

EAST WEST MEETING 2004

“EAST-WEST DIALOGUE : REFERENCE TO MONASTICISM”

MINSTER ABBEY – KENT

SEPTEMBER 30TH – OCTOBER 6TH 2004

**Theoria & Praxis
according to St Gregory Palamas
- Contribution to contemporary monasticism -**

**LECTURER
METROPOLITAN DR PAUL YAZIGI**

ADDRESS

**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF ALEPPO, ALEXANDRETTA & DEPENDENCIES
(PATRIARCHATE OF ANTIOCH AND ALL THE EAST)
Po. Box : 6976 ALEPPO – SYRIA
PHONE : + 963 21 4660670 – FAX : + 963 21 3631420
EMAIL : SECRETARY@ALEPPORTHODOX.ORG
WEBSITE : WWW.ALEPPORTHODOX.ORG**

**KENT - ENGLAND
2004**

Theoria & Praxis

according to St Gregory Palamas

- Contribution to contemporary monasticism -

Content

- A. Introduction
 - a. Misinterpreting Theoria and Praxis
 - b. The kingdom of God in the desert and in the parish
 - c. St Gregory Palamas: the hesychast and the archbishop
- B. Theoria & Praxis
 - a. Praxis and Theoria : two ideal levels in spiritual warfare
 - b. From the ascetic Orthodox tradition to the Philocalia
 - c. Praxis and Theoria in St Maximus' exegesis
 - d. Praxis and Theoria in Palamas' exegesis
 - e. Praxis and Theoria in the context of Barlaam's controversy
 - f. The time of Praxis and the time of Theoria
- Epilogue

A. Introduction

It is a common mistake from a Christian scope nowadays to split people into two categories or Christian life into two different natures, i.e. contemplative or practical life. Such a twofold and, thereby, contradictory approach is mostly evident in monasticism. In this regard, the church acceptance of the diversity of gifts in life is confused with the oneness of Christian life's purpose. Consequently, we find contemplative and working monastic communities. Neither Eastern Orthodoxy nor the ancient Christian tradition knew of such a practice. Such an interpretation of Christian life has no constructive spiritual and ecclesiastic outcome on the church's life in general.

There are indeed two ways of Christian life. It is true that there are, on the one hand, the ascetics who live in the 'desert', and, on the other hand, the servants who work in the 'parish'. If both ways are different, as a reflection of the diversity of gifts, spirituality should not differ between them, as regards the sameness of their ends. The spirituality of the desert fathers should not differ from that of the parishes. Sometimes, extremes and excessiveness are observed on both sides: on the one hand, when the isolation of those living in the desert (contemplative monasticism) reaches the limit of discontinuance with the church's actuality and affairs, as if monasticism is to reach self justification and salvation; or, on the other hand, when superficiality of the parish's

ministers and secularization of their ministry are being admitted. In one way or the other, the ‘salt’, without which nothing is salted, is corrupted.

a. Misinterpreting Theoria and Praxis

Some may think that the desert and the parish can not meet, and that there is neither a common spirituality between contemplation and ministry, nor a relationship between contemplation (Theoria) and practical life (Praxis). Theoria may seem a life that deals with theories, whereas Praxis looks after practical affairs. From such a perspective, we may easily bless Martha instead of Mary; something that contradicts Jesus’ words when he openly declared that Theoria (the listening to the Word) is Mary’s ‘better part’, whereas distraction by many things instead of listening is less a ‘part’.

