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THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: OPEN QUESTIONS OF THE GREEK SPIRITUAL TRADITION

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Abstract: *The article examines the features of the formation and development of theological anthropology, as a special direction of philosophical thought presented by the teachings of the leaders of Christian denominations, theologians and religious scholars, based on the Holy Scripture and the heritage of the holy fathers. Modern theological anthropology again seeks to understand the essence of man from the point of view of the challenges of the 21st century, seeing his divine principle. However, modern anthropological discourse is impossible without referring to the origins of the doctrine of the human person, rooted in the early Christian church, which was strongly influenced by Greek thought. An important source for the study of basic concepts of Christian anthropology is the legacy of the Greek theological thought of the New Age. The need for a new understanding of the mutual influence of Orthodox and Catholic thought in Greece during the struggle for independence is revealed. It is emphasized that the discussion that has unfolded in the Greek theological thought of the New Age requires a comprehensive critical analysis that will help solve the fundamental problems of modern religion and a proper understanding of the place and role of Greek theological tradition in shaping modern European ideas about the place and role of man in the world. The ambiguity of assessments of historical reality is demonstrated in the light of understanding the conditions for the formation and activity of the main trends of Orthodox theology and their influence on the assertion of the modern anthropological and theological paradigm.*

Keywords: Greek Orthodox anthropology, Greek enlightenment, Greek traditionalism, Holy Scripture, the New Age.

Human person continues to remain one of the greatest enigmas in both philosophy and science. The stunning grandeur of human creativity and cognitive abilities is enough to elevate a human being to the divine heights. Yet, human helplessness in the face of nature and social upheavals accentuates the issue of value and meaning of human life and often brings

humans to a level with the animal world¹. The crisis of anthropology that hit humanity in the 20th century revealed not only the inadequacy of economic, political, social and cultural systems², but also the oblivion of a human being as the supreme value, and triggered particular interest in Christian anthropology. Today leaders of Christian denominations, theologians and philosophers of religion yet again seek to grasp the essence of the human being in terms of challenges of the 21st century based on Holy Scripture and Holy Fathers' Heritage. The notions of person and personality enshrined in modern social and political thought are central to the values of European civilization. However, a doctrine of the human person – the cornerstone of European civilization – is rooted in the early Christian Church, which was deeply influenced by Greek thought.

Formation of theological anthropology in Christian tradition is usually connected to the texts of Apostles' Epistles, creedal documents of ecumenical councils, dogmatic theology and works of apologists. In them, the teaching about human appears as an idea about creation, image and likeness of God. Human is recognized as the “apex of Creation”, “image and likeness of God”, who hailed the incarnation of God the Son. Emerging theological anthropology is presented by the works of the Church Fathers including “On the soul” by Tertullian³, “On the making of man” by Gregory of Nyssa⁴, “On human nature” by Nemesius⁵. The image of God is seen by Clement of Alexandria, Origen and majority of Eastern theologians in human's spirituality, reason and freedom⁶. Tertullian and Lactantius also attributed it to the body. Distinction between image and likeness is connected to the teaching on the fall of man and was initially drawn by Irenaeus. According to his teaching, a fallen man has lost likeness but maintained the image of God, and freedom of will and immortality with it⁷. In the theological anthropology of the early Christian church the fallen man maintains the opportunity to contribute

¹ T.V. Portnova, I.V. Portnova, “Art review as the main component of forming eco-synergetic culture in the course of conducting guided tours related to the art heritage”, in *Research Journal of Pharmaceutical, Biological and Chemical Sciences*, 2016, vol. 7, no. 2, p. 2112-2117.

² T.V. Portnova, “Principles and opportunities of the study of pictorial heritage in the practice of choreographic education”, in *Journal of Siberian Federal University – Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2018, vol. 11, no. 12, p. 2043-2055.

³ K.S. Tertullian, *About the soul*, Oleg Abyshko Publishing, St. Petersburg, 2004.

⁴ H. Nisskiy, *About the dispensation of man*, Axioma, St. Petersburg, 1995.

⁵ N. Emesskiy, *About human nature*, Canon +, Moscow, 2011.

⁶ V.Ya. Savrey, *Alexandrian school in the history of philosophical and theological thought*, ComKniga, Moscow, 2006.

