

Logic and Spirituality to Maximus the Confessor.

The divine *logoi* and uncreated energies into “*onto-tropo-logical*” soteriology of the Confessor

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Introduction

The mystical experience of unity with God is communication with the transcendent, communication with the completely Other. Such experience is also passed on in a *completely other language*, in the language that ceases to be language at all. The unutterability of that experience is a consequence of God's transcendence and unknowability. *Wordlessness* (ἀλογία) and *unintelligibility* (ἀνοησία) reign in the “superintelligible darkness”.¹ Mystique talks about something that cannot be talked about: “All mystique has a *paradoxy of expression*”.² God is inexpressible and utterable. J. Quint rightfully writes about “*the struggle of mystique against language*” (*Kampf der Mystik gegen die Sprache*).³ Mystique in fact does not hesitate between speech and silence but it wants to remove their differences⁴, to regard speech and silence in their identity and not in their

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1. PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE, *De myst. theol. III* (PG 3,1033C).

2. KARL JASPERS, *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen*, Berlin 1971, p. 87.

3. J. QUINT, “Mystik und Sprache: Ihr Verhältnis zueinander, insbesondere in der spekulativen Mystik Meister Eckharts”, in: K. Ruh, Hg., *Altdeutsche und altniederländische Mystik*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1964, p. 113-151, here 121. For the whole problem see ALOIS M. HAAS, *Sermo mysticus: Studien zu Theologie und Sprache der deutschen Mystik*, Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 1989, p. 136-167 and 301-329; A. M. HAAS, *Geistliches Mittelalter*, Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag 1984, p. 181-247; WALTER HAUG, “Zur Grundlage einer Theorie des mystischen Sprechens” in: KURT RUH, Hg., *Abendlandische Mystik im Mittelalter*, Symposium Kloster Engelberg 1984, Stuttgart: Metzler 1986, p. 494-508; Kurt Ruh, “Das mystische Schweigen und die mystische Rede”, in: Peter K. Stein et alii, Hg., *Festschrift für Ingo Reiffenstein zu seinem 60. Geburtstag*, Göttingen: Kümmerle Verlag 1988, p. 463-472.

4. Cf. A. M. HAAS, “Das mystische Paradox”, in: P. Geyer, R. Hagenbuchle, Hg., *Das Pa-*

differences. The very word ‘mystique’ (μυστική) symbolically refers to this. It is derived from the verb *myo* (μύω) - to speak *my* (μυ), namely to utter everything that can be told when we shut our mouth: in this ‘m’ speech and silence are together. God is *ontological transcendence* and as a Person He *transcends* classical Greek) *ontology*. The paradoxes in formulations of mystical experience (thus in metalanguage) and those are *semantic paradoxes*. The mystical statements are semantically realized as a contradiction in terms of the propositional logic (God is He who IS, knowable as unknowable, utterable as unutterable).

For Bogoljub Šijaković paradox is “*a dynamic corrective against theological systematics and dogmatics*”. The paradox of apophatic theology witnesses to a personal experience of God that cannot be schematized and made a subject of dogmatic knowledge. He thus tells that “the paradox of the mystical knowledge of God is an attempt to resolve the problems of our thinking about God by contradictions. In the ontological sense mystical experience (*unio mystica*) is a unification of ontically different areas: an identity in difference, a surmounting of the ontologically insurmountable distance between man and God. The very possibility of an ontological nearness and ontological closeness with God is paradoxical. It is enabled by that what transcends Greek *cosmological* ontology: Personhood. The mystical paradox is an attempt to formulate a knowledge of the absolute transcendence and otherness, to describe the nature of the communication with a totally Other”.⁵ A paradox is a logical provocation and the old dilemma “Logic or Life?” is always timely.⁶

In this study on the Maximus the Confessor’s logic and spirituality we will try to achieve an image concerning the evolution of the great theologian’s thought, an analysis of the philosophical influences that have determined the structure of his theological work, in one word, a debate over maximienne terminology.

radox: Eine Herausforderung des abendländischen Denkens, Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag 1992, p. 273-294, for here p. 276. See also, A. M. HAAS, *Mystik als Aussage: Erfahrungs-, Denk- und Redeformen christlicher Mystik*, Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp 1996, p. 110-133, for here especially p. 114.