Such an approach to Theoria and Praxis badly misinterprets the meaning of retirement to the desert and the ministry in the parish. It leads to two different but dangerous ends. On the one hand, those who are practicing contemplation become theoretical groups alienated from their goal, i.e. man, for the reason that they have dedicated themselves to divine matters in a way that these matters become incomprehensible and useless to man. They cast God out from man’s life because of the wrong and exaggerated way of seeking Him. On the other hand, this same approach provides a good excuse to those who are ‘ministering’ for the absence of spirituality because of the greatness of the pastoral work accomplished. Such an approach leads the church to the path of a dangerous secularization, where the ‘minister’ should be superficial, and the ascetic an extraterrestrial. Neither does the one help nor is the other useful. In this view, Theoria and Praxis, even if they seem to be on opposite sides, carry out the one and same work, that of excluding God from man’s life, substituting Him by a principle that is served or studied.

b. The kingdom of God in the desert and in the parish

Both approaches are extravagant and ignore of the fact that “the kingdom of God is within us”. The kingdom of God, for the one who is absorbed by contemplation, is in heaven, whereas, for the one who is serving, it is in the world. Thus, the inner warfare between God and man, like the one that took place between Jacob and the angel, is obliterated. The former will consecrate oneself to combat his own thoughts and meditate on them, while the latter will fight to solve people’s matters of life, as if his contribution, though urgent, is the sole end of his life.

This is the inner warfare that the Bible calls ‘sanctification’ and that ascetic literature names ‘purification’. It is a warfare required of both, whether living in contemplation or serving in the world. Besides, it should be the motive, par excellence, for both.

God dwells within us, and our inner being becomes His ‘kingdom’, and even a battle place where God stands and His enemies are scattered away. This is the aim of

Christian life: purification or sanctification. To reach it two ways are provided: the desert as well as the parish, solitude or ministry. Distinguishing among the different talents is thus possible, but care should be taken not to split their one and unique goal, i.e. seeking the face of the Lord in the kingdom within us. In that regard, neither marriage is a reason to let God flee from within us and bring in a multitude of things, nor is the desert useful, if it becomes a place of dwelling solely alone to one's self and not a place of encounter between God and man.

When our attention is drawn to inner life in the 'kingdom of God', then the desert rallies with the parish, Praxis leads to Theoria and contemplation stimulates ministry. Life's real place is inside us, whether we are settled in the desert or in the middle of the city. Otherwise, ties between both are broken, and each part will take off in opposite directions. Indeed, the heart that works reaches contemplation. In the same way, the Spirit inspires the contemplative heart to work. This is the real course of life that we should learn in the desert and teach in the parish.

There, inside, in the 'kingdom of God', should we visit the desert or encounter the parish. This kingdom attracts God in the desert, and this same heart serves man in the parish. We are not confronted with the necessity of studying dogmatics and mysticism in the desert, or to commitment to social matters in parishes, since the main issue is union between God and man, whether it takes place in solitude or in society. This union occurs, neither in the desert nor in the streets, but 'inside' us.

Therefore, there is a one single spirituality in Christian life. It is every Christian's goal and should be sought by everyone. It is sanctity, i.e. edifying man as a temple of the Spirit. Christian life is a single strive, that of opening one's self to the pouring of the Spirit. This endeavor may flourish in the desert as well as in the city. It is not a matter of place, but of company. Because where Jesus is our companion, there is the kingdom.

Therefore, Theoria (contemplation) and Praxis (ministry) are not, in our Orthodox Church, two contradictory and opposite realities or charismas. Instead, they refer to different levels of the one and the same spiritual life: Praxis anticipates Theoria, introduces and initiates one to it, whereas contemplative life stems out from practical life. Ministry implies a life of inner combat or struggle through fasts, vigils and prayers. It is the initiative step. Contemplation follows, i.e. the vision of God in every ministry and diaconia. If, on the one level, struggle and work prevail, then God and His grace dominate on the second.

Contemplation is the goal of ministry, and Theoria is the aim of Praxis. Ministry that does not reach contemplation is sterile, and Praxis that does not attain Theoria is vain. One may serve wherever he wishes, but, despite his ministry, he should also draw towards contemplation.