⁷ H.H. Mayorov, *Formation of medieval philosophy (Latin patristics)*, Mysl, Moscow, 1979.

to his own salvation which is performed with grace of Jesus Christ who has fulfilled the purpose of a man. Distinction between hypostasis (specific individual essence) and ousia (general essence), between nature and person; acknowledgement of consubstantiality of the Trinity with difference in hypostases and persons; consubstantiality of Jesus Christ, God the Son, to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit as to His divinity, and consubstantiality with people as to His humanity, recognized by the dogmata of ecumenical councils, specifically by the formula of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (of Chalcedon) dated 451 CE⁸, has also become the basis for the theological anthropology. As divine and human natures are unconfusedly and indivisibly united in one person, one hypostasis of Jesus Christ, nature visible (body) and invisible (soul) are united in human hypostasis, unique personality. Being an independent personality, every human is thought to be consubstantial to other people as to his human nature; Christian anthropology though insists on singularity of every separate person (hypostasis). Attribution of the term “anthropology” to Philo of Alexandria or Christian patristics is however problematic. With the word “anthropologhein” encountered in his works, and in the works of Didymus the Blind and Anastasius Sinayita, they designated a certain mode of expression of thoughts, as well as special mindset close to be designated with terms “anthropomorphism” and “anthropopathism”. It meant to speak about God in “human” terms, attribute to God human body constitution, actions, feelings; and not only due to human need to measure everything according to his own criteria and by this means to create understandable and accessible God, but also when necessary to take into consideration human mind, essence and nature.

The main features of the formation and development of theological anthropology

Anthropology in wide sense of the word as teaching still was not distinguished as a special branch of theology or philosophy, and was being issued in various creedal and philosophical treatises, which following the works of Tertullian and Gregory of Nyssa often repeated their names: ‘On the soul or ‘On the making of man’. In the hierarchical system of being, as it was understood in the Eastern patristics, from Athanasius of Alexandria to Gregory Palamas theological anthropology was being unfolded in connection with the teaching of deification of human by grace:

⁸ V.M. Lurye, *The history of Byzantine philosophy. Formative period*, Axioma, St. Petersburg, 2006.

human is capable of being inherent to ‘uncreated energy’ of God, Who, remaining inapproachable for human in His essence, descends to him with His energies. The definition of Saint Basil the Great became exemplary for theological anthropology of the Eastern Church: “Human is the intelligent creation of God created in the image of his Creator”, “creation which received the command to become god”⁹.

In the Western theological anthropology, the very structure of the teaching about human is also defined by understanding of human in relation to God as the source and final destination of being. Human is shown as God’s creation and sinner fallen apart from God, going towards God down the path of self-improvement by communion with Him in sacraments of the church. Idea of human as the element of divine order, member of visible historical church was intrinsic for medieval theological anthropology. In theological anthropology of Saint Augustine of Hippo much significance is attached to will and time as definitiveness of human existence. Fighting against anthropological optimism, the teaching about human ability to contribute to his salvation defended by Pelagius, Saint Augustine of Hippo came to the conclusion that after the fall from grace human is not able not to sin, and he is purged of “law of sin” only by grace of God granted for free. Omniscient and merciful God since the beginning of time foresaw those few whose free will could be able to accept the gift of divine grace, and predestined them to salvation, and those, whose will hold on to temporal benefits, He predestined to death¹⁰. The concept of predestination in its rigorous version was not accepted by the church which having criticized pelagianism and leaned towards moderate augustinianism, denying predestination to moral evil, interpreted predestination as provision. Theological anthropology of scholasticism united elements of Aristotle’s and Plato’s anthropology¹¹ about soul as form and entelechy of body, free will as significant integral part of human nature, with Augustine’s teaching about grace, not excommunicating nor damaging, but supporting, enhancing and elevating the damaged but not corrupted with sin human nature.

Following Augustine and insisting on necessity of grace, Thomas Aquinas also believed that human as creation with rational nature seeks

⁹ P. Mikhailov, *How to know God. Basil the Great about knowing God. Alphabet of Faith*, 2012. Available at: https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Vasilij_Velikij/kak-poznat-boga-vasilij-velikij-o-poznanii-boga/.

¹⁰ M. Yermakova, A. Sharnina, *Anthology of medieval thought*, RHGI, St. Petersburg, 2001.

