

BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY, CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY
„ISIDOR TODORAN” THEOLOGY DOCTORAL SCHOOL

**ORTHODOXY AND THE WEST.
THE ISSUE OF THE WESTERN HETERODOX
INFLUENCES ON ORTHODOX THEOLOGY**

Th.D. Thesis Summary

Th.D. thesis supervisor
Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. Ioan Ică

Th.D. candidate:
Pr. Asist. Univ. Grigore-Dinu Moș

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SUMMARY

The introduction was focused on highlighting the theme's importance and topicality, circumscribing the topic within its wider framework, namely "Orthodoxy and the West", and presenting the current status of research, and the paper's objectives, method, and perspective.

The issue of the heterodox influences undergone by the Orthodox theology is extremely important in present-day context where post-modern ideologies generate ample movements and 'anti-identitary' mutations, and the temptations of levelling globalism and syncretism are ever greater. This dissertation is designed to continue the efforts of numerous Orthodox theologians of the 20th century who believed that identifying the heterodox influences in the post-byzantine Orthodox theology was a crucial task. It is aimed at renewing and strengthening the Orthodox's 'dogmatic conscience' – which has undergone all sorts of attacks and a slow erosion – as well as clearly specifying the Orthodox standpoint within the ecumenical dialogue, while at the same time bearing in mind the unbreakable connection between theology and the life of the Church. This task of the contemporary theology is related to and a consequence of the patristic renewal movement, the most characteristic phenomenon of 20th century theology. The first time the problem of heterodox influences was discussed in an academic and scientific framework was at the First Congress of the Faculties for Orthodox Theology held in Athens, in 1936, when George Florovsky proclaimed the 'return to the Holy Fathers' – as the chief means of renewal and creative development in the effort to overcome the scholasticism and to purge the Orthodox theology of heterodox influences – an advise which later gave birth to the neo-patristic theology project. Among its foremost exponents we should mention George Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, Dumitru Stăniloae, Iustin Popović, John Romanides, who on the whole have surpassed the stage of negative criticism and created a new theology in the spirit of the Fathers.

As to the themes approached, the 20th century Orthodox theologians believed there are heterodox influences in several domains and areas of eastern theology, spirituality and church life. Firstly, they have been identified in the 17th century statements of faith – dogmatical-symbolical monuments of the Eastern Church and guides of dogmatics – as well as having left their mark on the lives of preeminent saints such as Saint Peter Mogila and Saint Nicodemus the Hagiorite. Some theologians and especially George Florovsky in his book *Ways of Russian Theology* (1937), Alexander Schmemmann in *The Historical Road of Eastern Othodoxy* (1963)

and in his works dedicated to liturgical theology, and Christos Yannaras in *Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Identity in the Modern Age* (1992) consider the western influences as having been so significant that they actually generated a ‘pseudomorphosis’, a ‘Babylonian captivity’, an alienation of Orthodox theology in its essence. The majority of Orthodox theologians, among whom we should mention Ioannis Karmiris (*Heterodox influences on the 17th century Orthodox Confessions*, 1948), Ioan Ică Sr (*Mitrofan Kritopulos’s Confession of faith*, 1973 and ‘Recent discussions on older problems regarding the Confessions of faith’, 2001); Gheorghios Mettalinos (‘Introduction’ to the *Exomologetarion* of St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, 2006), Konstantinos Karaisaridis (*The life and work of St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite*, 2000), Kalistos Ware etc, along with strong voices of Orthodox monasticism and spirituality like Theoclytes of the Dionisiou Monastery, as the spokesman of the Athonite Community, Saint John Maximovitch and fr. Seraphim Rose (‘The Theological Writings of Archbishop John and the Question of «Western Influence» in Orthodox Theology’, 1976) considered that these influences have strongly affected the form, style, and language, whereas the substance remained quite intact. Intermediate opinions have been voiced by Karl Christian Felmy (‘Die orthodoxe Theologie in der Begegnung mit westlichen Einflüssen : zur Auseinandersetzung um die Theorie der westlichen Pseudomorphose der Orthodoxie’ 2008) who is closer to the former position, and Alexandru Elian (*The Greek contribution to the Confession of faith*, 1942; ‘Introduction’ to *Book for the soul* by St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, 1997) who is oriented towards the latter.

Since the issue of these influences on 17th century Confessions and on important ecclesiastic and theological figures of the post-byzantine period, such as St. Peter Mogila and St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, has been regarded by the scholars as the very core of heterodox influences in the East, one of the main objectives of this dissertation has been to present and evaluate them. In addition to these, heterodox influences have also been identified in the following areas of theology, spirituality and life of the Church: method, patrology, church history, triadology, soteriology, ecclesiology, mysteriology, ecumenical doctrine, the doctrine of the original sin, iconography, music, etc. Even neo-patristic theologians have undergone Protestant influences. It has been concluded that due to these foreign influences the Orthodox risk to become quasi-catholic on an institutional level and quasi-protestant on the level of personal life, and that they are easily tempted into re-defining their Orthodoxy as a middle way between Catholicism and Protestantism, and forgetting that it is something substantially

different, beyond formal differences or similarities to the other two denominations. This has been the second objective of my thesis, namely identifying and elaborating on these aspects, in detail or from a more general perspective depending on their importance and their place in the paper's plan.

In dealing with this issue in the theological works of the post-byzantine period we employed the 'economic' hermeneutics – opposed to the logic of infallibility – because the foremost theologians of that time had to advocate the cause of Orthodoxy under the harsh conditions of Turkish rule and against the strong Catholic and Protestant propaganda which possessed far superior material, political, and intellectual arsenals. Moreover, a simple but rigorous criterion for assessing the degree in which Orthodox theology has been subjected to heterodox influences is analysing and evaluating them precisely in the essential doctrinary points which distinguish Orthodoxy from heterodoxy. In the case of Roman-Catholicism they reside in *Filioque* and the pope's primacy.

The first step was to access the Greek and Russian theological scholarship of the past century up to the present time (Romanides, Florovsky, Lossky, Papadakis, Sft. Justin Popović, Schmemmann, Yannaras, Metallinos, Matsoukas, Alfeyev, Tsenghelidis, Deceille, Larchet, Serafim Rose etc.), Romanian theology (Dumitru Stăniloae, Ioan Ică Sr, Ioan Ică Jr, Dumitru Popescu, Alexandru Elian etc.) and the western (Runciman, Chadwick, A. de Halleux etc.). The method used was the historical-dogmatic one and the perspective was centred on the Holy Fathers, as they always provide a valid reference: especially St. Photios the Great, St. Gregory Palamas and St. Mark of Ephesus, hailed as 'the pillars of Orthodoxy' on dogmatic issues, and St. Nectarios of Aegina and St. Silouan the Athonite for the attitude towards the Heterodox.