The first and foremost examples in the church's life are those pastors who 'worked' in the desert and meditated on the nature of ministry. They worked on themselves and got prepared in the desert (Praxis) and then left to the cities to minister

to their flock (vision of God and His contemplation). The Cappadocian Fathers and the most eminent church figures commenced their spiritual warfare in the desert, and only upon exercising their ministry in the city could they reach the vision of God. Indeed, the desert is most suitable to achieve the first level, but not without exceptions. The one who works there on himself may attain contemplation afterwards, whether in the city or in the caves and huts.

c. St Gregory Palamas: the hesychast and the archbishop

A prominent example in that regard is that of St Gregory Palamas. A succinct exhibition of his life, his activities and his ascetism, may reveal how he was a man of Praxis and Theoria.

Gregory Palamas was born in Constantinople about 1296. He studied the encyclical sciences and philosophy. The rough conditions of life urged him to travel a lot. He decided to become a monk and went to Mount Athos to live in prayer. He faced Barlaam on the main issues regarding Theoria and the vision of the uncreated glory of God. He wrote and defended true knowledge, the one that comes not from secular achievements and philosophies, but from the wisdom that emerges from purity of life and cleansing of passions, i.e. the purity of the heart. For the pure in heart may come to see God.

Afterwards, this monk was elected Archbishop of Thessalonica. There, he did not hesitate to exhort people to practice Christian virtues and seek union with God, affirming that such an attitude is not the exclusive concern of monks but ought to be the concern of every Christian, of those living in parishes too.

Palamas' life challenges our false concepts of contemplation and ministry, of Theoria and Praxis. He is one of the foremost who could experience the 'uncreated light' through contemplation, without keeping himself away from his ministry in the church. He boldly handled church's affairs, facing the church's most difficult issue then (the Barlaam controversy), and actively exercised his pastoral work, guiding his flock (as archbishop of Thessalonica).

In his life, the imaginary barrier between Theoria and Praxis is broken. Our saint seems to have ministered contemplating and contemplated while ministering. He could unite both levels, without losing from his sight, at any time, God's vision and contemplation.

In what follows, we will try to expose the meaning of Theoria and Praxis mainly on the base of Palamas' writings and of the Orthodox Tradition, a tradition that did not know and would separate between the one goal and the unique spirituality of both levels, in ministry and solitude.

B. Theoria & Praxis

The sharp separation between contemplative life and active life, as if they were two different types of life and two different levels of spiritual struggle, has found its

way into the western world as of the Middle Ages, through influences that exercised rationalism, especially from the time of Thomas Aquinas.

a. Praxis and Theoria : two ideal levels in spiritual warfare

We, therefore, commence our exposition starting from the principal that Praxis and Theoria, active life and contemplative life, are not two opposite ways of life, but the two ideal levels in spiritual warfare. The first leads us to the second, whereas the second stimulates the first and promotes it. The former prepares us for the vision of God, whereas the latter is its propulsor.

Elijah the Presbyter sees that Theoria and Praxis are like a woman who holds two torches, both of which help her to see, something that metaphorically means the vision of God¹.

Sanctification or vision of God, i.e. Theoria, is the goal of Christian life, wherever and however it may be. Practical life represents here the doorway to the vision of God, or what we call ‘the resemblance’, the greater participation in God’s glory. If practical life is the struggle that matures and the endeavor that grows, then contemplation represents the steadiness in the stance of the vision of God².

Thus, practical life (Praxis) forms the first step of spiritual warfare, where man starts exercising virtues and struggles to purify himself in order to attain the vision of God. For those who are pure in heart will see God. For this reason, Praxis means the stage of purification, and is thereby called ‘practical philosophy’. The patristic and ascetic tradition distinguishes three stages of spiritual life; first, purification; second, illumination; and, third, deification. Praxis usually embraces the first two stages.