¹¹ Iuliu-Marius MORariu, "L'androyne chez Platon et Mircea Eliade," in *Astra Salvensis*, VI (2018), Special Issue, p. 1025.

salvation from his own natural bent¹². That is why in contrast to Augustine's followers who equated human to his soul, Thomists consider him an independent being formed by unification of soul and body. Following Aristotle who claimed that spiritual soul was the internal body forming principle, they considered soul and body not as separate substances, but as internal principles which being united represent the complete substance of whole and integral human. At the same time, his individuality and independency in relation to other substances have their source in the act of creation of existence of every single substance by God. Human self-exploration and his comprehension of God are considered within analogy of being, understanding of creation nature (especially of human nature and his soul) as likeness to Creator with simultaneous understanding of their whole essential unlikeness. Realizing his own finiteness, dependence, imperfection, human directs his cognition towards acknowledgement of being of God. Reformation leaders disapproved such cosmologic understanding of human within the perspective of analogy of being, involvement into the order of creation world and visible church. They reestablished, renewed and radicalized Augustine's understanding of original sin and predestination. In his statements in "De homine", Martin Luther¹³ rejected the possibility of philosophical cognition of 'created and fallen' Adam¹⁴. What he considered important for a Christian was not understanding that human is a 'rational animal', but realization that human is a sinner in all his deeds, can hope only for God, needs justification, and is justified only by faith. Human for Luther is not animal rationale, but peccator in re (sinner in his deeds), iustus In spe (justified through hope). In his argument with Erasmus of Rotterdam in his work "De servo arbitrio" Luther categorically rejected freedom of will of fallen man¹⁰. According to John Calvin, sinning human lost his ability not only to do good, but even wish for good. He finds salvation not because he believes, but he receives the gift of faith because he is chosen for salvation. Human is predestined to be "vessel of God's will", reject his own will and let God create everything in him from nothing. Calvin insists

¹² K. V. Bandurovskiy, *The immortality of the soul in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, RGGU, Moscow, 2011.

¹³ M. Luther, *About slavery of will*, 2010. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20100913040415/http://svitlo.by.ru/biblioteka/luter/ra_b01.htm.

¹⁴ R.V. Savinov, *Anthropology of the late Luther: Disputatio de homine (1536)*, 2017. Available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/antropologiya-pozdnego-lyutera-disputatio-de-homine-1536>.

on double predestination: some are taken to salvation, others to perdition¹⁵.

Analysis of the modern anthropological discourse

Insisting on corruption of human nature with original sin, on justification only by faith in Jesus Christ, emphasizing on human's personal transformation by grace, him being 'born again', reformers contributed to strengthening of individualistic tendencies within the protestant theological anthropology, but also secularization of anthropology, its division into theological and philosophical.

However, a doctrine of the human person evolved in close connection with social and cultural factors rather than theological disputes. Consequently, a Christian theory of the human person continues its transformation even in the modern world. Neo-patristics is a dominating paradigm of the modern Christian doctrine about the human, with its rise the revival of contemporary theological research in Greece is tightly connected¹⁶. At the same time, its numerous advocates including such figures as Ioannis Romanidis, Panagiotis Christou, Georgios Mantzaridis, Nikos Nisiotis, Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon, Father Elias Mastrogiannopoulos, Dimitrios Koutroumbis, Archimandrite Vasilios Gondikakis, Panagiotis Nellas, Archbishop Stylianos Harkianakis and other Greek theologians of the 20th century, to name but a few, remain little-studied and little-known across the globe¹⁷. Almost all these authors put forward interesting anthropological concepts, which, unfortunately, are relatively unknown outside of Greece. It is beyond argument that their oeuvre is deeply rooted in socio-cultural and religious events of the previous centuries.

The path to neo-patristic paradigm in the Greek Orthodox thought has not been simple or definite though. Due to historical events the Orthodoxy hasn't been always holding the leading positions in the society, and in educational sense was frequently supported by both Catholic and Protestant thought, and their influence on modern Greek Orthodox

¹⁵ B. D. Porozovskaya, *Zhan Calvin. His life and reform activities*, 2003. Available at: http://az.lib.ru/p/porozovskaja_b_d/text_0020.shtml.

¹⁶ Α. Χρυσοστόμου, Σταμούλη, *Περί Φωτός, Προσωπικές ή φυσικές ενέργειες; Συμβολή στη σύγχρονη περί Αγίας Τριάδος προβληματική τον Ορθόδοξο χώρο, Παλιμψηστον, Θεσσαλονίκη*, 1999.