5. BOGOLJUB ŠIJAKOVIĆ, *The Presence of Transcendence. Essays on Facing the Other through Holiness, History, and Text*, Sebastian Press, Los Angeles 2013, p. 124-125. See also: B. LUBARDIĆ, “Lav Shestov Philosophy of Faith. Apophatic Deconstruction of Reason and Conditions of Possibility for Religious Philosophy”, *Zbornik radova Filozofskog fakulteta u Pristini* XLIV, 2 (2014), p. 273-283

6. “And this is eternal life (αἰώνιος ζωή), that they may know You, the only true God (γινώσκωσιν σὲ τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεόν), and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3).

Therefore, Antoine Lévy states that “entire Christological thought of Maximus highlights the subtle interplay between λόγος of nature and hypostatic τρόπος (the hypostatic subject of the rational energeia)”⁷. On the other hand, by referring to the opponents of the maximian interpretation of Garrigues which sees in his theology “the ultimate and dramatic victory of the order of «tropos» linked to hypostasis on the order of «logos» associated with nature”, himself retains positively that “from ours perspectives, says Lévy, nothing more interesting than the target point by critical J.-M. Garrigues: the notion of physical deification is rejected as inseparable from “théurgisme” would exercise the palamienne theology”⁸. Accordingly, Maximus the Confessor uses two complementary formulas designed to describe the complex and vivid structure of the triad of hypostases in the unity of essence in a way excluding any separation of the unique divine essence or substance from the three divine hypostases. He calls the Holy Trinity: “*hypostatical essentiality of a consubstantial triad*” (ἐνυπόστατος ὀντότης ὁμοουσίου Τριάδος) and “*substantial subsistence of the three-hypostatic monad*” (ἐνούσιος ὑπαρξίς τρισυποστάτου μονάδος)⁹. In trinitarian theology, it is as important to maintain that a hypostasis ἐνούσιος is not necessarily an οὐσία of its own, as it is in Christology to prove that a φύσις ἐνυποστάτος is not necessarily a hypostasis of its own. Hence, “ἐνυπόστατος and ἐνούσιος describe the relationship of nature and hypostasis a parte naturae and a parte subsistentiae”, and they do not represent a real intermediary between hypostasis and ousia¹⁰. Maximus developed a coherent trinitarian-christo-

7. ANTOINE LÉVY, *Le créé et l'incréé. Maxime le Confesseur et Thomas d'Aquin aux sources de la querelle palamienne* (Sorbonne: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2007) 307-308, especially p. 311.

8. The relationship between Palamas and Maximus is correctly narrated: “*The fact is that we can not distinguish the forerunners in Palamism Maxime without implicitly recognize some loyalty maximienne in the theology of Gregory Palamas. We understand this hypothesis has aroused misgivings, the fact remains that only allow little reluctant to reject a hypothesis. By taking the latter contrast, it may be possible to establish this maximian Palamas loyalty by showing that the result of a rigorous understanding of Christology of Maximus.*” (ANTOINE LÉVY, *Le créé et l'incréé* 316-317).

9. Amb. 1, 23-31 apud BENJAMIN GLEEDE, *The Development of the Term ἐνυπόστατος from Origen to John of Damascus*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, Volume 113 (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012) 141-142.

10. BENJAMIN GLEEDE, *The Development of the Term ἐνυπόστατος* 147: “The substantiality of a hypostasis can either be unique (in the case of ‘natural hypostases’) or twofold (in

logical terminological system attributing to the term ἐνυπόστατος the same function in both theological contexts. Monothelitism reporting energy in person to justify their conception of one energy in Christ, the “personalist”. But we can not design modern categories patristic thought¹¹. The Parallel of Damascene between περιχώρεσις of the trinitaires hypostases and that of the two natures of Christ, acquires a status of “équation logique”¹² through which unity can be reconciled (nature-hypostasis) with distinction (hypostases-natures).

Achieving agreement between Plato and Aristotle was a reiterated concern from Plotinus until today. That is why firstly we proposed to study the relationship between philosophy and mysticism. the first chapter will have as issue the fulfillment of our reasoning and the poverty of philosophy versus the “Great Disruption” into philosophy, namely the mystical tendency in Neoplatonic henology, a type of “*a immanence mysticism in a metaphysics of transcendence*”.¹³ Starting from this in the second chapter, we will make a brief analysis of the philosophical influences received by Maximus and the Confessor’s (especially stoicism, platonism, aristotelianism and neoplatonic henology). We will see how these philosophical terminology are used to create a ‘revive’ language of deification. In order to illustrate in chapter three the movement of the from the neoplatonic aristotelian commentaries to christianization of aristotelian logic, we proceeds to analyze the Maximian’s concept of ἐνούσια and ἐν ὑπόστασις. In the end, in the last chapter we exhibit relationship between Logoi