The first chapter *Orthodoxy and West during the first Christian millennium* focuses on the elements and characteristics of Byzantine synthesis (subchapter 1), as well as on the factors which lead to the genesis of the West and its gradual estrangement (subchapter 2). It points out that the very use of the parochial term 'Byzantine' (for the Eastern Roman Empire and its inhabitants) instead of 'Roman', *rhomaioi* (the way the Greeks called themselves according to their self-conscience and the way even the Turks called them) represents a western influence. Making use of this ideologising terminology was an attempt to delegitimize and deny the historical, ecclesiastical and civilising continuity of Christian Roman culture – 'Romanness' – in the East. Similar hermeneutics may be identified in the historic-temporal limitation of the

patristic period up to the 8th century and of the Ecumenical Councils to the first seven. According to a unanimously accepted thesis the elements of the Byzantine synthesis are the Greek culture, the Roman state, and the Orthodoxy, the latter having determined all aspects of eastern life, far deeper than the Latin Christianity has in the west. Another concept which defined Byzantium in its historical, social, and cultural dynamic is the “equilibrium”, including the one between East and West. Nevertheless, eastern Christianity had operated a significant segmentation of its framework of reference images separating urban and rural spheres, monasticism and imperial power, promoted by the even more profound ‘conceptual schism’ between the desert and the world. The Greek philosophy was of great consequence to the synthesis of patristic theology. It is already a classical statement that western theology has an Aristotelian orientation, whereas the eastern, a Platonic one, but with some major exceptions. The writings of Origen and Augustine are a proof of an obvious clash between the biblical teachings and philosophy. However, while the Byzantine thought was been able to detach itself from Origen’s errors and style, western theology still owes much to Augustine. Byzantium was not only a civilisation synthesis but also a human synthesis: the saint is at the base and at the top of its human hierarchy, as he represented humanity’s paradigm and supreme fulfilment. From this perspective the Byzantine civilisation was characterised by humanness; theocentric orientation and the natural search for grace as an indispensable element of human life; awareness of one’s sins and that of the limits of human reason; a new understanding of the Truth as being the very embodied Logos; centring the personal life in the heart and the communitarian life in the Church, in the liturgical ethos; ascetics as a therapeutic factor; and ultimately the defining element of dogmatic consciousness. The history of the Orthodox East has naturally recorded failures and severe deviations from this ideal of Orthodox civilisation, but the lapses were acknowledged and met with as such, as opposed to the West, where deviations and errors became dogmas (*Filioque*, papal primacy and infallibility, absolute predestination, etc.).

Talking about the East’s and the West’s ‘unity in diversity’ during the first millennium is quite legitimate but at the same time the schismatic potential of their divergent evolutions can be observed in the way their liturgical traditions have evolved, on the one hand, and even more so in their frequent tensions, conflicts, and even their ceasing churchly communion with one another. The schisms were overcome each time as long as both east and west maintained the rightful worship in Spirit and Truth, the dogmatic, liturgical, and universal consciousness of the Church.

The consciousness of universality, of belonging to the true Church is humble. The humble and creative spirit of Orthodoxy warrants and ennobles cultural, human, and organisational differences and particularities, but it also brings them together in harmony without polarizing any of them. Without this Spirit, who is the Spirit of Truth, Christendom has come to know the bitter estrangement and schism.

Several factors have determined the West's growing apart from its own Christian heritage: the nomadic invasions; the dismantling of laic authority, which meant the Church had to step in and take the reins, which consequently lead to the Church's evolving in an authoritarian, centralist and legalist direction; the judicialisation of theology; the geographical and administrative understanding of the Church's catholicity; the politicisation of ecclesiology; the emergence of a laic and secular Christianity – foreshadowing the modern secularism; drifting apart linguistically and culturally; the West's insufficient understanding and reception of the theology of the icon; the unilateral and almost exclusive use of Augustinian system of thought as a source for elaborating the Church's doctrine; the establishment of the Carolingian Empire and the 'usurpation' of the Orthodox Romanness in the West due rather to an inner conflict of the western world, than to one between East and West. Echoes of this conflict are still present in the West because the Holy fathers have always been a 'problem' and a reason to oppose the official western theology, especially in the areas of ecclesiology, the original sin, the doctrine on the sight of God and the teaching on predestination. Our personal reception of various standpoints expressed by John Romanides, Christos Yannaras, or Patric Ranson has its reserves and critical delimitations. They believe that 1. The Greek Fathers – Latin Fathers antagonism on issues of doctrine is largely false; 2. The dialogue, however polemic, has never ceased between the two sides of Christianity and therefore it would be unjust to deem their separation as so radical as to generate the schism by itself; 3. The theologizing method invested in *Filioque*, the Carolingian view on power along with the Pope's ever increasing power were the basis of the western Middle Ages; 4. We shouldn't talk of a schism of the Church, as this would go against the very definition of the One Church, but rather of a schism of the European Christianity caused by the Franco-German party usurping the Roman Orthodox See. However, making Augustine the scapegoat for all of the West's heresies, schisms, and theological deviations – as the above mentioned authors are – is in our opinion a demarche too easily set in motion with insufficient specifications, ignoring the fact that the Orthodox Church has been able to accept his teachings

in Orthodox spirit (correcting them when necessary) and to honour him to this day by referring to him as *Blessed Augustine*.

The second Chapter deals with the Great Schism, underlining the position of Patriarch Photios with regard to the western innovations, as well as the dogmatical causes and consequences of the Schism. The introductory considerations discuss the issue of the schism's date: accurately dating it is almost impossible because the schism was actually a larger process, that started in the 9th century, manifested itself clearly and significantly in the mutual excommunications of Cardinal Humbert and Patriarch Kerularios of 1054 and was confirmed after 1204 when the knights of the Fourth Crusade conquered and devastated Constantinople. The next section focuses on the diversity of the schism's causes and on the determining causality of dogmatic reasons, stressing the Byzantines' fidelity to Orthodox doctrine, but also their capacity to make use of *oikonomia*. The last section of this subchapter is dedicated to a short history of the schism with special interest to its first phase (863-880), because it contains all its causes, especially the doctrinary ones, and because that is when that extraordinary economic spirit was manifested – both by Patriarch Photios and Pope John the 8th –which succeeded in maintaining the unity of the Church for more than a century and a half.

