

# *The Ways of Byzantine Philosophy*



*The Ways  
of Byzantine  
Philosophy*

*Edited by* **Mikonja Knežević**

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# The First Origin, Thinking and Memory in the Byzantine Philosophy of the Late 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Some Historico-Philosophical Observations

Dmitry Makarov

## 1. An Allusion to a Neo-Pythagorean Source in the Theology of St. Gregory of Cyprus?

As Harry A. Wolfson noted in his time, discussing the theology of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, “[...] the doctrines which he tried to expound had, before they reached him, already gone through a process of philosophical reasoning; so whatever he says [...] reflects that background of philosophical reasoning.”<sup>1</sup> It seems to us that from this standpoint one may look at an assertion from the recently published treatise by St. Gregory II of Cyprus (1241–1290), Patriarch of Constantinople (1283–1289), *An Antirrhetic against the Blasphemous Dogmas of Veccus which had been issued before the Author Ascended the Patriarchal Throne by the Grace of God*.<sup>2</sup> Here we read in the Ch. 5 that God the Father is “[...] the originating (πηγαῖα) source of Godhead, the natural Beginning (ἀρχή) and the Root (ρίζα) of the Son and the Spirit [...]”<sup>3</sup>

1. H. A. Wolfson, “Philosophical Implications of the Theology of Cyril of Jerusalem,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 11 (1957) 1–19: 19.
2. According to Metropolitan Chrysostomos (Savvatos), the treatise in question was written between January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1283, and March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1283 ; S. E. Chrysostomos Sabbatos, “Le ‘Discours antirrhétique contre les blasphèmes de Bekkos’ du patriarche Grégoire II de Chypre et son oeuvre intitulée ‘Sur la procession du Saint-Esprit,’” in: J.-C. Larchet, éd., *La vie et l’oeuvre théologique de Georges/Grégoire II de Chypre (1241–1290), patriarche de Constantinople*, Paris 2012, 132, n. 11 (132–133); 145, n. 53. The target of St. Gregory’s criticism was the Latinophile Patriarch John XI Veccus (Beccos) (1275–1282). From the secondary literature on his theological views see especially N. Γ. Ξεζάκη, *Ἰωάννης Βέκκος καὶ αἱ θεολογικαὶ ἀντιλήψεις αὐτοῦ*, Ἀθήναι 1981.
3. Grégoire II de Chypre, “Discours antirrhétique contre les opinions blasphématoires de Bekkos,” éd. par le hiérom. Th. Kislas sur la base des travaux préparatoires du métr. Chrysostomos Sabbatos, trad. par F. Vinel, ch. 5, in : J.-C. Larchet, éd., *La vie et l’oeuvre théologique de Georges/Grégoire II de Chypre...*, n. 2, 170.5.1–2.



Certainly, God the Father was said to be “the Origin and the Root” of both God the Son and the Holy Spirit in the 24<sup>th</sup> homily *Against the Sabellians, Arius and the Anomeans*,<sup>4</sup> which until recently was ascribed to St. Basil the Great and considered to be a part of his homiliary. But in 1990 the homily was reattributed to Apollinarius of Laodicea (CPGS [2243],<sup>5</sup> [2869], 3674).

Besides that, one may suggest another source, not as obvious as the aforementioned homily, but rather cryptic, having been used by Gregory of Cyprus. And, indeed, the word combination of ἀρχὴ καὶ πηγὴ καὶ ῥίζα τῶν πάντων can be seen in *The Exposition of the Things Mathematical Useful for Reading Plato* by the philosopher and mathematician, Theon of Smyrna (2<sup>nd</sup> century C.E.). As Theon puts it: “[...] according to the Pythagorean tradition, the numbers are *the beginning, the origin, and the root of everything*.”<sup>6</sup> Might not this have been the case, evidenced by St. Gregory of Cyprus’ hinting so elegantly about his acquaintance with some branches of Neopythagoreanism, as well as at a certain profit of this tradition for a human mind seeking after the truth?

St. Gregory’s profound knowledge of ancient Greek philosophy cannot be called into question. It is not by chance indeed that Theodoros Alexopoulos has already underlined a typological affinity between his doctrine on the monarchy of God the Father, on the one hand, and Plotinus’ teaching on the One (*Enn.* III, 8, 10)<sup>7</sup>. Alexopoulos’ assumption will appear to be quite probable, if one takes into account the significance of the great Neoplatonist for Greek philosophy and science, but it may be hard to prove it unambiguously. On the other hand, John Whittaker has ascertained the fact of Barlaam the Calabrian (ca. 1290–1348) having cited from memory the two fragments from Syrian’s *A Commentary to the Metaphysics of Aristotle* which were especially dedicated to Neopythagoreans (*In Metaph.* 166.3 ff. Kroll; 183.1 ff. Kroll).<sup>8</sup> The point in the both passages was just the absolute transcendence of the First Origin. This fact corresponds to Barlaam’s thought about a concordance between those Neopythagorean teachings, on the one hand, and the treatise *On*