¹⁷ V. S. Larionov, *Ways of Greek Theology*, 2012. Available at: <http://pstgu.ru/news/smi/2012/05/18/37349>.

thought yet needs to be adequately studied¹⁸. For instance, it is known that both the anthropological agenda and theological thought in general in 17th-18th century Greece were interwoven with and influenced by both Catholic and Protestant thoughts due to socio-cultural events that occurred during that period¹⁹. However, it's a little known fact that many Greeks of that time were educated in the Jesuit schools. The Holy Mountain of Athos was no exception. On a visit to Rome in 1628, Ignatios, abbot of the Vatopedi Monastery, proposed that such a school be established on Athos for the training of monks, and in 1635 a Jesuit school was duly opened. On Naxos and other Greek islands Jesuits preached in Orthodox churches, heard confessions of Orthodox Christians and administered the sacraments.

It is worth mentioning that the relationship between Western monasticism and the monks of Athos had had an even longer history²⁰. Thus, Saint Gregory Palamas in his "Triads" intended to protect hesychasts of Athos is speaking about the patriarch of Western monasticism, Saint Benedict as "one of the most accomplished saints who got to see the whole universe in the shining of one ray of this cognizable sun", and considers him exemplary for the spiritual tradition he is protecting²¹. In the late 16th and early 17th centuries Orthodox Christians often received the Eucharist in the Catholic churches and local bishops gave free rein to it. Moreover, in their letters to Rome Orthodox Christians appealed to the Pope as the Defender of the Orthodox Faith. Under the influence of these schools, and not least because the ablest of Greeks continued their education in the West, a scholastic type of education was established in Greece, which followed western tendencies in almost every way²².

In 1821, the Greek war of independence from the Ottoman empire, also called the Greek revolution, begins. It ended in 1832 with the peace

¹⁸ K.T. Ware, *Orthodox and Catholics in the 17th century: Schism or Intercommunion?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

¹⁹ A.N. Papathanasiou, *Some key themes and figures in Greek theological thought. The Cambridge companion to orthodox christian theology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008.

²⁰ Irenaeus, "Dom Leo Bonsall, monk of Belmont. Mount Athos and the Catholic Church», in *Eastern Churches Review*, 1969, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 262-267. Available at: <http://fatherdavidbirdosb.blogspot.com/2016/07/benedictine-hagiorites-august-20-2009.html>.

²¹ A. Lambrechts, *School of brotherly love. Benedictine on Athos*, 2012. Available at: <http://catholichurch.ru/index.php/topic/435-латиняне-на-афоне/>.

²² K.T. Ware, *Eustratios Argentis: A Study of the Greek Church under the Turkish Rule*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1974.

Treaty of Constantinople, resulting in Greece becoming an independent state. During this period formation of Catholic and Protestant political elite is taking place here (the king was Catholic, his advisors were Protestant, while Anglicans possessed the Ionian Islands). This had a profound impact on the country's cultural and religious life. "Academic" theology which had deep roots in the Western university tradition enjoyed robust development, while non-church religious organizations such as Ζωή and Σωτήρ. However, the activity of the brotherhoods, as the historian Gafi Ghazi notes, is not sufficiently studied due to lack of access to the archives²³. Of course, this was not a one-sided process as Catholicism and Protestantism got acquainted with the Greek ecclesiastical tradition. The degree of this mutual influence is least studied by scholars in both Greece and overseas. Anthropology was the central issue debated by theologians of that time with the theology of St Gregory Palamas being one of the discursive themes. The reason for different interpretations of his heritage remains an open question. The Orthodox Church views his anthropology as a meaningful practical experience for a creation to be part of life created by the Creator, while Catholicism and Protestantism mainly view it as a mere moral improvement that enhances human character.

What remains debatable is whether traditional enlightenment was a solid intellectual movement or what we are dealing with here is the sum of stand-alone social and political concepts put forward by figures who contributed to enlightening their compatriots to a different degree²⁴. However, attitude to the Western influence is significantly changing. Spreading of the ideas of the Enlightenment forced the Orthodox theologians across the whole Orthodox oecumene to engage in assessment of these ideas from the point of view of the traditional Orthodox values, as well to protect these values from the Western influence. Since not all the ideas of the European Enlightenment contributed to preservation of the Orthodox worldview. For instance, the symbol of Greek Enlightenment and its key participant Adamantios Korais in his writings touches various theological subjects related mainly to the method of the Church reformation, such as: limitation of services and fasts, wedded episcopate, gradual elimination of the body of monasticism etc.

²³ Ε. Γαζής, *Πατρίς θρησκεία, οικογένεια. Ιστορία ενός συνθήματος. 1880-1930*, Πόλις, Σελ, Αθήνα, 2011.