The second subchapter lists some of the views on Patriarch Photios in the contemporary western historiography, far more favourable now than in the past, and also close to the views of the Orthodox historians. Furthermore, it emphasises the importance of the Photian Synod of 879-880 that condemns *Filioque* both as an addition to the Creed and as a doctrine, and re-establishes the unity of the Church on the basis of an unaltered Creed. The next section shows to what extent this could be considered as the 8th Ecumenical Council: it has all the defining elements of an ecumenical council and the very participants perceived it as such. The last section is dedicated to Photios's personality and its present ecumenical importance due to the fact that his activity, theology and Orthodox testimony have an exceptional paradigmatic and typological value not only for the theological differences between East and West but also for the long awaited convergences. Today, the defining traits of Photios's personality: humbleness and love, loyalty to the truth of the faith, testifying to an ecumenical Orthodoxy, theological erudition, missionary spirit (that acknowledges the customs', traditions', and languages' pluralism), and diplomatic ability are needed for a responsible commitment in the ecumenical dialogue. In order to understand the relations between Orthodoxy and the West on a theological level and in order to

assess the heterodox influences in post-byzantine Orthodox theology, a principle was considered to be of major importance, namely one that had been presented by Patriarch Photios in his “Letter to the Metropolitan of Aquilea”. While conceding to the fact that in both East and West some Holy Fathers had used formulas close to *Filioque*, Patriarch Photios pleaded for ‘covering the shame’ of those Fathers and for not diminishing the honour due them. This letter reveals a divine way in which dogmatic acrimony and ecclesiastic economy may coexist, in the Spirit of Truth and loving humbleness, a way accessible to man solely with divine guidance.

The third subchapter analyses in detail the main dogmatic causes of the Schism, from a historic-dogmatic perspective: *Filioque* and the papal primacy, which are up to present day prime impediments to unity.

With respect to *Filioque*, three points of view were presented and analysed: the patristic view, the debates of the Ferrara-Florence Council (1438-1439), and outlooks and discussions in contemporary theology. For the Orthodox Church *Filioque* has been and still is a Trinitarian heresy, condemned by the pan-Orthodox synods of 879-880, 1285, 1484, 1583, 1838, as well as by the Holy Fathers, especially Photios the Great, Gregory II of Cyprus, Gregory Palamas, and Mark of Ephesus. The first one to systematise the eastern arguments against the *Filioque* addition has been Patriarch Photios, who saw this doctrinary innovation as a subdued reiteration of Pneumatomachism, Sabellian modalism, and emanationism, and as having introduced a diarchy within the Holy Trinity. A most significant document is the Tomos of the 1285 Constantinople Synod compiled by Patriarch Gregory II of Cyprus, the only synodal document of the Orthodox Church which expressly refers to and disputes *Filioque* as a teaching and condemns it in very harsh, even menacing terms. Beyond its polemic character, the Trinitarian theology of the 1285 Tomos possesses a real ecumenical perspective because it offers the only positive solution to the controversy: although it is unacceptable on the level of the divine being, *Filioque* may be valid in the case of the uncreated divine energies, the eternal manifestation of the divine nature in the Spirit, through and from the Son. (However, were the Catholics to accept this solution, they would also have to accept the Orthodox doctrine of the uncreated energies, but as chapter III shows, significant progresses have yet to be made.) Saint Gregory Palamas brings solid biblical, patristic and logic arguments against *Filioque* in his two works on the procession of the Holy Spirit of 1333-1334, where he also identifies in the Latin theology a way of thinking based greatly on separation, which leads to de-contextualisation (on an exegetical level),

philological scrupulosity and semantic reduction in strict conformity to the text's analytics and internal logic (on a hermeneutic level), as well as autonomous rational structuring (on a theological level). Consequently, the line separating the Orthodox from the *Filioquist* triadology consists of the theological method. The primary elements of the *Filioquist* doctrine are dialectical thinking and essentialism, doubled by a logic of the separation – because the self-sufficient reason's kataphatism cannot overcome agnosticism –, whereas the Orthodox perspective embraces a Trinitarian vision within the Holy Spirit, equally apodictic and apophatic, personalistic and ontological. It is the dogmatic of the ecclesial, spiritual and contemplative experience versus the dogmatic of rational speculation.

Despite having shown open-mindedness towards the Orthodox standpoint, the Catholic Church has not relinquished *Filioque*, if not reaffirmed it in its official documents, such as the new *Catholic Catechism* (1992) and the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2005). Furthermore, there are only insufficient signs of it renouncing the *Filioquist* vision which penetrates its entire system of doctrines, and the theological method that has led to this doctrinarian innovation. As the Clarification of Catholic doctrine of 1995 (The Holy Spirit proceeds hypostatically only from the Father, but by nature from both the Father and the Son) shows, contemporary Catholic theology admits to a 'complementary' validity of the Orthodox teaching on the Holy Spirit's proceeding, but only in as much as it can be integrated in the Catholic *filioquist* triadology. Influences of Roman-Catholic triadology are to be found in varying proportions in the cases of Patriarch John XI Bekkos (13th c.), Barlaam of Calabria (14th c.), in the final text of the unionist Council of Ferrara-Florence (15th c.) – which was signed by the entire Byzantine delegation except for St. Mark of Ephesus –, in the case of Vasili Bolotov (19th c.), in the Klignenthal Memorandum (1979-1980), in the agreed statement of The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation held in Washington (2003) entitled "The *Filioque*: A Church-Dividing Issue?" as well as in the views of several contemporary theologians such as Theodor Stylianopoulos, Olivier Clement, and Boris Bobrinskoy who have enthusiastically responded to the Catholic J. Garrigues's position (inspired by Bolotov) which was the basis of the Catholic Clarification of 1995. A critical response to the latter's 'syncretistic' position has been voiced by the renowned Catholic patrologist André de Halleux (1975), whereas Orthodox, traditional points of view have been expressed vis-à-vis the 1995 Clarification by Daniel the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church (1998) and by Jean

Claude Larchet (1999), and these are the main points of reference of this thesis. Despite the above mentioned influences and compromises there still is a strong opposition within the Orthodox theology to accepting the Catholic version of *Filioque*.