4. S. Basilii Magni *Homilia contra Sabellianos, et Arium, et Anomoeos*, PG 31, 609B.

5. With a characteristic note: “Apollinario Laodiceno attribuendum uidetur,” in: M. Geerard, J. Noret, cura et studio, addiv. F. Glorie et J. Desmet, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum. Supplementum...*, Brepols, Turnhout 1998, 64. According to Manlio Simonetti (1990), the homily was written by an unknown follower of Apollinarius between 380 and 400 (*Ibid.*, 203). Cf. Н. И. Сагарда, *Лекции по иайрологии, I-IV века*, Москва 2004, 642 and n. 4.

6. *Expositio* 17, 28–18, 2, Hiller. Italics are mine, D. M.

7. T. Alexopoulos, “Die Argumentation des Patriarchen Gregorios II. Kyprios zur Widerlegung des Filioque-Ansatzes in der Schrift ‘De Processione Spiritus Sancti,’” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 104, 1 (2011) 1–39: 10–11. According to John Rist, the One was conceived by Plotinus as God, whereas the Mind (Nous) could sometimes be referred to as the *Second* God. See J. M. Rist, “Theos and the One in Some Texts of Plotinus,” in: Idem, *Platonism and its Christian Heritage*, London: VR 1985, VII, 169–180, esp. 179–180.

8. J. Whittaker, “The Pythagorean Source of Barlaam the Calabrian,” in: Idem, *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought*, London: VR 1984, XIV, 155–158, esp. 156.

*the Mystical Theology* by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, on the other.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly enough, as John Whittaker has noticed, that the best manuscript containing the works of Syrian, i.e. *Paris. Coisl.* 161, originates from the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. It formed a part of the library of the Great Laura on the Holy Mount Athos,<sup>10</sup> this fact being an additional proof of a certain acquaintance with neo-Pythagoreanism on behalf of both the Athonite monks and their adversaries. In a situation like this, our assumption concerning St. Gregory of Cyprus' possible cognizance of some neo-Pythagorean texts does not look highly improbable.

## 2. *God as Thinking: On a Seeming Consonance between Barlaam the Calabrian and Theophanes of Nicaea*

In the Sixth chapter of Barlaam the Calabrian's second treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit, against the Latins* one is struck with such a phrase: "We affirm, then, that God conceives (voεῖν) Himself [...]"<sup>11</sup>.

Commenting on the passage in question, the prominent Greek historian of Byzantine philosophy, John Demetrapoulos, has adduced the only excerpt from St. Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Soul and Resurrection* which sounds as follows: "Godhead knows (γινώσκει) Himself; and the knowledge turns into love."<sup>12</sup>

The scholar suggested that this was "presumably" the only passage in the Fathers' writings, which touched upon the topic. But in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Theophanes III, Metropolitan of Nicaea,<sup>13</sup> wrote in his *Second Oration on the Taboric Light* (ca. 1369–1376) with a reference to St. Maximus the Confessor:

9. *Ibid.*, 155–156. Barlaam is making a reference here to the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *MT*, where God is described in extremely apophatic terms. So the Calabrian asserts that God is beyond any affirmation or negation, as existing in a way "transcendent to all" (literally "beyond everything," ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὅλων) (*MT* V, in: G. Heil, A. M. Ritter, hrsg., *Corpus Dionysiacum. Bd. II. De coelesti hierarchia. De ecclesiastica hierarchia. De mystica theologia. Epistulae*, Patristische Texte und Studien 36, Berlin, New York 1991, 149.1–150.9, esp. 150.5–9. On the Neopythagorean counterparts of the last formula see J. Whittaker, "ἐπέκεινα νοῦ καὶ οὐσίας," in: *Idem, Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought*, n. 8, XIII, 91–104.
10. J. Whittaker, "The Pythagorean Source...", n. 8, 157 and n. 7 (a reference is made to the description of the Le fonds Coislins by Fr. Devreesse).
11. A. Fyrigos, a cura di, *Barlaam Calabro, Opere contro i Latini* II, Studi e Testi 348, Città del Vaticano 1998, 422.94.
12. S. Greg. Nyss., *De anima et Resurrectione Dialogus*, PG 46, 96C; J. A. Demetrapoulos, "Further evidence on the ancient, patristic, and Byzantine sources of Barlaam the Calabrian's 'Contra Latinos.' À propos de A. Fyrigos (ed.), *Barlaam Calabro, Opere contro i Latini*", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 96, 1 (2003) 104, n. 64.
13. Despite Theophanes' having not been canonized (on the reasons of such a development see D. Makarov, "Determining the Historical Context of Theophanes of Nicaea's Theological Propensities," *Phronema. Journal of St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College* 28, 1 (2013) 29–52: 32–34, 51), he may be regarded as a teacher of the Church. It would mean that one ought to take his doctrinal views and philosophical statements into account as mostly authoritative for an Orthodox believer.