Spiritual life starts with purification in order to reach purity and dispassions (apatheia-ἀπάθεια). Pleasure becomes bitter and is therefore not desirable, and even hated. St Isaac the Syrian says: “the beginning of repentance is aversion to sin”. It is the stage of restoring man’s yearning, purifying his desires and cleansing them, transforming love from earthly things to love of divine realities (θείον έρωτας). Then the mind (νοός) is set free from ignorance (άγνοια) and from whatever distracts it from the presence of God. Afterwards, man reaches illumination, a state of permanent prayer. It should be known here, that prayer means not the mere repetition of common prayers but the awareness of God’s permanent presence in life and the conformity of man’s will to the divine will. This conformity is the sign of obedience of God’s sons, in the absence of inner tension or struggle. It characterizes the stage of purification, where man’s heart is still attached to worldliness. He who reaches illumination is free; worldly seduction has no more effect on him. At this stage, God’s presence is always felt in one’s life, and by the same token, man is freed from oblivion (λήθη). When dwelling in God (η εν Θεώ διαμονή) and constant communion with Him are achieved, then illusions fade and the vision of God (θεωρία) remains.

In other words, Praxis is the practice of praying, fasting and vigils, i.e. the three virtues that summarize spiritual warfare and all kind of Christian virtues. In this

regard, the Church hymns her archpriests, those who have ministered to their rational flock and were martyred for their sake: “*Thou hast become like the Apostles in their states, a successor to their throne, finding indeed the intelligential ladder, O thou God-inspired. Therefore, thou hast followed the Word of God in righteousness, and striven unto blood for the faith. O Martyr among Priests (...)*”. Indeed, Praxis leads to Theoria. In this context, Praxis seems to be the keeping of the true faith (the theoretical faith) and also the striving to bloody martyrdom if necessary. This hymn (troparion) is dedicated to pastors who lived not in the desert but dedicated themselves to parishioners. By the same token, the Church hymns the righteous saints, who lived in the wilderness and received “the heavenly gifts”, i.e. the vision of God: by “fasts, vigils and prayers” they received these gifts (performing miracles and contemplating God).

b. From the ascetic Orthodox tradition to the *Philocalia*

The ascetic Orthodox spiritual tradition has always used apophatic theology (αποφατική θεολογία) to speak about approaching God. It is a method that repels the influence of philosophy and Scholasticism. For God’s vision does not occur through rational comprehension and Gnostic ways, but empirically, through the experience that stems out from abiding in keeping the commandments and the exercise of virtues. Only then is the heart purified.

It is remarkable that the writings of the fourteenth century fathers, like St Gregory Palamas and many others, form the quarter volume of the *Philocalia*. These fathers have underlined, because of the controversy between Orthodoxy and Scholasticism and Rationalism in the west, that the method and the tool of approaching God is not the mind and philosophy but purification of the heart and ascetic life. St Nicodimos the Aghiorite, the compiler of the *Philocalia*, included in his collection a portion of related writings of St Gregory Palamas³. In the introduction to the French translation of the *Philocalia*, Oliver Clément defines Praxis and Theoria as follows: Praxis = exercise = the work of the monk on himself = life’s purification = perfection⁴. That is why, for St Gregory Palamas, the way to the vision of God (προσκολληθούμε στο Θεό) consists in the works of repentance. These works reflect our absolute love to God. Such a love can be reached by purification from passions through the keeping of all the commandments and succeeding in exercising the virtues⁵.

c. Praxis and Theoria in St Maximus’ exegesis

Praxis is the stage of ascent while exercising the Christian virtues, an exercise that leads finally to contemplation-vision. The faithful, for St Maximus the Confessor (a neptic father of the 7th century) can be distinguished in three spiritual levels: the first are those who are initiated to faith (οι πιστοί) and have only accepted it; the second are those who practice the commandments (οι πρακτικοί) and succeed in keeping them; and the third are the perfects (οι γνωστικοί). This last word does not imply an intellectual and rational occupation but the Christian perfection (τέλειοι) that is achieved by

purification of one self⁶. In this last level are the faithful who purified themselves and are free from the world's seduction and illusions. Their spirits have acquired by then the ability, whenever they deal with worldly affairs, to move spiritually towards the vision of God (physical Theoria-φυσική θεωρία), and afterwards to reach "theology" (φανερή θεολογία)⁷.

