

Orthodox Theology and the Judgment of History (1) (Georgios P. Pavlos, Professor of Physics and Philosophy, DUTH)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



The following text which will be published in three parts, is Georgios P. Pavlos's talk at the 8th International Conference of Orthodox Theology, Under the Auspices of the Ecumenical Patriarchate "The Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church: Orthodox in the 21st century".

All Christians are watching today in agony and prayer the blessed struggle of the Patriarchate of Constantinople for the unity of all Christians and the transmission of Christ to all Nations and all people.

Therefore, I dedicate this talk to the martyric Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in New Rome and to the martyric person of the Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew, who silently and in simplicity expresses this agony for the unity of the entire Christian world, no least of the mankind and the human history, for which the Son of God was thoroughly praying in His earthly presence: 'so that all becomes one', in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Virgin.

Christ is the judgment of history for He Himself is the perfect Love, the perfect knowledge, the perfect Freedom, the perfect Eros, as the only absolutely unselfish. Christ Himself is the End, the Perfection and the Meaning of History; He is the Cause of All, the Alpha and Omega.



Orthodox Theology and the Orthodox Church contain and reveal the Mystery of God, that is, they reveal the Whole God as Trinity of Living Persons. At the same time, they reveal the whole all man as a great mystery, as the place and the unique, personal, and without similitude image, of the Personal and truly Living God.

The Orthodox East initiates us to the reception of the Holy Spirit and teaches us the contemplative prayer as Eros and the burning of the heart for the entire creation, as St. Isaak the Syrian says. It teaches the union of the Mind – Intellect – Logos with the heart, and through it, with the very Living God, Christ the Messiah and Savior. There is no evidence of God apart from God. God is evidenced through Himself; He cannot be confirmed through anyone else. Without Christ the God-Man neither God

nor man does exist. It is only through Christ that we know God. Apart from Christ we only have a shadow of God and a shadow of man.

‘No one can reach my father unless through Me...’, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life...’: beyond Christ there is no way towards the Father.

The Orthodox Church is principally signified by Divine Liturgy. Here, in the Orthodox Divine Liturgy everything is transformed: man and the cosmos, space, time, and persons; they all enter into the New Creation of names, the Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Here, everything receives a name unique and unprecedented. Here everything is recognized by its own name, the name given to them since the origins of the world.

Divine Liturgy introduces us to the real apophaticism, precisely the Divine Darkness, the Theophany and transformation of the created. It leads us to the truly union of the created with the uncreated. The Divine Liturgy expands the senses, the intellect, the mind, the body. Here we have a fundamental transformation of body and the soul, in order for the man to be led to the Vision of God in Christ. It is through Christ that in the Divine Liturgy man enters Mount Tabor; man enters the area of Divine Transfiguration. Man, truly becomes Christ and God by Grace. In Christ man is truly united with the Trinitarian hypostatic and Living God. What we actually have in the Divine Liturgy is a real and sensible participation in the very last things, the eschata, a share in the Kingdom.

Creation comes to being from not being, from nothing, and this happens within the uncreated Activity of the very uncreated God.

This is the Orthodox Eastern Theology of the divine Activities, the only Truthful and orthodox theology.

Without the distinction between Substance and Activity (Energieia) in God, we necessarily fall to pantheism, or, in other words, to a fake and non-existent God, which is a kind of theological atheism.

For without this distinction between Substance and Activity, we have no hypostatic distinctions; we do not have a Living God. We do not have a Truthful Incarnation of God. We do not have a truthful Theophany, a truthful Knowledge, a truthful Theōria – Vision of God. We do not have a truthful possibility of salvation for the created; we have no salvation at all, if the latter entails a real, truthful, ontological and existential union with the Uncreated. We have no Christ, we have no resurrection, neither for the body nor for the soul. We have no deification, we have neither Holy

Trinity nor God, not even theology.

Without the distinction between Substance and Activity in God, we only end up with ghosts, fantasies, ideas, shadows, mythology.

The Orthodox Divine Liturgy is the Place of the truly encounter of the mankind with Christ. Only when man meets with Christ in His Church, only then man becomes truthful and begins to live. Then man begins to exist, to see, to perceive, to love. Then man gains the irrefutable certainty that he is dead without Christ; not only him, but also the entire world, all is non-existent, all is nothing and non-being.

The Orthodox Church shares the same form with Orthodox theology and vice versa. In a manner truly logical and therefore truly apophatic Orthodox theology depicts the greatest richness and the greatest gift Of Heaven in the earth, which is nothing other than the Orthodox Church, as the only Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. That is, precisely, why in the Orthodox Theology and the Orthodox Church the meaning of the whole history and of the entire created world, visible and invisible, is condensed and revealed.

The movement of the created towards the Uncreated and of the Uncreated towards the created, seen as truly ecstatic Eros, is the cosmic manifestation of the Church as Divine Liturgy.

Created world, the visible and invisible beings, the mankind and the angels, all was made with the possibility and the aptitude for becoming God by Grace, that is, Christ by Grace.

This entails that the world was created receptive of deification, theōsis, a Church in potency, in order to freely (autexousiōs) become Church in actuality, by receiving in love and Divine Eros Christ the Messiah, the Incarnated Lord and God. The ancestral fall creates a pathology and brings about a partial illness, weakness, and denial of this movement of cosmic Divine Liturgy; but it cannot suspend it entirely.

(to be continued)