[...] When thinking of God, one ought to consider His being according to His essence to be identical with His self-knowledge according to the essence (ταὐτὸν ἐπὶ Θεοῦ νοητέον τό τε κατ' οὐσίαν ὑπάρχειν καὶ τὸ γινώσκειν ἑαυτὸν κατ' οὐσίαν). And, indeed, knowing is the cogitative part of the knower's getting conformable to the known (τὸ γίνεσθαι [...] κατὰ τὸ γινώσκόμενον). But the essence of God is unique and simple, containing no otherness within itself. Besides that, it is totally Mind (νοῦς), and it is totally the Wisdom-in-itself (αὐτοσοφία), so that its being as the Mind and as the Wisdom-in-itself is identical to its being as such, the more so as the divine Maximus contends in the 82<sup>nd</sup> of his *Chapters on Theology*: "But God Himself, Who is total and unique, is Thinking according to His essence, whereas He, Who is total and unique, is essence according to His thinking."<sup>14</sup> In the case of God, therefore, His thinking and His essence are identical [to each other] [...] It follows that, as the essence of God is concerned, being [as such] is equal to its knowing itself (ταὐτὸν ἄρα ἔσται τῇ οὐσίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ εἶναι τῷ ἑαυτὴν γινώσκειν).<sup>15</sup>

It is self-evident that this view of St. Maximus the Confessor and of Theophanes of Nicaea, who tried to interpret this great Father in his own way, represents a much closer parallel to Barlaam of Calabria than the passage from St. Gregory of Nyssa.

Turning to St. Maximus' thought in its essence, one realizes that it was probably the Byzantine Palamite monk David Disypatos who came up with its most profound exegesis in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Disypatos underscored<sup>16</sup> that God is Essence and Thinking and, therefore, He possesses both Essence and Thinking, but in a superessential (ὑπερουσίως)<sup>17</sup> and ineffable way. He is, then, neither Essence nor Thinking in our human understanding of these categories. It is due to His superessential mode of possessing this, first of all, and to the fact that the energies of God are the very Divine life, and not an analogue of any group of qualities which come together in a material substrate.<sup>18</sup> We tend to think that it is just this parallel from David Disypatos that enables one to better seize the Byzantine background and an implication of

14. S. Max. Conf., *Capita theologica et oeconomica* I, 82, PG 90, 1115C.

15. Γ. Θ. Ζαχαροπούλου, *Θεοφάνης Νικαίας († 1380/1381). Ὁ βίος καὶ τὸ συγγραφικὸν τοῦ ἔργου*, Byzantine Texts and Studies 35, Θεσσαλονίκη 2003, 197.994–198.1010; cf. Χ. Σωτηρόπουλος, *Νηπιτικοὶ καὶ πατέρες τῶν μέσων χρόνων*, Αθήνα 1996, 224.1033–1041, cf. ll. 1041–1048.

16. With a reference to S. Max. Conf., *Capita theologica et oeconomica* II, 3, PG 90, 1125D.

17. The notions "super-essentiality" and its cognates were introduced into Christian thought by the Areopagite (most likely, via Proclus). This notion is attested to in the *Corpus* no less than 4 times, whereas its cognate, the adjective "super-essential," is attested to about 117 times. See A. van den Daele, *Indices pseudo-Dionysiani*, Leuven 1941, 140.

18. Δ. Γ. Τσάμη, ed., *Δαβὶδ Δισυπάτου, Λόγος κατὰ Βαρλαάμ καὶ Ἀκινδύνου πρὸς Νικόλαον Καβάσιλαν*, Byzantine Texts and Studies 10, Θεσσαλονίκη 1973, 62.28–64.28. There exists a Russian translation of the text, together with a scientific commentary by Dmitry Birjukov. See A. I. Solopov, D. S. Birjukov, eds., *Монах Давид Дисипат, Полемические сочинения. История и богословие паламитских споров*, Σμάρραδος φιλοκαλίας. Византийская философия 9, Святая гора Афон, Москва 2012, 188–192. On the Stoic origin of the teaching on the substrate

Theophanes' thought, despite the apparent affinity between our Metropolitan's line of reasoning and that of Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles* (SCG I, 46; III, 53).<sup>19</sup> I suppose that the implication under analysis may be that the Divine Mind might well be for Theophanes one of the energies of God, inextricably interconnected with the Divine essence due to the essence-energies *interpenetration*.<sup>20</sup> Certainly, such an interpretation of the identity between the Divine Mind and the Divine essence was unacceptable for Barlaam. So an assumption that Theophanes of Nicaea might have been influenced by the *Second treatise against the Latins* by Barlaam the Calabrian would be untenable, the more so as David Disypatos, being a prominent Palamite of the mid-14th century, came out with a severe criticism of Barlaam and Akindynos.