the case of Christ), whereas the hypostatical realization of a nature can either be uniform (in case of the natural procreation of species-individuals) or in the form of a hypostatical coexistence with another nature (in case of Christ)”. The rapport between nature and hypostasis (or λόγος φύσεως and τρόπος ὑπόστασεως) referred to by the term ἐνυπόστατος can thus be described correctly as insubsistence, not only in case of the natural, but also in case of the Christological realization of the human nature, provided that any connotation of (quasi-) accidental inherence or asymmetry is ruled out. (BENJAMIN GLEEDÉ, *The Development of the Term ἐνυπόστατος* 155).

11. JEAN-CLAUDE LARCHET, *La théologie des énergies divines. Des origines à saint Jean Damascène* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2010) 415-417.

12. EMMANUEL DURAND, *La périchorèse des personnes divines. Immanence mutuelle, réciprocité et communion* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2005) 23-27. “Cependant à s’interpénétrer, préférons en français se compénétrer ou se pénétrer l’un l’autre, expressions restituant mieux les construction grecques” (Durand, *La périchorèse* 24).

13. PIERRE AUBENQUE, “Plotin et le dépassement de l’ontologie grecque classique”, in *Le Néoplatonisme*. Colloque international du CNRS, Paris, Édition du CNRS, Paris 1971, p. 101-109, here 102.

and the Uncreated Energies. I will attempt to show how the *logos* constitutes the profound unity and co-existence of essence and energy. therewith the theological foundation for an ascetic spirituality we will be able to close circularly the relation between philosophical logic and Christian spirituality in St. Maximus' work.

1. A reiterated concern - achieving agreement between Plato and Aristotle. *The fulfillment of our reasoning and the poverty of philosophy versus the "Great Disruption" into philosophy*

Early characterisations of *nous* present it as a holistic mode of apprehension. Efforts to emphasise the intuitive function ought to be played down in favour of the holistic functioning of the intellect, and its capacity for complete apprehension. "The concept of mind as an apparatus for dealing with alien material is quite foreign to a large part of the Greek tradition, which sees mind as akin to that which it receives".¹⁴ The radical criticism of anthropomorphism and the apophatic theology of later Platonism, made a significant contribution to later Platonic development of a monotheistic doctrine of transcendent Being. The resultant idea of God is "the Mind which is the Father and maker of All, whose name Plato cannot tell because he does not know it, whose appearance cannot describe because he cannot see it".¹⁵ Plato originated the widespread use of the concept of participation as a means 'to describe how a sensible particular comes to have an ideal Form'. 'Participation' was a technical concept in Greek science which was used to describe relationships of formal causality. For Plato, participation 'signifies a relation of sharing in a common character, of having com-

14. RAOUL MORTLEY, *From Word to Silence, 1. The Rise and Fall of Logos*, Hanstein, Bonn 1986, p. 92-93.

15. MAXIMUS OF TYRE, *Who is God according to Plato?* (Discourse 11, 9 c-d; II e), apud Frances M. Young, "The God of the Greeks and the Nature of Religious Language", in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition. In honorem Robert M. Grant*, edited by William R. Schoedel, Robert L. Wilken, Éditions Beauchesne, Paris 1979, p. 49-50. See also: WERNER JAEGER, *The theology of the Greek Philosophers* (Oxford University Press, 2005), JACOB NEUSNER (ed.), *Christianity, Judaism and the Greco-Roman Cults* (Leiden, 1974), 143-166; T.D. BARNES, "Porphyry Against the Christians: Date and the Attribution of Fragments", *JTS*, 24 (1973), p. 424-442.

munion. The common term for participation in Plato is μέθεξις, concept which express the relation between the particular and the Form, describing an asymmetrical relation adequately. Plato also used the terms κοινωνία and μετέχειν in order to describe the relationship between the Forms themselves. Plato clearly employed the vocabulary of participation. The Neoplatonic school played an important role in mediating the concept of participation to the later church Fathers, who then transposed it for use in a specifically Christian theological context.¹⁶ According to Greek ideas, Plato, by making the Idea of Good monarch of the intelligible world, like the sun in the world of sight, gives it the same divinity as the God of other thinkers, even though he does not actually call it God.¹⁷ For Plato's ontological realism, the Idea of Good is not an idea in our sense of the word, but is itself good. In fact, it is the Good in its most perfect form. It is only that form of thought which deserves the name of intellect (*nous*). Compared with it, mathematical thought is only understanding (*dianoia*), while sense-perception of the material world is only opinion (*pistis*). The inmost nature of philosophy is constant struggle to imitate the paradigm, 'the pattern that stands in the realm of Being'.¹⁸ Such a concern of combining mysticism and philosophy (theology and theosophy or triptych ontology, noetic, henology) becomes a tendency that leads to Eckhart and Böhme.¹⁹