The next section approaches the interdependence of papal primacy and *Filioque* both from the perspective of their historical evolution and as a system of thinking: splitting the unity principle of the Holy Trinity (the Father alone) in two, the Father and the Son, is echoed by dualizing the principle of the Church's unity (only Christ): Christ and the Pope. Furthermore, emphasis has been given to the connection between the method of scholastic theology, the presumption of infallibility and the doctrine of created grace; by contrast, one of the prerequisites of the method of Orthodox theology is the doctrine of uncreated energies (see chapter III). It may be conjectured that all the differences between Orthodoxy and Catholicism (*Filioque*, papal primacy, theological method) converge in the doctrine of divine energies, and therefore the dialogue between these two churches should begin here. Among the theological considerations concerning the papal primacy it has been taken into account that Jaroslav Pelikan formulated a thesis stating that during the first Christian millennium the pope was, for the eastern Christians, the first among the bishops because he was Orthodox, whereas for the westerners he was Orthodox because he was the first among the bishops. What's more, the patristic interpretation of the 'stone' in Matthew 16, 18 – on which the Catholic theology bases papal primacy – may be resumed to the following scheme: the stone (onto which the Church is built) = Christ = the faith and bearing witness to Christ's divinity = Peter (the first one to bear witness to Christ's divinity) = the Apostles (for whom Peter speaks, witnesses and defenders of the true faith together with Peter) = the bishops = the faithful. These are dynamic equivalences based on the logic of humbleness, selflessness, and love, unable to individually claim any sort of primacy by divine right, because ultimately, the 'Stone' was, is, and will be Christ, Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. We also made mention of Archimandrite Vasilios Gondikakis's position who believes the doctrines of papal primacy and infallibility are a 'disarticulation of the Church's trinitarian structure', a deadly ecclesial illness on which he hopes 'the Holy Spirit will perform surgery' in the end.

The end of this subchapter points out the influences of Catholic ecclesiology in the Balamand (1992) and Ravenna (2007) accords and it also records – with some reserves – the sometimes exaggeratedly expressed critical reactions of Archbishop Ilarion Alfeyev,

Arhimandrite Gheorghios Kapsanis and Professor Dimitrios Tselenghidis. Essentially it shows that the attempt to separate authority from synodality at a universal level or to divide it in order to make room for papal primacy is completely foreign to Orthodox tradition, simply because in the very institution of the ecumenical Council authority and synodality overlap perfectly, and therefore there is no more need for the Roman primacy office as a parallel authority.

The last subchapter of chapter II deals with the dogmatical consequences of the 1054 schism by bringing to the fore and trying to get a deeper understanding of fr. Dumitru Stăniloae's views expressed in his 1954 study "The schism's dogmatic reasons and consequences". From the Great Schism up to the 20th century the Catholic Church experienced a process of dogmatizing new heterodox teachings in various areas of theology and Christian spirituality. What we have been able to detect in these new dogmata – as a spiritual principle – is the incapacity to envision and understand humility, both with regard to God and to men; there is a dissociative logic and a clearly visible and omnipresent principle of separation, whereas the defining elements of Orthodoxy are the theanthropy, organic unity, the freedom in the Spirit of Truth and humble praising love. Catholicism gradually became more of a secular and political humanism supported by an ideologising and politicising theology, by an increasingly cultural spirituality and a minimalistic asceticism, following the principle of adapting to the world's changes and to the weakness of the fallen man. Albeit the Orthodoxy has remained alive and fecund through its dogmatic conscience and its ascetic spirit, completed by the uninterrupted doxology and liturgical sacrifice, the Schism did weaken the Byzantine Empire's resistance against the Islamic assault and at the same time it precipitated the centralisation of the western Church, a fact that generated many abuses, one consequence of which has been the 16th century Protestant Reformation.

Chapter III is focused on the evolution of the East – West relationships from the Great Schism to the Fall of Constantinople, beginning in the first subchapter with general historical-theological considerations on the unification attempts of the 11th-15th centuries among which Lyon (1274) and Ferrara-Florence (1438-1439) stand out. Ever since the Schism there have been a pro-unionist party and an anti-unionist one within the Orthodox Church. Usually, the unionist party was politically supported and motivated, often by force. The Byzantine emperors have generally had a more or less manifest pro-unionist political orientation, as they sought both to *actually* save the Empire from the Arabic attacks, and to re-establish its *ideal* boundaries within

the ecumenicity of the Christian world. Conversely, most of the monks were anti-unionists. The finalised unification attempts, whether they had been preceded by theological debates or not, concluded with accepting the Catholic position; but the Orthodox people rejected these unions. These attempts have led to serious polarisation and tensions within the Orthodox Church, on the one hand, to the schism's deepening and to growing resentments between east and west, on the other hand. The anti-unionist direction has prevailed to this day, but not in its radical and ideology-filled forms, many of its foremost figures having also been sanctified. More often than not, the theological debates on the question of the Holy Spirit's procession and on the dogmatical differences had been underlain with false humility. It has been stated that the man cannot produce definitive affirmations on the Holy Trinity in order to allow for both sides to express their views and to try and find a compromise. This methodological and underlying 'agnosticism' was at play then, in the views of the pro-unionist Barlaam of Calabria, in the pride accusations of the pro-unionists at the Ferrara-Florence Council raised against St. Mark of Ephesus, but also in the suggestions of the agreed statement of The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation on *Filioque* (2003). It has been ignored that the dogmatic teachings are based on divine Revelation, on God's self-revelation to men and on experiencing communion with God through the Holy Spirit: this is expressed, formulated, and decided in dogmatic definitions under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and by the authority of the Ecumenical Councils. The cause of the agnostic attitude not encompassing real humbleness of heart but rather being based on human reason – in itself weak and limited – is the audacity to unilaterally modify the Creed, the claim of papal primacy and infallibility, as well as the continuous justification for the errors committed, which are considered to be different and complementary expressions of the same truth – a position categorically refuted by St. Mark of Ephesus and St. Gregory Palamas, to name just them two. There is an essential difference between apophatism and agnosticism with regards to how they relate to a concept. They both acknowledge its insufficiency, even when it is part of a dogma, but whereas the agnostic has a dubitative, sceptical and relativistic view of the concept, the apophatic theologian goes beyond the concept without annulling it, because he sees the holy divine Light through the concept's transparency and beyond it, in an immediate spiritual sight (the Spirit's uncreated Light makes the concept transparent), a non-knowing that involves a more perfect, surer, truer way of knowing than conceptual understanding. Knowing through the Holy Spirit is made possible only within the boundaries of the dogmata.