### 3. *Theophanes of Nicaea, St. Gregory of Nyssa and Aristotle on Sensation and Memory: The Statement of the Problem*

“What would be terrible is to lose one's memory [...]”<sup>21</sup> The idea expressed by the modern writer is not only topical for us; it was also worthwhile for the bearers of the Byzantine culture who held in high esteem human personality and each human being's uniqueness which was understood in the image and likeness of Christ, the Incarnate God-man. It is therefore quite natural, that in the harmonically well-balanced and attuned nature of human beings, one of important links turns out to be *the memory*. It is thus by analyzing Theophanes' conception of the memory and its faculties that we are going to finish our paper.

A small problem is that the corresponding speculations turn up in an anti-Palamite's putative speech, which opens the *Fourth treatise on the Light of Tabor*

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and qualities see D. S. Birjukov's, 192, n. 85, where the following fragments are referred to: SVF I, 493; II, 318, 374, 376, 380.

19. SCG I, 46 [...] *evidenter apparet quod intellectus divinus nulla alia specie intelligibili intelligat quam sua essentia [...] non est in intellectu ejus aliqua species praeter ipsam divinam essentiam*; III, 53 [...] *Deo idem esse est quod intelligere [...]*; Г. И. Беневич, “Феофан Никейский. Между паламизмом и антипаламизмом; влияние Фомы Аквинского (по монографии И. Полемиса),” in : G. I. Benevich, D. S. Birjukov, eds., *Антология восточно-христианской богословской мысли : Ортодоксия и гетеродоксия, Σμάραγδος φιλοκαλίας. Византийская философия 5*, Москва, Санкт-Петербург 2009, V. 2, 576–577. In Marcus Plested's recent book one will find no mention of this example of affinity at all; M. Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, Oxford 2012, 89–95.
20. One of the most prominent Byzantine treatises where the topic of the interpenetration of the Persons of the Holy Trinity is penetratingly discussed is Nicéphorus Blemmydes' *Another Syllogisms on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*. See M. Stavrou, ed., *Nicéphore Blemmydès, Œuvres théologiques*, Vol. II, Sources Chrétiennes 558, Paris 2013, 222–232. We've prepared a Russian translation of the text in our book : Д. И. Макаров, *Мариологія Феофана Никейського в контекстіє византийської доіословської ітрадици (VII – XIV вв.)*, Санкт-Петербург 2015, 298–302.
21. M. Frisch, *Man in the Holocene* (1979). Cited in our back translation from the Russian rendering of the novel in: M. Frisch, *Homo faber. Montock. Chelovek pojavljaetsja v epochu golocena. Sinjaja boroda*, Moscow 2004, 248.

(ca. 1369–1376).<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, Theophanes never demonstrates any zeal to distance himself from those views of his theological opponent. Let us take as the first example the treatment of pronounced speech, or, to put it in a Stoic manner, of the pronounced word (λόγος προφορικός). Whoever might have authored the corresponding theory in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, it clearly reveals its Cappadocian and Palamite, but in the final analysis, Aristotelian origins.

[...] a word, – in the construed anti-Palamite’s words, – is a *symbol* of the movements of our soul (τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς κινήματων).<sup>23</sup> First of all, the soul symbolically impresses (τυποῦσα) such a movement by the means of that stream of air, which issues from our mouth, and so brings this flow to *the sensation* of the listeners. Later on, the sense of hearing first perceives the current of air, which brings with itself *these impressions* (τοὺς τύπους), then [the sense] *wipes for itself* (ἀπομάττεται) these very *impresses* (τοὺς αὐτοὺς χαρακτῆρας), like a wax which receives a seal’s imprint,<sup>24</sup> and hence (καὶ οὕτως) participates in the movements and thoughts (νοημάτων) of the first soul and grasps them. Now that the hearing has perceived *these impressions* (τοὺς τύπους), like the stream [had done this earlier], it immediately sends them off (ἀποβάλλεται [...]) *rapidly* (ῥαδίως), because of the flow being humid and easily dissolved (εὐδιάχυτον), whereas *the sensation*, as soon as it gets these *imprints*, instantly *transmits* (αὐτίκα παραπέμπειν) them to *the memory*,<sup>25</sup> since it is indispensable for the sensation to get free of *the impresses* already perceived,