During late Antiquity, an interesting doctrinal shift can be observed: Aristotelian logic and its Neoplatonic complements, in particular the teachings of Aristotle's *Categories* and Porphyry's *Isagoge*, was progressively accepted as a tool in Christian theology. Various authors - Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, John Philoponus, Leontius of Byzantium, Maximus the Confessor, Theodore of Raithu, John of Damascus and Boethius can be mentioned on different accounts - used concepts which originated in logic in order

16. RUTH M. SIDDALS, 'Logic and Christology in Cyril of Alexandria', *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., 38 (1987), 341-67, (here 348), for the Neoplatonic mediation of the principles of participation to the Fathers of the Church.

17. WERNER JAEGER, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture, Volume II. In Search of The Divine Centre*, Translated by Gilbert Highet, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1947, p. 285.

18. JAEGER, *Paideia*, p. 296.

19. VIRGINIE PEKTAS, *Mystique et Philosophie. Grunt, abgrunt et Ungrund chez Maître Eckhart et Jacob Böhme*, B.R. Grüner, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2006, p. 25-88. Herbert McCabe, "The Logic of Mysticism", *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*,/Volume 31 (1992), pp 45-69.

to support their theological thinking. But, also, the influence of Aristotle is being especially felt in the philosophical underpinnings of the post-Chalcedonian Christology and in the widespread adoption of Aristotelian modes of argumentation (Theodore the Studite, Photios of Constantinople, Michael Psellos, Eustratios of Nicaea, Michael of Ephesus and Nikephoros Blemmydes).²⁰ The debate among Byzantine philosophers and theologians about the proper attitude towards ancient logic is just one episode in the turbulent history of the reception of ancient philosophy in Byzantine thought, but it certainly raises one of the most complicated and intriguing issues in the study of the intellectual life in Byzantium. There is no doubt that ancient logic, and more specifically Aristotle's syllogistic, was taught extensively throughout the Byzantine era as a preliminary to more theoretical studies. This is amply attested not only by biographical information concerning the logical education of eminent Byzantine figures, but also by the substantial number of surviving Byzantine manuscripts of Aristotle's logical writings, in particular Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, and of the related Byzantine scholia, paraphrases, and logical treatises. Katerina Ierodiakonou shows how "in fact, the predominance in Byzantium of Aristotle's logic is so undisputed that, even when Byzantine scholars suggest changes in Aristotelian syllogistic, or attempt to incorporate into it other ancient logical traditions, they consider these alterations only as minor improvements on the Aristotelian system".²¹

20. MARCUS PLESTED, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 51-52. On Aristotle in Byzantium "In speaking of the dominance of Aristotle in the Byzantine theological tradition some caveats are necessary. Firstly, no one seriously opposed Plato and Aristotle until the very last days of the Empire: they were viewed as complementary and not as antagonistic. Further-more, when I speak of 'Aristotle' or 'Plato' this is shorthand for a more or less Platonized Aristotelianism or Aristotelianized Platonism. Aristotle was still chiefly encountered through the neo-Platonic prism of Porphyry's *Eisagoge* while neo-Platonism itself was decisively shaped by Peripatetic principle. Eclecticism was the norm." (p. 53).

21. KATERINA IERODIAKONOU, "The Anti-Logical Movement in the Fourteenth Century", in *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2004, p. 219. Nevertheless, Byzantine authors are not all unanimous as to the importance of the study of Aristotle's logic, and more generally, as to the importance of any kind of logical training: "There is plenty of evidence that, in different periods of Byzantine history, some Byzantine philosophers and theologians stress that, when it comes to theology, we should not rely on logical arguments, whereas others insist that we should avail ourselves of logic either in the exposition of Christian dogmas or even in the attempt to prove their truth" (*Ibid.* p. 220). See also: B. N. TATAKIS' *La*

Also, another reiterated concern of the Western thinking, is that of achieving *agreement between Plato and Aristotle*: a unity tracing (Plato, the “mystical” attitude) and analyzing of every being property (Aristotle, the “logic” attitude).²² The secret of this reconciliation is kept in the four adverbs of Chalcedonian Christology: “undivided”, “inseparable”, “unmixed” and “unchanged”. Also, says Ghislain Lafont “a suggestive ontological notion is «*consubstantial*» (*homoousios*). The use of this word implies the choice of a solution to the *aporia*’s problem of One and Being in suspension from Plato’s *Parmenides*: in God, The One is Being and the reciprocal”.²³