d. Praxis and Theoria in Palamas' exegesis

Praxis, according to Palamas is the attempt to get rid of the carnal and earthly mindset (τα γεώδη και σαρκικά φρονήματα)⁸. He gives an account of the stages of spiritual life when explaining symbolically the events that took place at the Transfiguration of the Lord. His account clarifies his approach to Praxis and Theoria:

The Transfiguration happened after the Peter's confession (ομολογία) of the divinity of the Lord. Six days passed after this confession without the Evangelist mentioning anything. It is the period of silence (σιωπή). After that lapse of time, Jesus took his three disciples and ascended on Mount Tabor to pray. During that period of prayer (προσευχή) the Transfiguration occurred. These are the three periods of man's spiritual life. It begins with the confession (ομολογία), i.e. the complete knowledge of faith and the understanding of the commandments and the meaning of the divine Word. The second period is silence (σιωπή) which means the period of asceticism and the keeping (practicing) of the commandments and the practical knowledge of life. It is the period of purifying one's self. Both periods belong to the time of Praxis (πράξις). Afterwards, such a man reaches transfiguration (μεταμόρφωση), i.e. the time of prayer (προσευχή), the time of our life's company to God's presence and life. This period is called sanctification or deification (θέωσις), or the time of the vision of God – Theoria (θεωρία)⁹.

According to another schema, there is faith (η πίστη), the church (η εκκλησία) and the kingdom (η βασιλεία). Faith stands for the six days of this eon; the Church stands for the seventh day; and the Kingdom stands for the eighth day. The mind helps in understanding the commandments. It is the period of faith (η πίστη). But asceticism and the work of virtues cause us to live in church (η εκκλησία). It is the Sabbatism (σαββατισμός). Then Praxis' time hands over to Theoria. Theoria is the time of the eighth day and the time of the kingdom (η βασιλεία).

In conclusion, Praxis is the time of silence (σιωπή), and Theoria is the time of transfiguration. For "prayer and fasting", as Jesus said to His disciples when they could not expulse the demon right after the Transfiguration, are the work of the six days and of the seventh day, without which it is impossible to contemplate God (transfiguration) and to enter into the eighth day.

e. Praxis and Theoria in the context of Barlaam's controversy

St Gregory Palamas admonished those who tried to reduce Christianity to a philosophical system like the human sciences, or to a mere phenomenon or to an

intellectual pursuit (speculation), and preferred to speak of the “real philosophy”. Did not his opponent Barlaam assert that the philosophers are better and much more powerful than the apostles and the saints, because they possessed sublime scientific and philosophical knowledge? The true philosophy (the true knowledge) according to Palamas is the vision of God, which may not occur without having been anticipated by Theoria¹⁰. Therefore, knowledge (γνώσις) leads us to Praxis (πρακτική) and not to Theoria. It is the introductory step to Praxis.

Underlining the importance of works (έργα) and revealing knowledge through the works, as James the Apostle exhorted us to show our faith through our works, by no means implies that these works are mere human achievements, but rather constitute the gift of divine grace (συνεργεία).

Purification of the heart can not be attained by human effort. It can only attract the grace of the Spirit which may cleanse man’s heart. The frame within which man collaborates with God’s grace is the Church and its mysteries. The period of Praxis is realized within a workplace which consists of the church’s mysteries. Palamas and Tradition do speak of “the illuminating energy of the mysteries” (φωτιστική ενέργεια των μυστηρίων).

Man’s freedom became, after the fall, more rapidly influenced by worldly seduction and more inclined to evil. Hence, the free man always requires grace in order to continue his way and ascend to deification, something that was torn away abruptly because of sin¹¹. Not only achieving works and exercising virtues require the participation of the grace, but also “good willing” (βούλεσθαι καλώς) needs the support of the grace too¹².