22. I. D. Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea: His Life and Works*, Wiener Byzantinische Studien XX, Wien 1996, 15, 75. It is approximately in the same epoch, i.e. in 1375/1376, as we argue, that St. Philotheos Kokkinos, the pupil of Palamas and the instructor of Theophanes, wrote his *Two Treatises on the Taboric Light*; П. Янева, ed., *Филотей Коккин. De Domini luce. За Таворската светлина (editio princeps)*, София 2011; Д. И. Макаров, “Три заметки о датировке ‘Двух слов о Свете Фаворском’ св. Филофея Коккина,” *Вестник Екатеринбургской Духовной семинарии* 1 (2013) 63–69.
23. See G. S. Zacharopoulos’ n. 1 on p. 237 of his edition for St. Gregory of Nyssa’s *Contra Eunomium*, XII, as the source of this expression and Theophanes’ line of reasoning in general. Cf. “[...] The Creator of the logical nature gave us the word (τὸν λόγον) according to the measure of this nature, so as to enable us, through its agency, to disclose the movements of our soul (ἐξαγγέλλειν [...] τῆς ψυχῆς τὰ κινήματα);” S. Greg. Nyss., *Contra Eunomii libri duodecim. Liber XII*, PG 45, 989B; W. Jaeger, ed., *Gregorii Nysseni Opera I. Contra Eunomium libri...*, Leiden 1960, 294.18–20.
24. The source of this fragment was also detected by G. Zakharopoulos. It turned out to be a snatch from Elias’ of Crete (late 11<sup>th</sup> –first quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries) commentaries to the orations of St. Gregory the Theologian. The text reads: “[...] it is impossible for the sight [...] to approach to a visible thing and *imprint in itself the impressions* (τοὺς τύπους [...] ἐκμάξασθαι) of what is immediately seen by the sight, if there is no lightened air. [These impressions] are recorded in it, like in wax, as if they were being delineated (διαγράφονται), and through the sight they are transmitted to the memory (τῇ τε μνήμῃ [...]) παραπέμπονται) as well as to the common sense [of the soul];” Eliae metropolitae Cretae, *Commentarius in orationes S. Gregorii XIX...*, PG 36, 776B; note 2 (G. Zakharopoulos), 237 (cf. n. 15 *infra*). Cf. in the final analysis: Arist., *De anima* II, 12 424a 15–20 (a sensation is compared to wax); III, 1 425a 25–30 (on the common sense of a soul). On Elias of Crete see: М. М. Бернацкий, “Илия, митрополит Критский,” *Православная энциклопедия XXII*, Москва 2009, 281.
25. On the contrary, those parallels from St. Basil the Great, which were adduced to this passage by G. Zakharopoulos, do not seem to be quite convincing, because the editor of Theophanes

to recover its proper balance and to be ready to perceive other ones thereafter. The problem is that *any sensation* is able to perceive only a visible appearance of the perceptible things, until it comes into direct contact with them (μέχρις ἂν ἀτενῶς προσβάλλοι τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς). But when the sensation recedes from the contiguity (τῆς [...] συναφείας) and contact of such a kind, it thereby casts off (συναποβάλλεται) the representations (τὰς εἰκόνας) of the things perceived and passes them on to the memory (τῇ μνήμῃ), so that these representations may be stored there, like in a storehouse (ταμιεῖο).<sup>26</sup>

In this passage, like in many others, one can see clear traces of Theophanes' succession to the Iconophile theological and philosophical thought with its categorial apparatus. For example, in St. Theodore the Stoudite's *Letter 528* the concept "impress" (ὁ χαρακτήρ) designates the theandric Hypostasis of Christ, which is depicted on the icon of the Lord (ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι).<sup>27</sup> This line of reasoning was to be continued in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by St. Photios of Constantinople's *Amphilochia* 231. Here we read that in course of the Incarnation the Hypostasis of Christ reveals to the human sight the traits (ὁ χαρακτήρ) of His human nature, which is united to His divinity in the uniqueness of the Hypostasis.<sup>28</sup> In Theophanes, in his turn, we may see the transfer of these Christological categories into the spheres of anthropology and philosophical psychology.

As for the structure of this reasoning in general, in G. Zakharopoulos' commentary those passages from St. Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium*, which served as points of departure for Theophanes, are noted. More concretely, the idea of a stream of air being easily dissolved was reflected in the 12<sup>th</sup> book of *Contra Eunomium*, as well as the conception that the sense of hearing captured the meaning of the words spoken in the memory (τῷ μνημονικῷ) of a person who perceived other people's speech.<sup>29</sup>

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relies too heavily on a supposed affinity between Theophanes' verb παραπέμπειν and St. Basil's formula παρακατέχω τῇ μνήμῃ; see Zakharopoulos' n. 3 on the p. 238 of his edition; PG 29, 2, 521B; PG 31, 200A. See the analysis *infra*.