Philosophie byzantine (Paris, 1949); *Idem*, “La Philosophie grecque patristique et byzantine” (*Histoire de la Philosophie*, i (Paris, 1969), 936-1005); G. PODSKALSKY, *Theologie und Philosophie in Byzanz: Der Streit um die theologische Methodik in der spatbyzantinischen Geistesgeschichte* (14/15. Jh.) (Munich, 1977); H. HUNGER, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich, 1978), p. 3-62; K. OEHLER, *Antike Philosophie und byzantinisches Mittelalter* (Munich, 1969), and in his article ‘Die byzantinische Philosophie’, in *Contemporary Philosophy: A New Survey*, vi/2. *Philosophy and Science in the Middle Ages* (Dordrecht, 1990), p. 639-49. G. WEISS, ‘Kritischer Forschungs und Literaturbericht 1968-1985’, *Historische Zeitschrift*, 14 (1986), J. BECKMANN, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, ed. K. Vorlander, ii (1990). A. de Libera, *La philosophie medievale* (Paris, 1995); L. BRISSON, ‘L’Aristotelisme dans le monde byzantin’ in L. Couloubaritsis’ learned volume *Histoire de la philosophie ancienne et medievale* (Paris, 1998).

22. DIRK CÜRSGEN, *Henologie und Ontologie. Die metaphysische Prinzipienlehre des späten Neuplatonismus*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2007, p. 285-315. The subject of Cürsgen’s study is nothing other than the question of unity (*Einheit* - a ‘fundamental concept’ in Proclus and Damascius) in Neoplatonism. See Sebastian Gertz’ *Reviews* in *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 3 (2009) 194-196. Also, H.J. BLUMENTHAL and R.A. MARKUS (eds.), *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought. Essays in honnour of A.H. Armstrong*, Variorum Publication LTD, London 1981, p. 189-249; LLOYD P. GERSON, “From Plato’s Good to Platonic God”, *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 2 (2008) 93-112; JOHN RIST, *Eros and Psyche. Studies in Plato, Plotinus, and Origin*, University of Toronto Press (1964); C. J. DE VOGEL, “Platonism and Christianity: A Mere Antagonism or a Profound Common Ground?” *Vigilae Christianae* 39 (1985) 1-62; BORIS MASLOV, “The Limits of Platonism: Gregory of Nazianzus and the Invention of *theōsis*”, in *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 52 (2012), p. 440-468.

23. GHISLAIN LAFONT, *Histoire théologique de l’Église catholique. Itinéraire et formes de la théologie*, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1994; GHISLAIN LAFONT, *La Sagesse et la Prophétie. Modèles théologiques*, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1999; Both books are published in a single volume in romanian translation: GHISLAIN LAFONT, *O istorie teologica a Bisericii. Itinerarul, formele si modelele teologiei*, trans. Maria-Cornelia Ica jr and presentation by Ioan I. Ica jr, Deisis, Sibiu 2003, for here pp. 41 and 76. In *Peut-on connaître Dieu en Jésus-Christ?* (Paris,

A general and fundamental problem of the patristic theology is its relationship with hellenistic culture. This is what Endre von Ivanka said: “*the phenomenon which entirely characterizing the first millennium of Christian thought... is the use as a form of Platonism for its philosophical expression and the framework image of the world in terms of which it was proclaimed the revealed truths - Christian Platonism in other words*”.²⁴ “Christian Platonism” signified many things, but Christianity and Platonism primarily met to the mystics level, since in the second century Platonism was characterized by his prevailing religious and theocentric view of the world. Platonism second century is theologically oriented towards beyond. This kind of Platonism, known as “Middle Platonism” was “mystical”: it was concerned with the unmediated search of the soul meeting with God, concern which has intensified to Plotinus and Neoplatonism. For A.-J. Festugière, “*When Fathers «think» mystique, they platonise. There is nothing original in their construction*”.²⁵

Important and fundamental, the mystical trait of Platonism it develops it grows from the concept concerning the essential nature of the human spirit, from the belief of its kinship with the divine. But for Christianity, man is a crea-

1969), Ghislain Lafont tried to develop an issue on placing the substance (being) vocabulary in expressing the Christian faith, in order to utter Trinity in the Itself a and in its report to the economy of salvation. In his conclusions regarding the patristic, Lafont was quite vigorously contradicted by A. de Halleux, in *Patrologie et oecuménisme* (Louvain, 1990) and instead supported by B. Studer, in *Theologische Revue* 87, 1991, p. 483.

