecclesial body is certainly an objective fact, but at the same time a potential. It is fixed and permanent from the perspective of the immutable will of God to draw the whole of created reality into ecclesial existence, but remains in a state of potential with respect to the free acceptance of its imitation.[12] Once again, we return to the theme announced in the book's title: an apophatic ecclesiology of consubstantiality describes the process of 'Church in the making', that is, of the Church as the potentiality of the image of God realizing and being assimilated to the fullness of the divine likeness.

The author at this point brings out in greater detail the Christological elements in his argument, specifically the manner in which each charism is a particular mode of Eucharistic participation in the Body of Christ. Loudovikos rightly notes that, for Maximus the Confessor, the mystery of the Church is the supreme Christological mystery. Each charism and each activity flowing from Christ extends the fact of his incarnation, and, through the Spirit, is realized as a living member of Christ's body. Thus each charism (or ecclesial activity or ministry) becomes a particular mode of Eucharistic participation in the body of Christ, which implies a mode of participation in the whole Christ.[13] Participation in Christ by the different ministries, which Maximus presents as the consumption of the various parts of the Christ-Lamb, places Christ in his entirety, in each one of the saints, in a manner that is 'analogous' (or in proportion) to the participant, that is, relative to the charism of the believer and according to the measure of his or her faith.[14]

In Maximus' spiritual interpretation of the eating of the paschal lamb—which reverses Adam's transgressive consumption) the organic and biological image of the body comes to the fore. Through this process, the believer is, through the Spirit, assimilated to the whole Christ, so that the charism renders the believer an 'unrepeatable and particular presence of Christ by grace in the Church.' This is the manner in which Christ becomes 'wholly incarnate in various ways in each one of his charismatic members that are in the communion of his body'.[15] With this for-

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[12] This theological principle is at the core of Maximus' theology of baptism, outlined in the *Responses to Thalassios,* Qu. 6 (CCSG 7:69–71), in which the baptized receive the whole Holy Spirit in potential but not in actuality, which requires their freely chosen cooperation. Incorporation into the body of the Church contains the whole dynamic of that body in terms of being and becoming, potential and actualization.

[13] According to the traditional doctrine of participation, the whole of the participating being shares in the whole of the participated.

[14] *Ambiguum* 47 (DOML 2:207–11).

[15] See *Ambiguum* 21.15: 'Those who choose the life of the Gospel … take possession of the likeness of the good things of the age to come … and will be spiritually vivified by their union with the archetype of

mulation, Loudovikos provides us with an extraordinary framing of a well-known Maximian doctrine—the embodiment of the Logos in the believer[16]—in the context of ecclesiology. This is in marked contrast to the majority of commentators who understand it as a somewhat free-floating event in virtue ethics or moral psychology, with no reference to its proper ecclesial setting. This is but one example of Loudovikos's profound ecclesiological interpretation of the theology of Maximus the Confessor, which is a remarkable feature of this book.

By virtue of this ontological, participatory ecclesiology of consubstantiality, 'all charisms without exception are Christological,' and thus are 'absolutely and unequivocally equal and consubstantially inclusive of each other in the Spirit, when they function properly'. In other words, there is 'no ontological difference between the charisms; there is only a difference of function'. From this, Loudovikos concludes that 'there is no real unity of the Church in the bishop' when and to the extent that his 'episcopal charism does not function as an existential struggle to imitate the divine activity of Christ', which is a 'struggle he undergoes as a bishop who consubstantially contains within himself all the other charisms', and who does not merely 'coordinate or administer' these charisms, but who 'preserves them in their fullness'.