The second subchapter examines the western scholastic, which was supposed to be a consolidation, a rational development and a superior continuation of patristic theology. Actually, the scholastic hasn't been creative because it was not based on experience, neither in the traditional sense (spiritual experience), nor in the modern sense (empirical experience). From the 9th century onwards, the western theology developed within universities, mainly and unilaterally as a science, separated from spirituality and a spiritual and charismatic knowledge of God. It overestimated the part reason and general notions (conceptual realism) should play, at the expense of charismatic and ecclesial experience of the individual, as it considered faith to be inferior to intellectual understanding. In fact, the intellectual understanding should continually open itself to spiritual understanding, which is different and superior because it is inspired by divine grace. Thus, starting off from St. Isaac the Syrian and St. Gregory of Sinai's gnoseology we've highlighted in detail the difference between these two types of understanding, as well as their correct ratio. We have then shown that the scholastic theory of knowledge owes everything to the doctrine of a created grace which is added to a self-sufficient human nature – which means it may have its own field of interest independently from grace. The intellectual history of the West shows that the scholastic method and way of thinking gradually drifted away from its Christian doctrinary content, became an autonomous critical method to such an extent, that even the Christian teaching had to justify itself to this new supreme authority, the critical reason. But in the end, reason will turn against itself in a critic demarche. Unfortunately, the western theology will be unable to free itself from the dominion of reason, between its magnificent intellectual constructions or the pathos of deconstruction dictated by the same pure, divided reason.

The third subchapter deals with the status and the functions of philosophy and theology in the Byzantine educational system which created the method the Orthodox theology still in use today. There has been a real tension between conservative theologians and humanist philosophers, heresy trials and convictions, but the East did not take the inquisitorial measures the West took, such as censoring or burning the books, or the death penalty. By contrast to western scholastic, the Byzantine Church refused any new synthesis of Hellenism and Christianity and remained faithful to the first synthesis of this type from the patristic period. The mostly kerygmatic Byzantine theology was an organic extension of the patristic theology. In the Byzantine society faith, convictions, and theological concepts were naturally present in all

aspects of social, political, and personal life. ‘Scholastic professionalism’ and ‘clerical monopole’ over the Christian teachings – specific to western theology – was largely foreign to eastern theology. Here reason, whether philosophical or scientific, did not possess the authority to justify dogmata, it could only describe, interpret and explain them. Today we run the risk of unilaterally emphasising the charismatic side of knowing God, theology as spiritual experience, prayer and contemplation, dismissing theology as a science and rational knowledge, or to separate and polarize these two. As Prof. Theodor M. Popescu and fr. Prof. Ioan Ică have already shown, theology is both knowledge of and discourse on God, speaking about God and speaking to God, in prayers. Theology is coming to know God from what you hear and what you see, but it is also a science. Reason, guided by faith, played an essential part in formulating the dogmata, expounding the teachings of the faith, fighting idolatry, superstition, false myths and beliefs. Scientific theology, in as much as it is the trustworthy offspring of ecclesial experience and spiritual knowledge, exercises a critic function of guiding those who walk the path of contemplation. As Archimandrite Sophrony Sakharov believed, abstract mental representations are important although they are not that type of knowing God which is the eternal life (John 17, 3), because they can serve the man any time in his spiritual development. Finally, we concluded that between the 11th and the 15th century the dominant theology in the East has been one that got its inspiration from patristic, monasticism and Hesychasm, and one that because of its gnoseology and methodology, its divine-human dialectic and its both mystic and rational character has both been open to culture and created culture in its turn, vivifying and renewing the whole of Byzantine society and civilization.

In the fourth section of the chapter we focused on the Hesychast controversy, the most important theological issue of the 15th century and the last great dogmatical dispute of the Orthodox East, in which the western scholastic theology was also, to some extent, caught up. The history section lists and discusses the four phases of the controversy which involved St. Gregory Palamas and Barlaam of Calabria (from 1335 to 1341), Gregory Akindin (1341-1347), Nikephoros Gregoras (1350-1356), and Prochoros Kydones respectively (1359-1368 –from the death of St. Gregory Palamas up to his sanctification). It has been pointed out that Barlaam of Calabria was deeply influenced by western post-Augustinian theology, and as John Romanides believes, had a Latin way of thinking – it was essentially pre-scholastic, but formally scholastic with influences from Scott’s works and marked by neo-platonic rationalism. Phases 2 and 3 have

been extremely important because Gregory Palamas had to be more prudent in what he said against his opponents, more careful with wielding theological language and give his explanations the needed nuances, so that his fundamental thesis, the real distinction between the divine being and the uncreated energies, would be correctly understood and received by his contemporaries. Thus, he used a maximal antinomy, conceiving the being and the energies as simultaneously identical and different. The last phase of the dispute had to do with the issue of translating the Latin scholastic works into Greek, a project undertaken mainly by the Kydones brothers (of pro-unionist and pro-Catholic orientation), under the political patronage of the pro-Palamite emperor John Kantakuzenos (1347-1354), who was also open to western contact. In this context it is important to stress the St. Nicholas Cabasilas's balanced standpoint: although he was loyal to the teachings of Palamas, as he contributed to setting his ideas in dogmatic form and to sanctify him in the Eastern Church, his theological line has been more moderate; he emphasised the role of reason and theological culture in the spiritual life better. We therefore believe these two 14th century saints, St. Gregory Palamas and Nicholas Cabasilas, should both be acknowledged by contemporary theology in order to increase its missionary and ecumenical dimension and value. The Palamite doctrine of uncreated energies, promulgated by the 1341 and 1351 Synods of Constantinople has been received by the Church's consensus as a dogma de facto and not just a theologumenon. A defining Orthodox spiritual experience has been based dogmatically after the Palamite controversy – Hesychast prayer, the experience of real communion and unity with God through the uncreated grace – opposed to the scholastic intellectualism which keeps God and men at distance. This has been the last great theological synthesis of the Orthodox spirituality and this moment showed that the Churches cannot be reunited while ignoring the dogmatic differences, because the dogmata are the result of the actual presence of Christ, Who is the eternal Truth. At the same time, the Hesychast controversy has accentuated the East – West rift and the anti-union feeling in the Byzantine world. The victory of Palamism left a profound mark on the destiny of the Eastern Church, had an enormous influence in the Slavic world, ensured the resistance and the survival of Orthodox Christianity under the long Turkish rule, it nurtured what Nicolae Iorga later called 'Byzantium after Byzantium' and it fortified the Church against the modernity's secular and relativistic spirit.