²⁴ Α. Zoitakis, *Traditional Enlightenment in Greece in the 18th Century: Cosmas Aetoli and Nicodemus Svyatrets*, Svyataya Hora, Moscow, 2008.

This period can be rightfully considered as one of the pivotal periods in Greek history. Collision between innovative ideas of the Enlightenment and traditional Orthodox views was happening simultaneously on several levels: of education and ideology, national objectives – public and social, “it was manifested in the form contestation of traditional values and acceptance of the new system of coordinates and paradigms, collision with ruling classes and tendency to create the national state, as well as of the fight for social rebuilding and liberation”²⁵. As Athanasius Zoitakis rightfully remarks, “the cause for this is in fact the issue of choice of the further path of development for Orthodox nations was in the center of debate between enlighteners and traditionalists”²². Analyzing archive materials of the Athos’ monasteries, he shows that Orthodox traditionalism played major part in revival of the Greek educational system and national liberation movement.

Worthy of separate attention is the Orthodox traditionalism of that time. In general, traditionalism was formed as a movement on the basis of common views (Holy Scripture, Sacred Tradition and Hesychast tradition), but many participants of this movement disagree in particular. The reasons for these discrepancies are rooted in national characteristics, which gives grounds for asserting the lack of knowledge of traditional enlightenment in modern historiography and the contradictory nature of assessments of this ideological trend. And in general, there is almost no analysis of the chronology and structure of traditionalists. Some authors noted the similarity of views of those representing the traditionalist movement and yet continued dividing it into ideological components (i.e. the Kollyvades, traditionalists, Russophiles, etc.). It is common to state that with their focus on the education of compatriots, traditionalists tended to pay little attention to underpinning their views theoretically²⁶.

Other circle of pending issues to be solved is related to participation of traditional enlighteners in forming of new anthropological vision. It is necessary to consider the degree, nature and characteristics of the influence traditionalists had on masses. As it has already been presented in case of Athanasius Zoitakis, there is an established point of view that the Greek national liberation movement was tightly connected to

²⁵ A. Zoitakis, *Traditional enlightenment of the XVIII-XIX centuries as a general Orthodox movement*, Svyataya Hora, Moscow, 2012.

Cf. Ioan Chirilă, Stelian Pașca-Tușa, Adrian Mărincean, Bogdan Șopterean, „The Divine Light. The Sight and Experience of it in Gregory Palamas Theology,” in *Astra Salvensis*, VII (2019), no. 13, p. 224.

²⁶ T. Portnova, “Genre and style interaction in solutions staged ballets of the nineteenth, twentieth centuries”, in *Astra Salvensis*, 2018, vol. 6, no. 12, p. 689-694.

spreading of enlightenment and education, but it does not reveal the specifics of formation of the new personality in which national consciousness and Orthodox worldview are intertwined, and to what degree these new anthropological beliefs influenced formation of present-day national character of the Greek people²⁷. The answer to these questions will help provide a general characteristic of their views and educational activities, and highlight their role in reviving Hellenic national identity.

There are only few comprehensive works on the transformation of Orthodox anthropological thought in 18th-20th century Greece and its place and its role in the formation of the modern European anthropological paradigm. As a result, the opposing concepts took shape. The most famous work is 'Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Identity in the Modern Age' by Christos Yannaras, a Greek philosopher and Eastern Orthodox theologian²⁸.

The author is revisiting the paths of formation of the Greek spiritual identity from 1453 to 60s of the XXth century. He calls 'Western propaganda' the period of 16th-17th centuries, when influence of Catholic education was at its peak of intensity in Greece. This influence of Western tradition is considered by Yannaras as degradation of own Greek identity, or westernization (ἄφελληνισμός), which caused, according to the author, social-cultural and political crisis. And only within the environment of regular people who were not subject to Latin education the true spirit of the Greek nation was preserved. Thus, Christos Yannaras categorically distinguishes Greek Orthodox identity and Western one as two absolutely different anthropological paradigms. Needless to say that in this case the true Christian is Greek. It should be noted that despite the distinct theological position based on which the author is reviewing large volume of historical material, some of Yannaras's conclusions were repeatedly criticized (e.g. from the theology of St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and Greek Aristotelianism of Theophil Koridalevs time) due to weak theological argumentation and superficiality of historical generalizations. However, it is necessary to acknowledge high relevance of his work for

²⁷ T. G. Zervas, *(Re)Creating a National Identity in 19th Century Greece: National Identity, Education, and European Perceptions of Greece*, 2008. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/2084653/_Re_Creating_a_National_Identity_in_19th_Century_Greece_National_Identity_Education_and_European_Perceptions_of_Greece.