Praxis is the stage of purifying and cleansing the heart in order to contemplate God. It should be noticed that “heart” means the whole human being. Purification does not concern the purification of the mind only, but also the participation of the body. It is the preparatory stage of the entire person, body and spirit. Man has a synthetic nature; therefore, purification concerns his whole nature¹³.

Praxis leads us to Theoria. The thought of St Gregory Palamas corresponds to the famous expression of St Gregory the Theologian “Praxis is the doorway to Theoria” (πράξις γὰρ ἐπίβασις θεωρίας).

In Orthodox tradition and to St Gregory Palamas, Theoria does not mean the intellectual and philosophical speculation about faith. The vision of God (Theoria, contemplation) is synonym to sanctification, deification, i.e. the union with God (θέωσις-θεωρία-θεοπτία-βασίλεια).

These constitute the goal of Christian life. Therefore, the icon of transfiguration represents the anticipated image of the purpose, its final goal. Salvation is not ‘justification’, a justification that means cleansing from sins and acquiring divine forgiveness. Salvation in the Orthodox tradition is to be freed from the sick post-

lapsarian man (ο μετά την πώση άνθρωπος), to recover man's nature and humanity in its integrity, and to lead it to live by God and in Him. If man's fall is the separation of human life from God, then salvation is the union with God, something that is realized when handicaps are removed and man is healed from his weaknesses. Theoria is not a matter that concerns the mind but the entire human being. Indeed, when the prophet Elijah saw God, he felt warm in his body.

Palamas has been distinguished for his attention when dealing with Theoria and vision of the uncreated divine light. He used audacious expressions to express such an experience, as, for example: 'the sanctifying power (energy) of God' (θεοποιός δύναμις του Θεού). He is to some extent revolutionary in comparison with other fathers who remained faithful to those expressions in use before St Basil the Great¹⁴.

Theoria is neither the result of imagination (φαντασία) nor an intellectual theoretical speculation (διανοητικά, θεωρητικά, στοχασμός¹⁵), but union with God. The living and permanent presence of God represents the expressive image of such a state. In the monastic tradition, vision is the state of union with God in pure prayer without distraction, something that occurs after the exercise of virtues, a spiritual warfare along with the grace's assistance¹⁶. For this reason, Palamas considers, as did St Gregory the Theologian, that the tree of life in paradise was but the vision - the contemplation of God¹⁷.

Theoria is then the state that follows *apatheia* (απάθεια), when man is filled with divine passion or love (θείον πάθος). Within man there is nothing but God (Χριστώ εν πάσι). It is the state of Christian perfection (τέλος)¹⁸.

Theoria (θεωρία, θεοπτία), the vision of God or of the uncreated light, is not the work of the man's mind. It is not a mere rational knowledge, but union (ένωσις) or deification, like the union of fire with iron (μέθεξις και θεουργός κοινωνία). It is getting into God's world and not remaining an observer from far away. In other words, it is participation in divine glory.

Therefore, Palamas spoke explicitly of false philosophy, because the saints theologize not in an Aristotelian way, but as fishermen (θεολογούν «αλιευτικώς και όχι αριστοτελικώς»). In fact, the vision of God is the experience of divine revelation, whereas heresies depend on imagination and philosophies¹⁹.

f. The time of Praxis and the time of Theoria

From these definitions of contemplation, we may conclude that Theoria is not the result of human effort but it is exclusively the gift of God's love. Therefore, contemplation of the uncreated light is not, in Palamas' view, the reward of virtues (time of Praxis). It is rather the gift of the Holy Spirit (time of Theoria), because it is not only a state beyond human nature, but also beyond human intellectual capabilities. Of course, the virtues do prepare us, but union with God is bestowed on man²⁰. Vision is, then, a state that divine love (φιλανθρωπία) affords to man²¹. On the other hand,

Theoria is the state of inner concordance between the human soul and God. It comes after the purification of one's heart which then reaches the full love of God. It is a state that is like the one Moses experienced when he was on the mountain and when he parted the Red Sea²², or like the one Elijah experienced when he ordered the rain to stop²³.