26. Γ. Θ. Ζαχαροπούλου, *Θεοφάνης Νικαίας...*, 237.5–238.21. Cf. Χ. Σωτηρόπουλος, *Νηπτικοί...*, 252.8–24.
27. G. Fatouros, ed., *Theodori Studitae Epistulae. Pars altera textum epp. 71–564 et indices continens*, Berlin, New York 1992, 790.60–63. For the following analysis important is: V. Baranov, "Amphilochia 231 of Patriarch Photius as a Possible Source on the Christology of the Byzantine Iconoclasts," *Studia Patristica* LVIII (2013) 371–381, esp. 377–378.
28. See V. Baranov, "Amphilochia 231 of Patriarch Photius..." *passim*.
29. See especially: ὁ δὲ τῶν ρηθέντων νοῦς διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς τῷ μνημονικῷ τῆς τοῦ ἀκούοντος ψυχῆς ἐχαράσσεται, εἴτε ἀληθῆς εἴτε διεσφαλμένος τύχοι; S. Greg. Nyss., *Contra Eunomii libri duodecim. Liber XII*, PG 45, 925B; W. Jaeger, ed., *Gregorii Nysseni Opera I...*, 239.29–240.1; n. 1 (G. Zakharopoulos) on the 237. See the whole fragment 924D–925B (239.6–240.1 Jaeger), especially the following note: "[...] nothing stable remains in a word after its being uttered [literally 'no hypostasis,' μηδεμιᾶς ὑποστάσεως];" Ibid. 924D (= 239.11–12 Jaeger); cf. 977AB (= 283.13–284.1 Jaeger). In the last snatch one may read: "[...] both the draught of the air [from outside] and the inner spirit [from inside] contribute to our pronunciation of words" (Ibid. 977A; 283.14–16 Jaeger). St. Gregory Palamas followed the tradition of St. Gregory of

But the Greek scholar did not take notice of the fact that such a formulation of the *memory-sensation* distinction is identical to St. Gregory Palamas' (ca. 1294–1357) differentiation between *sensation* and *imagination*. In fact, *sensation* is able to recognize and perceive (γνωστική, [...] αντίληπτική) only the things immediately present, whereas *imagination* (or phantasy, ἡ φαντασία) can do so also in relation to those absent in the immediate perception.<sup>30</sup> It looks as if Palamas was turning towards that tradition of Aristotle's psychology reception, which had found its reflection in the *Epitome of Logic* by Nicephorus Blemmydes (ca. 1197–1269). According to Blemmydes, *sensation* and *imagination* (ἡ φαντασία) belong to those cognitive faculties of our soul, which fall under the category of *irrational* (ἄλογοι).<sup>31</sup> He wrote: "*Sensation* is a concrete (partial) recognition of a thing present (ἡ τοῦ παρόντος μερική γνῶσις) [...] *Imagination* is a concrete recognition of a thing absent."<sup>32</sup> All these tenets stem from Aristotle's thesis that "[...] sensation in its operation is directed towards [any] singular [thing]."<sup>33</sup>

As things stand now, one needs not suppose Theophanes' borrowing of Aquinas' slightly similar ideas about the cognitive and reminiscent faculties of the soul.<sup>34</sup>

In a word, Theophanes' passage in question clearly discloses its Aristotelian and Byzantine origins. According to Aristotle, the difference between *sensation* and *memory* lies in the fact that the former stays in the present, whereas the latter is oriented towards the past. This idea was brought forward, first and foremost, in one of the small Aristotelian treatises, to wit, *On Memory and Reminiscence*: "There can be no memory either of the future [...] or of the present, because the latter is comprehended with the *sensation*. For with the sensation we know neither the future, nor the past, but only the present, while the *memory* (ἡ [...] μνήμη) can be of the past only."<sup>35</sup> Elsewhere the Stagirite wrote that "[...] the *memory* is neither *sensation*, nor comprehension, but a trained habit or a condition of anything from these when a span of time has elapsed. And of the present there is no

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Nyssa more or less strictly, when he denied the appropriateness for anthropology of one of the main Trinitarian analogies, i.e., that of the mind, word and spirit. For all these objects are devoid of a hypostatic being; Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα, τ. 2, Θεσσαλονίκη 1966, 87.7–14; Γ. Δημητρακόπουλος, *Αὐγουστίνος καὶ Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς. Τά προβλήματα τῶν ἀριστοτελικῶν κατηγοριῶν καὶ τῆς τριαδικῆς ψυχοθεολογίας*, Αθήνα 1997, 86. The influence on Theophanes of both SS. Gregories is more than probable.

30. Gregory Palamas, *The Homily on the Presentation of the Most Holy Virgin into the Temple* (BHG, 1095 = *Homily 53*), in: Σ. Κ. Οἰκονόμου, ed., *Τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Γρηγορίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Θεσσαλονίκης, τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Ὁμιλία κβ...*, Αθήνησι 1861, 173–174.