While evaluating the opinions of contemporary Orthodox theologians regarding the Hesychast controversy and the Palamite doctrine, the critical position of John Romanides with

respect to John Meyendorff's ideas have been taken into consideration. In the west the latter is considered and quoted as the foremost Orthodox Palamism specialist. Meyendorff was influenced by western theses under at least three aspects: he entertained the idea that the Hesychasm had undergone non-Christian religious influences; he limited the causes and the significance of the Hesychast issue to an internal Byzantine quarrel between the humanist and monastic currents, between philosophy and theology, and refused to see in it a clash between eastern and western theology; he put forth the idea of 'Christological corrective' which St. Gregory Palamas must have applied to St. Denis (Pseudo)Areopagite, who had been accused of neo-Platonism. These ideas inspired by western scholarship have been rejected by most of the neo-Palamite Orthodox theologians of the 20th century such as Florovsky, Lossky, Stăniloae, Romanides, Matsoukas, Golitzin and others. The same influence can be identified in the theses stipulating the radical novelty of Palamite thought, an idea accepted by Yaroslav Pelikan, for instance. Furthermore, we've also taken into consideration fr. Dumitru Stăniloae's standpoint, probably the most profound and balanced of the Palamite theologians of the past century. The apophatic theology of intellectual negation is insufficient not because it is apophatic, but because it is never apophatic enough to really transcend not only affirmation but also negation, just as kataphatic theology is insufficient not because it is kataphatic, but because it is never as kataphatic enough as God's actual and absolute infinity would need to be understood.

At the end of this subchapter we've analysed the opinions of contemporary Catholic and Protestant theologians regarding Palamism. Generally, Catholic theologians say they accept the patristic doctrine of deification, but not in the Palamite sense, meaning they do not acknowledge the reality of the being/divine energies distinction. Exceptions to this official line of Catholic theology are André de Halleux and Jürgen Kuhlmann, whose considerations have been largely in favour of the Palamite doctrine. J. Kuhlmann for instance, answering the Protestant Dorothea Wendebourg's critique, has shown that the uncreated energies do not bring a de-functioning but a 'dynamic re-functioning' of the divine hypostases, and that the true meaning of deification, so necessary in a secularised world, can be found exclusively in the Palamite doctrine. With the exception of these important names, the western theology has but scarcely accepted Palamism. As Gheorghios Martzelos explained, today, just as in Palamas' time, the being/uncreated energies distinction is found at the centre of the dispute between eastern and western theologies.

Chapter IV, 'Post-Byzantine Orthodoxy and the West' evaluates the impact of heterodox denominations and western ideologies in the East, as well as the Orthodox influences on the West. The first subchapter systematically examines the heterodox influences undergone by the Orthodox Confessions of 17th century: Mitrofan Kritopulos's Confession of faith (1629), Metropolitan Peter Mogila's (1638, 1642), the one of Dositheos, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1672), considered to be guides of Orthodox dogmatic and symbolic theology and expressions of the dynamic ecclesial tradition which responded to the challenge of Catholic and Protestant theologies. Due to the impact and circulation of these Confessions of faith in the life and the theology of the Orthodox Church, and because they were the target of accusations and reserves expressed by theologians who support the theory of Orthodoxy's 'pseudomorphosis', they became the object of extended research and an important topic on the agenda of the First Congress of Orthodox Theology Professors held in Athens 1936. On that occasion the heterodox influences have been identified, but this did not lead to diminishing the importance of the confessions as a general and definitive conclusion. The chief reference point of the present evaluation is fr. Prof. Ioan Ică's synthetic, balanced and recently up-dated position. The causes of these influences were: the drastic decrease, under Turkish rule, of the level of general and theological education among the clergy and the people; most of the young Orthodox sought education in the West, in the absence of higher education institutions for theology in their home land; Catholic and Protestant proselytism and propaganda backed up with enormous material, political and intellectual resources; the eastern expansion of the Catholic-Protestant 'battle field'; the insufficient understanding of Orthodox and western teachings; the novelty of the emerging problems, as the authors of these confessions were forced to discover for the first time the connection and opposition points with western doctrines; the short period of time available for formulating answers; the not so organic dogmatic development in relation to the previous dogmatic tradition; the use of Catholic arguments against the Protestants and vice versa; the fact that both the Orthodox and the Catholic theology base most of their teachings on the common theological tradition of the first millennium; some Protestant teachings were considered Orthodox because Protestantism was insufficiently known, etc. As to the extent and the limits of western influence, we agree with most of the Orthodox theologians who believe that these influences usually refer to the means and the form in which the doctrine is expounded and not as much to the essence of faith itself; even if *Filioque* and the papal primacy have been rejected, the

Catholic influences have been more profound and numerous, whereas the Protestant influences were only a few and superficial; they did not affect the Church and its dogmata but theology and its representatives; they were external, peripheral and superficial, referring to formulas and terminology; by comparison, the heterodox influences on Orthodox theology have been less important than the Orthodox ones on western theology. The Confession of Mitrofan Kritopulos has been rightfully considered the most theological and free of heterodox influences. Despite some ineffective formulations, it is obviously loyal to the authentic spirit of eastern theology and to its continuity with the theology of the old Fathers of the Church. It also has the highest theological, scientific, critic, ecumenical and originality level. Regardless of all this, it did not enjoy synodal approval, neither did it the prestige nor the circulation of the other two statements of faith mentioned above. It was better known only beginning with the second half of the 19th century. The new teachings comprised in these statements had to be rigorously confronted with the dogmatic teachings of the Church and with the Holy Fathers' spirit and way of thinking – this is an important task of modern theology. The western teachings will not be rejected as a whole, neither will the authentic developments and progresses made by the western theology, because some of them are rooted in the common tradition of the first millennium and can be accepted in the spirit of Orthodox theology, but sometimes it's necessary to broaden the perspective, change terms and nuances, set different accents and balance affirmations.