If such a vision is the 'end' of Christian perfection, it is an end without end! Perfection confined to certain limits is but a 'fall' and a sin²⁴.

The experiencing of such a transcendent state is not restricted to a few people, for contemplation is a state to which every body has been called. Moreover, monasticism or hesychasm are not the sole way to attaining this state. Palamas did not hesitate to speak of the uncreated light and the vision of God even in homilies to the faithful in Thessalonica. The significant prototypes to Palamas, as well as to St Gregory the Theologian, are figures such as Elijah, Moses, John the Baptist, and most especially the Virgin Mary²⁵. These prototypes were considered to be stimulating and not regarded as exceptions. Indeed, contemplation is possible for the pure who achieved purity by prayer and works (ἔργα). It is a gift given to all²⁶.

If monks may succeed in attaining such a spiritual uplifting, it is potentially accessible to all in principle. It is a divine call addressed to all²⁷.

Epilogue

Importance should not be attributed to the way we chose, be it either ministry or solitude. Both ways are a 'work' in order to achieve the sole goal of man's life, i.e. deification, contemplation, Theoria. What we should take into account is that we 'work' for God's glory. Unmistakably, such a 'work' – despite the way we chose – leads man to *apatheia*, the purity of the heart and frees him from selfishness. It is such a purity that enables man to acquire the divine gift, i.e. contemplation.

Sources

EPE Φιλοκάλια των ιερών Νηπτικών, τόμ. Β' και Γ'.
Ellines Pateres tis Ekklesias, Thessaloniki (in Greek).

Bibliography

- Βλάχος, Ιερόθεος *Μικρά Είσοδος στην Ορθόδοξη πνευματικότητα*, έκδ. Αποστολική Διακονία, Σειρά Θεωρία και Πράξη, 1992 (1).
- Γεωργίου, Αρχιμ. (Ηγουμένου) *Η θέωσις ως σκοπός της ζωής του ανθρώπου*, έκδ. Ι.Μ. Οσίου Γρηγορίου, Άγιον Όρος 1997.
- Καρδαμάκης, Μιχαήλ *Η σοφία λέγει*, έκδ. Αρμός, Αθήνα.
- Σαχάρωφ, Αρχιμ. *Άσκησις και θεωρία*, έκδ. Ι.Μ. τιμίου Προδόμου, Essex 1996.
- Σωφρονίου Μαντζαρίδου, *Παλαμικά*, έκδ. Πουρναρά, Θεσσαλονίκη 1998.
- Γεωργίου Ζαχαρίου, Αρχιμ. *Αναφορά στη θεολογία του Γέροντος Σωφρονίου*, Ι.Μ. τιμίου Προδόμου, Essex 2000.
- Ζαχαρία Θεογνώστου, Οσίου *Περί πράξεως και θεωρίας*, Φιλοκαλία τόμ. Β', « Sur l'action et la contemplation et sur le sacerdoce », in *La Philocalie*, présentée par Olivier Clément.
-
- Clément, Olivier *La Philocalie*, présentée par Olivier Clément.
- *Introduction à la spiritualité philocalique*, La Philocalie, Editions Desclée de Brouwer 1995.