31. Nicephorus Blemmydes, *Epitome logica...*, III, 14, PG 142, 712D.

32. *Ibid.*, III. 16–17, PG 142, 713A.

33. Arist., *De anima* II, 5 417b 20.

34. But cf. SCG. II.80.6; *Ibid.* II.79.11: one's intelligence needs the imaginative, remindful and cognitive faculties (*imaginatiois, memorativae et cogitativae virtutum*). Unlike the Byzantine authors treated *supra*, Aquinas distinguishes imagination from memory.

35. Arist., *De memoria et reminiscencia* 449b 10–15, Becker.

memory in the present [moment], [...] but *the present is* [perceived] *with sensation, the future is* [got] *with expectation, whereas the past is* [comprehended] *with memory.*<sup>36</sup>

The raw material of the memory consists of the images or *phantasms* (φαντάσματα). Everything, which is kept in the memory like in a storehouse, exists as the *phantasms*. So the memory belongs to the same part of the soul as the imagination (ἡ φαντασία).<sup>37</sup> The affinity of this idea with Theophanes is probably not so striking, but it comes to the fore when we compare this Aristotelian teaching with the corresponding theories of Blemmydes and Palamas. Nevertheless, the following nuance of Aristotle's thought leaves no doubts as to the pedigree of Theophanes' conception of memory: "As a matter of fact, the originating motion ([both in the sensible things and in one's soul – D. M.] is being imprinted, as an *impression* of the object of sensation, the same way as [the impressions of] finger rings [are imprinted]."<sup>38</sup>

This "theory of the objects' impressions" seems to be borrowed by Theophanes from *On Memory and Reminiscence*. A scholar may be put on to this idea due to the systematic coincidences in the wording and categories, used by both authors in their descriptions of one and the same group of phenomena, to wit, the differences between one's immediate sensual perception of sensual objects, on the one hand, and one's memory about those very objects when they are absent in his or her perception, on the other hand. I think that, if a re-edition or a new translation of Theophanes' treatise is to be attempted, its future editor will have to indicate *On Memory and Reminiscence* and its presumably premeditated retelling by Theophanes in the *Index fontium*.

Last but not least, there exists even one more source for Theophanes' theory of perception. I mean the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> chapters from Palamas' *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* (ca. 1349–1350):<sup>39</sup> "The formations (μορφώσεις) that occur in the senses arise from bodies but are not bodies, though corporeal, for they do not arise from bodies in an absolute sense (ἀπλῶς), but rather from the forms (τῶν [...] εἰδῶν)<sup>40</sup> which are associated with bodies.

36. Arist., *De memoria*... 449b 24–28: ἔστι μὲν οὖν ἡ μνήμη οὔτε αἴσθησις οὔτε ὑπόληψις, ἀλλὰ τούτων τινὸς ἕξις ἢ πάθος, ὅταν γένηται χρόνος. τοῦ δὲ νῦν ἐν τῷ νῦν οὐκ ἔστι μνήμη [...], ἀλλὰ τοῦ μὲν παρόντος αἴσθησις, τοῦ δὲ μέλλοντος ἐλπίς, τοῦ δὲ γενομένου μνήμη. Cf. EN IX, 1168a 13–14.

37. *Ibid.* 450a 22–23.

38. *Ibid.*, 450a 30–32: ἡ γὰρ γινομένη κίνησις ἐνσημαίνεται οἷον τύπον τινὰ τοῦ αἰσθήματος, καθάπερ οἱ σφραγιζόμενοι τοῖς δακτυλίοις.

39. Nr. 19, according to Rev. R. E. Sinkewicz (the dating is also his): R. E. Sinkewicz, "Gregory Palamas," in: C. G. Conticello, V. Conticello, eds., *Théologie byzantine et sa Tradition II* (XIII<sup>e</sup>–XIX<sup>e</sup> s.), Turnhout 2002, 144–145. According to a more recent research by John A. Demetropoulos, the dating of this treatise should be transferred to the winter of 1347–1348; see Γ. Δημητρακόπουλος, *Αὐγουστῖνος καὶ Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς. Τὰ προβλήματα τῶν ἀριστοτελικῶν κατηγοριῶν καὶ τῆς τριαδικῆς ψυχοεολογίας*, Αθήνα 1997, 110–115.

40. Cf. for example, Theodore of Smyrna's (late 11<sup>th</sup>–early 12<sup>th</sup> century) dubbing of the soul as "the place of the forms" (τόπος εἰδῶν); M. Trizio, "Ancient Physics in the Mid-Byzantine Period. The 'Epitome' of Theodore of Smyrna, Consul of the Philosophers Under Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118)," *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale* 54 (2012) 77–99: 85.