The second subchapter presents and evaluates the theory of Orthodoxy's Catholic and Protestant 'pseudomorphosis', supported especially by George Florovsky (who accused Peter Mogila of 'crypto-Catholicism'), Alexander Schmemmann (who believed the Orthodox Church suffered a national petrification and was 'mute' in the face of western challenges) and Christos Yannaras (who accused St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite for translating-adapting some influent writings of the Catholic spirituality). These theologians believe that post-Byzantine Orthodoxy experienced a radical estrangement, substantial westernisation in its essence, a genuine western 'Babylonian captivity' which threatened and drove its very dogmatic and spiritual identity to crisis. The 'pseudomorphosis' theories accuse primarily the 'spirit' and the 'mentality' of the post-Byzantine theological works, their inauthentic and deficient spiritual and ecclesial experience underlying them, although the theological form remained by force or inertia, as a purely national and ideological expression, within the framework of Orthodox teachings. In general, they accuse the separation between ecclesial experience and the theological expression

of the faith, the fact that this experience is not represented, that what's been left authentic of this experience was not strong enough to create its own theological expression and was subsequently left with the solution of the western import. The supporters of this theory believe that the Orthodox confessions of 17th century are the foremost and clearest proof of the East's westernisation, the result and theological expression of Orthodoxy's estrangement, but also the instrument of its ever deeper dissemination among the faithful. Secondly, saints and significant figures of the Church, such as Peter Mogila, Nicodemus the Hagiorite, Tichon of Zadonsk and many others have been accused of 'pseudomorphosis.' Thirdly, the influences of Protestant rationalism and pietism have been exaggeratedly emphasised.

In evaluating the pseudomorphosis theory and explaining the positions of St. Peter Mogila and Nicodemus the Hagiorite, we looked into – to some extent – the critical reactions of Protestant and Catholic historians and theologians, but we've insisted more on the opinions of Orthodox scholars such as fr. Prof. Ioan Ică Sr., Alexandru Elian, Kalistos Ware, Karl Christian Felmy, Gheorghios Metallinos, Konstantinos Karaisaridis, Nicolai Uspensky, as well as on the testimony the Community of the Holy Mountain and St. John Maximovitch. The methodological 'key' used in this evaluation has been combining the 'economic' hermeneutic illustrated by St. Photios the Great – according to which it is possible that even the saints could err in certain contexts and for certain reasons, which does not mean we should honour them less – with the 'consensual' hermeneutic of St. Gregory Palamas – according to which all saints have essentially thought in the same way, beyond some imperfect, unsuitable, unilateral or unclear expressions. We concluded that the heterodox influences on the 17th century Orthodox Confessions and St. Peter Mogila and Nicodemus the Hagiorite, to name just them, have been obvious in the form, terminology and phraseology, partial or reduced in the way they thought, and quite isolated and insignificant in the essence. Therefore, these real influences, although they shouldn't be ignored, were not major. If we take into consideration their entire theological work and ecclesiastic activity we can say that both the above mentioned saints remained Orthodox. In the historic dynamics of the Holy Tradition, the Holy Spirit as a 'critic spirit' of the Church (manifesting itself from within it and as a self-criticising voice of Church itself) makes sure that doctrinal and spiritual errors would not last in the Church, so that sooner or later those that had emerged at some point are completely eliminated (what Philaret of Moskow did with the Catholic loans of Peter Mogila, or Teophan the Recluse with the western influences in Nicodemus the Hagiorite's

Unseen war). This work of correcting the errors in the peaceful, unity loving spirit of Orthodoxy can continue today without the need to use the radical terms of the pseudomorphosis theory.

Beginning with the 18th century and under western influence, theology was cultivated as a science in the universities, and the theology faculties were organised following a western model, but as the patristic and Byzantine traditions had remained vivid, theology as a science did not get separated from theology as ecclesial, spiritual and charismatic experience: it was grafted onto it, although it did experience a scholastic influence that cannot be neglected. The real influences of rationalism and pietism on Orthodox theology and church life in the 18th-20th centuries have largely been overcome thanks to the neo-patristic revival of the 20th century. In this context, the Romanian theology never accepted the radical theory of Orthodoxy's western pseudomorphosis. Even if the Romanian theology enjoyed a profound patristic renewal and revival, especially due to fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, fulfilling Florovsky advice to return to the Holy Fathers, this did not happen by a programme of antitheses accusing the previous theological tradition, but in a positive and balanced way.

George Florovsky, Alexander Schmemmann and Christos Yannaras, with the undisputed value of their theological works, have overestimated the thesis of heterodox influence. By entering a hyper-critical logic they submitted themselves to these influences and implicitly judged the Orthodoxy by quasi-Protestant criteria. Just as the Protestants had tried to rediscover a genuine, biblical Christianity after a supposed long historical syncope, some Orthodox theologians have exaggerated the post-Byzantine Christianity's discontinuity to the patristic period, ignoring and not evaluating correctly the elements of continuity represented by the saints and the theologians of that period and embodied in the dogmatic-symbolic monuments. In addition to that, the pseudomorphosis theories' starting point is a premise of cultural theory which cannot be applied to Orthodoxy, namely the complete interconnection and interdependence of form and content. But in the Church, where there is a 'hermeneutic of the Spirit', there is also a certain independence and pre-eminence of the essence over the form in the theological expression – depending on the actual conditions of the period, its cultural paradigms and the intentions of those involved. At the same time this independence of the essence by the work of the Holy Spirit cannot be absolute, is not universally valid and cannot work magically, because then a Nestorian scheme would set in, and the equilibrium of the theanthropy in the theological expression of the faith would disappear. In other words, a foreign form that does not

belong to the essence does not necessarily point to the essence's alteration, but it will require correction in time. As it has been previously shown, this is one of the Tradition's directions as it also is a task for the contemporary theology. Moreover, the intellectualist expression, excessive rationalisation, systematisation, the use of some of the adversaries' methods and concepts, etc. do not necessarily involve flawed teachings in the field of dogmatics, just as it does not automatically mean a lack of spiritual experience, a feeling of superiority and self-sufficiency, will for power, domination and control, but simply a desire to respond to challenges, to clarify, to formulate one's faith etc. In the centuries following the fall of Constantinople the Orthodox intellectuals of the East rose from among the people, and through their lives and way of understanding things they remained close to the people and the saints of their time, being nurtured by the liturgical ethos. For this reason, the heterodox influences on their theology were rather formal and exterior, never reaching deeper. To conclude, despite the difficult circumstances of the Turkish rule, the Orthodox Church preserved its faith and was able to resist and respond to the strong Catholic and Protestant propaganda by the means of its theology.