Endnotes

- ¹ Cf. Vlachos, Metropolitan Ieotheos, *The Church Mindset*, p. 178-9 (in Greek).
- ² «Η πράξις είναι η εν Θεώ προσπάθεια, η δε θεωρία η εν Θεώ διαμονή, δηλ. η Θεωρία του Θείου και άκτιστου φωτός, η θέωσις του ανθρώπου».
- ³ Clément, Olivier, *La Philocalie*, Introduction, p. 686.
- ⁴ « praxis = pratique = l'action du moine sur lui-même = κάθαρσις ζωής = perfection », Clément, Olivier, *La Philocalie*, Précisions de vocabulaires p. 687.
- ⁵ Gregory Palamas, EPE, *Works*, tom. 8, p. 17 (in Greek).
- ⁶ Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, Chap. 22-23.
- ⁷ Cf. Basileios Psevtongas, *Λόγος σαρκωμένος-Εκκλησία-Ευχαριστιακός λόγος*, p. 279.
- ⁸ Gregory Palamas, EPE, *Έργα*, tome 10, p. 404-6.
- ⁹ Βλ. Βλάχος, Μητροπολίτη Ιεροθέου, *Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς ως Αγιορίτη*, σ. 355-6 (in Greek).
- ¹⁰ «Μόνον δείξον επί των έργων την ειδισιν· κατάβηθι προς το πρακτικόν της γνώσεως στάδιον· αγώνισαι τον καλόν αγώνα», Gregory Palamas, *Προς Ιωάννη και Θεόδωρον τους φιλοσόφους*, EPE, *Έργα*, tom. 8, p. 463 (in Greek).
- ¹¹ Cf. Theodorou, A., *Η περί του ανθρώπου διδασκαλία των Ελλήνων Πατέρων*, Athens 1956, p. 119 (in Greek).
- ¹² Tsamis Dimitriou, *Εισαγωγή στην πατερική γραμματεία και σκέψη*, p. 341 (in Greek).
- ¹³ Cf. Gregory Palamas, *Λόγος* 40, 38 PG 36, 413A (in Greek).
- ¹⁴ Cf. Gross, *La divinisation du Chrétien d'après les pères grecs*, p. 244
- ¹⁵ Evdokimov, Paul, *Η Ορθοδοξία*, p. 148 (in Greek).
- ¹⁶ Théognoste, *La Philocalie*, “Sur l'action et la contemplation”, p. 626.
- ¹⁷ Cf. Gregory Palamas, *Λόγος*, 38, 12 PG 36, 324CE; *Έργα*, EPE, tom. 8, Εισαγωγή Χριστού Παναγιώτη, p. 16, and chap. 49, p. 136 (in Greek).
- ¹⁸ Oliver Clément définie la contemplation comme suit: « elle désigne la sensation spirituelle de Dieu, au Coeur et au delà de la prière. La contemplation est la transfiguration de l'action, de la praxis », *La Philocalie*, Précisions de vocabulaires, p. 687.
- ¹⁹ Gregory Palamas, *Έργα*, EPE, tome 2, p. 108.
- ²⁰ «Η αρετή προετοιμάζει προς την θείαν ένωση. Αλλά η ένωση είναι της θείας χάριτος.»
- ²¹ Evdokimov, Paul, *Η Ορθοδοξία*, σ. 145-6. Cf. Théognoste, *La Philocalie*, “Sur l'action et la contemplation”, p. 626.
- ²² *Ex.* 14, 21.
- ²³ *I Kings* 18, 36-38. Théognoste, Chap. 69. *La Philocalie*, p. 631.
- ²⁴ Gregory Palamas, *Έργα*, EPE tome 2, p. 478. Cf. Vlachos, Metropolitan Ieotheos, *Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς ως Αγιορείτης*, p. 358.
- ²⁵ Gregory Palamas, *Υπέρ των ιερώς ησυχάζόντων*, Homily 1, 1, 4.
- ²⁶ «Πάσι διδομένη τε και ορωμένη τοις δι'αγαθοεργίας ακριβώς και διά προσοχής ελικρινούς...», Gregory Palamas, *Έργα*, EPE, tome 10, Homily 34, chap. 11, p. 370.
- ²⁷ Gregory Palamas, *Έργα*, EPE, tome 1, p. 52.