²⁸ X. Γιανναράς, *Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ Δύση στὴ Νεώτερη Ἑλλάδα, Ἀθήνα, ἐκδόσεις "Δόμος"*, Πόλις. Σελ, Αθήνα, 1999. Cf. Iuliu-Marius Morariu, "Bioethics in the Discussions of the Pan-Orthodox Synod from Crete (2016)", in *Astra Salvensis*, IV (2016), no. 7, Salva, p. 249-251.

deep present-day analysis, within the framework of similar discussions concerning transformation of the teachings related to the human person in modern Greek theological thought. Considerable interest in the context of revival of national historical tradition and its contemplation is sparked by the book “Unthinkable Nothingness: Philocalic Roots of Modern Greek Nihilism” authored by Greek philosopher Stelios Ramfos²⁹.

Revisiting the Orthodox heritage of Greece, the author considers it to be not only the key component of Greek spiritual identity, but also the reason of the general condition of the nation. Here, the issue concerning the ways of formation of Greek identity is also raised, but the conclusion reached by the author is opposite to the position of Christos Yannaras. The work of Ramfos has drawn a lot of criticism within the context of his understanding of the place and role for monasticism and its influence on progressive development of Greeks. The priest Nikolaos Loudovikos expresses his surprise that Ramfos didn't manage to see the depth of the Greek Orthodox anthropological thought³⁰. According to Ramfos, influence of Catholic theology on dogmatics of the East was positive but obviously not sufficient, since its full and complete absorption didn't happen. He finds the reason to this in key views of monks who would restrain thought and spirit of the nation. That is why he denies the meaning of hesychasm and philocaly. The author comes to the conclusion that when Greeks opted for “Turkish headscarf instead of papal tiara” in the name of Orthodoxy they bartered away European democratic thinking that implies initiative and responsibility and is capable of open dialogue at the level of objective reasoning in exchange for Oriental non-historical consciousness geared towards eschatology and incapable of being independent *hic et nunc*²¹.

Obviously, the above-mentioned works are nothing else but extreme points of view in the context of contemplation of Greek Orthodox heritage and its influence onto modern Greek and global Christian thought. One of the examples of more careful analysis is the fundamental historical piece “The Greek Theology under Turkish Rule

²⁹ Ε. Ράμφος, *Το αδιανόητο τίποτα. Φιλοκαλικά ριζώματα του νεοελληνικού μηδενισμού: Δοκίμιο φιλοσοφικής ανθρωπολογίας*, Ιανουάριος από "Αρμός", Έκδοση, 2012.

³⁰ Ν. Λουδοβίκος, *Η Φιλοκαλία, ο μηδενισμός και η κρίση*, 2010. Available at: <https://alopsis.gr/%CE%B7-%CF%86%CE%B9%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CE%BF-%CE%BC%CE%B7%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BD%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%BC%CF%82-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B9-%CE%B7-%CE%BA%CF%81%CE%AF%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%80/>.

(1453-1821)” authored by Gerhard Podskalsky³¹. Although this work lacks comprehensive critical analysis that could give a new understanding of the historical background of the modern anthropological and theological paradigm, vast factual material represents unconditional value for the research.

The modern Orthodox Church is going through the period that surely will leave a mark in the history, and which will not be assessed unambiguously either by coevals or by future generations. The schism caused by achievement of autocephaly by Ukraine exposed lack of integrity and unity of the Orthodox world in general³². And in this case the position of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople is the indication of great courage to unveil this. Orthodoxy fostered by Greek thought is growing and developing in it, as it is growing and developing all around the world. Dialectic of colliding theological arguments at times drawing participants of the debate to extreme views reveals historical dramatic nature of the people’s spiritual path which has not yet been traveled. That is why the history of Greek theology is full of theological debates and controversies, and in general theological dispute is not an easy task in Greece, so it requires comprehensive critical analysis, thereby contributing to solving the fundamental problems of modern theology and true understanding of place and role of Greek theology in the formation of modern European views about human’s place and role in the world.

³¹ G. Podskalsky, *The Greek Theology under Turkish Rule (1453-1821)*, Beck, Munich, 1988.

³² Cf. Iuliu-Marius Morariu, ‘The new Ukrainian Autocephalous Church and its image in the ecumenical space’, *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 76 (3), a6012 2020, p. 1-6.