As a result, the manifestation of the Church's truth can occur in any of the charisms, when it functions in a consubstantial, Christological manner. Then, and only then, is the Church's truth manifested in its unity. This is why the Church's unity in truth has been expressed throughout its history by various charisms, 'whether of martyrs, monks, teachers, or bishops', without disturbing either the Church's conciliarity or its hierarchical structure. In this regard, it is worth recalling that Maximus the Confessor expressed the truth and unity of the Church at a time when the majority of the hierarchy was in a state of formal heresy, though he himself was a simple monk. Loudovikos explains: 'A holy hermit or charismatic layperson, by preserving the whole Christ consubstantially within himself, and therefore also the truth of the other charisms, including even that of the bishop, could maintain the truth of the Church's unity. He is able to do this, of course, not by standing in place of the bishop, but by creating the spiritual conditions manifesting the unity of the Church's truth' in such a way as to 'revivify' the other orders in the Church.

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these true things, and so become living images of Christ, or rather become one with Him through grace (rather than being a mere simulacrum), or even, perhaps, become the Lord Himself' (DOML 1:445).

[16] See *Ambiguum* 7.22: 'In honoring the *logoi* and acting in accordance with them, the human person places himself wholly in God alone, forming and configuring God alone throughout his entire being, so that he himself by grace is and is called God, just as God by His condescension is and is called man for the sake of man, and also so that the power of this reciprocal disposition might be shown forth herein, a power that divinizes man through his love for God, and humanizes God through His love for man. And by this beautiful exchange, it renders God man by reason of the divinization of man, and man God by reason of the Incarnation of God. For the Logos of God (who is God) wills always and in all things to accomplish the mystery of His embodiment' (DOML 1:105–107).

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Church in the Making is an important and challenging book. Reading it is less about working through a series of rigorous, detailed arguments (of which there are many), and more about becoming accustomed to a radically different way of seeing fundamental theological questions, especially in regard to the author's complex and constructive vision of the Church. To be sure, some readers will find the author's writing style to be an obstacle to understanding his thought. They might question the need for what appears to be unnecessarily novel categories and inflated theological jargon. However, there is something to be gained by breaking the hegemony of older, entrenched concepts and vocabularies—which are freighted with unproductive concepts and ideas—and replacing them with new ones. If the older, theoretically misconceived ecclesiologies are to be corrected, then we need to start speaking a new language.

Perhaps part of the difficulty is that what Loudovikos endeavors to describe is not an object or even a concept but rather a kind of experience that is not reducible to a simple verbal formula. Like the flattening of a sphere onto the surface of a plane, an entire dimension is lost in the shift to language. The mystery of the Church is available to the life of the spirit but not to language, at least not fully. Loudovikos says something similar regarding Maximus the Confessor, whom he sees as merely 'describing in theoretical terms the Church's experience of the Holy Spirit—yet nobody except Maximus has expressed this richness so fully in theological language'. This suggests that the nature of the experience itself—the very dynamic of an apophatic ecclesiology of consubstantiality—overwhelms the capacity of language to signify adequately.

Loudovikos is a brilliantly insightful and often exhilaratingly creative interpreter of Maximus the Confessor. One may question the degree to which his interpretations accurately represent the content of the Confessor's thought, or to what extent he develops that thought in a manner consistent with Maximus' original context, aims, and intentions. This reviewer, having spent no small amount of time with the writings of St Maximus, believes that, in *Church in the Making,* we have a deeply perceptive and compelling interpretation of Maximus' thought and how it might be best developed to respond to the current crisis in ecclesiology. Loudovikos's profound *ecclesial* reading of Maximus the Confessor is surely this book's major achievement, making explicit what the Confessor only implied or left unstated, either because, in the words of Florovsky, it was 'self-evident and required no explanation', or because the particular question or problem Maximus was engaged with did not require the ecclesial dimension to be specifically thematized.

To bring together and reintegrate the divided fragments of the world is not simply the task of genuine theology, but is itself a kind of Eucharistic event, a *synaxis,* a 'gathering of what was scattered' and the unification of their elements into one, 'just as wheat is transformed into bread', to recall a well known image from the *Didache.*

Church in the Making deftly brings together disparate and often contradictory ecclesiologies, and offers its readers a fresh, creative, and deeply insightful vision of the Church, which is at once traditional, integral, authentic, and fully engaged with the concerns of the modern world.

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Analogia

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