In the third subchapter, in the historical horizon of 'Byzantium after Byzantium' we presented the impact of western ideologies in the Orthodox East and showed that as they are the heritage of western denominations, they brought their contribution to the infiltration and maintaining of heterodox influences in the life, spirituality and theology of the Orthodox Church. The next section is a presentation of the western world's evolution from the Renaissance to post-modernity with a critical evaluation of modernity and post-modernity from a theological perspective, identifying the values and elements with Christian potential. The western ideologies (enlightenment, rationalism, materialism and positivism, modernism and post-modernism, secularism etc.) as well as the somewhat religious humanism of the western 'Christianities' had a major impact on the Orthodox East: the eastern peoples adopted western civilisation, as well as numerous elements of humanist culture, and the Orthodox Church was left with the task of differently assimilating them and transforming them from within, on the grounds of Christian anthropology, cosmology and eschatology. For instance, the church promoted the 'enlightenment' not in its atheist or anthropocentric sense, but in that of enlightening the people through education, freeing them from ignorance and superstitions. In the face of western influences, the Orthodoxy stood firm because of the Hesychasm through which it remained faithful to the scriptural and patristic theanthropy, reaffirming its irreducible contemplation,

epistemological and formational capacity as well as its crucial implications for the destiny of humankind. The presentation contains the Orthodox resistance reactions in Greece, Russia and Romania throughout the 18th to the 20th centuries: the Athonite Academy, the mission of St. Kosmas of Aetolia, the Paisian movement, the Optina *starets*, the theological, philosophical and literary synthesis in pre-revolutionary Russia, the *Burning bush* movement, the vigilant reactions of the Holy Mountain Community, the 20th century neo-patristic movement.

The fourth subchapter evaluates the Orthodox influence on the West and it proves that it was possible because in the entire structure of western world and in all its solid creations there is a deep ‘nostalgia for Orthodoxy’, as Placide Deseille said. Thus, nowadays the presence and testimony of the Eastern Church in the West is chiefly a calling addressed to it to rediscover its Orthodox past. In their turn, some of the western influences are welcome in and good for the Orthodoxy due to the common tradition and nostalgia for unity. However, some western influences merely give back enriched and improved elements of the Orthodox influence on the West, so on a certain level it would be very difficult to separate the two directions. For instance, the cultivated and ‘urban’ Orthodoxy of the first Christian millennium, and especially of the Byzantine world, became ‘rural’ and ‘national’ after the fall of Constantinople, but it had previously exported humanist forms in the West, returned through the influences of the western thought and theology, which was just as cultivated and refined. Nevertheless it is true that the western spirit was more receptive to the humanistic culture of late Byzantium than to the light of Orthodoxy – see the role played by emigrated scholars in the birth of Italian Renaissance. At the same time, the Philokalia, the writings of the Holy Fathers of the first Christian millennium, especially St. Gregory of Nyssa, Denis (Pseudo)Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, have been a source of inspiration for the spiritual searches and achievements of the West, and sometimes a reason to oppose the official western theology – this would explain how some Catholic texts (especially those adapted by St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite) came to be popular in the Orthodox East. This does not mean that these spiritual writings were or became entirely Orthodox by the means of their being translated-adapted. In this context we have also presented the process of translation of the patristic works in the West (17th-20th c.) – the 20th century western theologians having been receptive to Orthodox spirituality – and the impact of eastern theology on Council Vatican II. It has also been stressed that the part played by Russian emigration after 1917 was crucial in the reassertion of Orthodoxy in the West, in the neo-patristic revival of contemporary

theology, and in the ecumenical dialogue where it highlights the universal dimension of Orthodoxy and its relevance for the world. Firstly, many and important conversions to Orthodoxy occurred. Secondly, elements of our spirituality have been adopted by many monastic or even laic communities in the West: the prayer of the heart, the Orthodox icon, elements of Philocalic mystique, and even the Byzantine liturgy. Still, partially appropriating elements of eastern spirituality and Orthodox Liturgy – without dogmatic and ecclesial unity – may feed serious confusions of theological and ecclesiological nature and may lead to spiritual illusions, reducing Orthodoxy to an exotic fascination. To conclude, the ‘personalism’ and the neo-patristic revival of the 20th century was born in the space of mutual influences between East and West, but in evaluating them theologically, the syncretism should be avoided. In this context, the inter-Orthodox dialogue should be granted priority to the inter-confessional dialogue, without neglecting the latter, and the particularities of Romanian theology should be underlined as complementary rather than opposed to the Russian and the Greek theologies.

Subchapter five gives an account of the various positions expressed in Orthodox, inter-Orthodox and ecumenical documents on the subject of ecumenism and the involvement of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement. It has been shown that there is no unified position in the Orthodox theology regarding this issue: some theologians and spiritual fathers deem the ecumenism to be a ‘pan-heresy’ go as far as refusing any dialogue; others however, at the price of compromise and dogmatic and ecclesiological relativism, believe it (inter-Christian and inter-religious ecumenism) to be an absolute priority; others have a well balanced position, being open to dialogue and cooperation, but not to dogmatic compromise. In some ecumenical manifestations (liturgical con-celebrations, equivocal accords, excessively diplomatic or politically correct gestures and formulas etc.) there is the risk of an implicit de facto acceptance of the ‘branch theory’, which requires vigilance from the Church. Unity in Christ and in His Church cannot be superficial, sentimental and syncretistic; it is mandatory that the unity of faith precede Eucharistic communion. The Orthodox Church has so far had a good influence on the ecumenical movement, but in later years it became obvious that the World Council of Churches has deviated from its initial purpose, structure and practices; this requires a re-evaluation of the way the Orthodox Churches are present in this ecumenical organism, even more so when their ecumenism is essentially different to the one the Catholic Church and the protestant communities promote. There is an increasingly accentuated polarization of the Orthodox space between

‘ecumenists’ and ‘fundamentalists’, especially in the Church of Greece; consequently, another task for modern theology would be initiating a dialogue in order to bring closer and balance the extremist positions with schismatic potential.

The authentic Orthodox ecumenism is a dialogue of ‘truth and love’, defined by dogmatic intransigence and firmness, on the one hand, and by an economic attitude towards the heterodox, in the spirit of humble love, on the other hand, following the example of St. Nectarios of Aegina and St. Silouan the Athonite. The content of this dialogue can only be the truth, and its way of expression, love.