They are not themselves the forms of bodies but the *impressions* [or ‘figures in relief,’ D. M.] (τὰ ἐκτυπώματα) left by the forms, like *images* (οἷόν τινας εἰκόνες) inseparably separate from the forms associated with bodies. This is more evident in the case of vision and especially in the case of objects seen in mirrors.”<sup>41</sup>

In the present consideration both Platonic language and imagery (the notions of “formations,” “impressions” and such-like) come into notice. More than that, in the following, 16<sup>th</sup> chapter Palamas introduces one more specifically Platonic term from the theory of matter, i.e., ἐκμαγεῖα (Plat., *Tim.* 50c). And yet, I tend to believe that the Aristotelian epistemology, with its sharp distinctions between sensation, imagination and memory, represents the basic substrate of Theophanes’ theory of knowledge, whereas certain influences of Plato, received by the metropolitan of Nicaea through the agency of Palamas’ text, represent a superstructure of the theory in question. If one reads the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of Palamas’ *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, one will get an impression that Theophanes studied the source carefully:

*The imaginative faculty of the soul* (τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς φανταστικόν), which in turn appropriates (προσοικειούμενον) these *sense impressions* (τὰ [...] ἐκμαγεῖα) from the *senses* (τῶν αἰσθήσεων), completely separates not the *senses* themselves but what we have called the *images* (τὰς [...] εἰκόνας) in them from the bodies and their forms. And it holds them stored there like *treasures* (θησαυρούς),<sup>42</sup> bringing them forward interiorly for its own use, one after another, each in its own time, even when a body is absent,<sup>43</sup> and it presents to itself all manner of things, objects of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.<sup>44</sup>

One can see that what Palamas assigned to one *imaginative faculty of the soul*, which was treated by him in a rather wide fashion, Theophanes related, in the fragment under analysis, to the two different powers of the soul, to wit, to the *memory* as the storehouse of the images of sensible objects, on the one hand, and to the *sensation* as such, on the other hand. Theophanes’ theory had only indirect points of contact with the corresponding speculations of Aquinas (see n. 35 *supra*), but it reveals obvious Aristotelian and patristic origins instead (St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gregory Palamas). Most likely, Aristotle, Gregory of Nyssa and, probably, *Epitome of Logic* by Nicephorus Blemmydes, together with Elias of Crete’s *Commentaries on the Orations* by St. Gregory the Theologian, had been attentively read by Theophanes (ca. 1315–1381)

41. R. E. Sinkewicz, ed., *Saint Gregory Palamas, The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, Toronto 1988, 98.15.4–11. The translation is also by R. E. Sinkewicz, *Ibid.*, 99.

42. Cf. the image of a storehouse in Theophanes.

43. R. E. Sinkewicz adduces a parallel from the 53<sup>rd</sup> Homily of Palamas: St. Gregory Palamas, *The Homily on the Introduction of the Virgin...*, 174.1–2; n. 31 (R. E. Sinkewicz) on the p. 101 of his edition of the *Chapters*.

44. R. E. Sinkewicz, ed., *Saint Gregory Palamas...*, 98.16.1–100.16.8. The translation is by R. E. Sinkewicz, *Ibid.*, 99–101.

in his younger years, which were contemporary with the first and second stages of the Hesychast controversy – (1334–1351),<sup>45</sup> and were periodically looked through later on. As for *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* by Palamas, it appeared when Theophanes was already a mature person. So he probably studied this writing and then developed his own version of the more or less “mainstream” Aristotelian epistemology, trying to combine Palamas’ ideas with the notions and categories of the tradition of the Stagirite. This version not only bore the character of a compilation, but was also characterized by a rather high level of philosophical reflection and, by the same token, it was colored with a tendency to integrate different schools of Greek and Byzantine thought, be they Christian or “mundane” ones, into a coherent system. It is self-evident thereby that Aristotle bolstered Theophanes only insofar as the Stagirite’s philosophical psychology did not contradict the Christian Revelation. The same can be said about St. Gregory of Cyprus’ attitude towards his supposed Neopythagorean source. Contrary to this, in the anti-Latin treatises of Barlaam of Calabria only accidental affinities to the reasoning of Theophanes of Nicaea showed through. It was conditioned by the reverse correlation in his mind of the ancient Greek and, in general, any “mundane” philosophy, on the one side, and the Christian Revelation and its Tradition, on the other side, as compared to the representatives of the wide Palamite (Theophanes) and “proto-Palamite” (St. Gregory of Cyprus) branches of the latter Tradition<sup>46</sup>.

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45. I borrowed this periodization from A. Rigo, “Il Monte Athos e la controversia palamitica dal Concilio del 1351 al Tomo Sinodale del 1368. Giacomo Trikanas, Procoro Cidone e Filoteo Kokkinos,” in: A. Rigo, a cura di, *Gregorio Palamas e oltre. Studi e documenti sulle controversie teologiche del XIV secolo bizantino*, *Orientalia Venetiana* XVI, Firenze 2004, 1–177, 2.

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