24. ENDRE VON IVÁNKA, *Plato Christianus*, Einsiedeln 1964, p. 19. For a review of recent research regarding this issue, see: E.J. MEIJERING, *God, Being, History*, Amsterdam 1975, “Zehn Jahre zum Thema Platonismus und Kirchenväter”, p. 1-18; JOHN M. DILLON, *The Great Tradition. Further Studies in the Development of Platonism and Early Christianity*, Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1997; JOHN M. DILLON, *The Golden Chain. Studies in the Development of Platonism and Christianity*, Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1990; A. H. ARMSTRONG, “Dualism Platonic, Gnostic, and Christian,” in D. T. Runia (ed.), *Plotinus amid Gnostics and Christians* (Amsterdam 1984) 29-52, esp. 29-41 (repr. in *Hellenic and Christian Studies* [Aldershot 1990]). H. J. BLUMENTHAL, “Some Problems about Body and Soul in Later Pagan Neoplatonism: Do they follow a pattern?” in H. D. Blume and F. Mann (eds.), *Platonismus und Christentum. Festschrift für H. Dörrie* (Münster 1983) 75-84 (repr. in *Soul and Intellect: Studies in Plotinus and Later Neoplatonism* [Aldershot 1993]).

25. *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon*, ed. III, Paris 1967, p. 5. WINFRIED SCHRÖDER, *Athen und Jerusalem. Die philosophische Kritik am Christentum in Antike und Neuzeit*, frommann holzboog; Auflage: 2013, p. 88-109.

ture which is related to God, but created from nothing by Him and sustained into existence by addiction to His will.²⁶

The core of mystics seems to be seeking God as the ultimate thing, for His sake and refusing to let satisfied with nothing but himself. The charge that for Christianity mystical trait is foreign to Christianity is an accusation frequently made. The most developed and influential presentation of this thesis is to Anders Nygren in his book *Eros and Agape*.²⁷ For Nygren mystique is an intrusion of the eros motif in Christianity, where it is certainly foreign, since Christianity is based solely on the ground of agape. Festugiere, on the other hand, simplifies Christianity by seeing therein nothing more than a moral imitation of Christ. He oppose too much *active* and *contemplative* and he sees the Christian concept of Agape as being essential active. Just as theology and spirituality must not be separated, and they are not separate for Fathers, so we do not need to separate action from contemplation. Because prayer is contemplative, but it flows into acts of love.²⁸

History of the schism between Christian East and West can be summed up as a tightening of their own dogmatic divergences and theological disagreement. Similarly, says E. Lane all reconciliation must pass through “reversing this dialectic”,²⁹ which consists, according to him, in the that mystery of communion between God and man was felt and expressed by both sides. The Latin opposition towards Greeks on the issue of knowledge and grace of God was already latent in the tradition of *Augustinianism towards Cappadocian’s traditions*. It will crystallized starting from the thirteenth century with the debut of Western schools which have opted for Aristotelianism, while the Byzantine Church will

26. There is an *ontological gap* between God and his creation, a real difference of being. At this point Christianity and Platonism are irreconcilable, and conflict between them reach a climax in the Arian controversy. Soul searching after God is naturally conceived as a return, an ascent to God. On the other, Christianity speaks of the Incarnation of God, of His descent into the world to give man the possibility to be in communion with God which it’s not open by its very nature. And yet man is made in God’s image and thus, these ascent and descent movements intersecting each other.

27. Discussions about Nygren’s thesis at M.C. D’ARCY, *The Mind and Heart of Love*, Londra 1945 and JOHN BURNABY, *Amor Dei*, London 1938, chap I: “The Embarrassment of Anti-Mystic”, p. 3-21.

28. Cf. ANDREW LOUTH, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*, Oxford University Press, 2007, rom. transl. at Deisis, Sibiu 2002, pp. 11-14 și 249-250.

29. E. LANE, *Unité de la foi et pluralisme théologique*, în *Irénikon*, t. 46, 1973, pp. 207-213.

confirm one hundred years later, his fidelity to the Platonic orientation which it had been that of the entire Christianity of the first millennium. To designate the two theological lines, André de Halleux³⁰ uses the terms of “scholastic” and “Palamism” (considered to be for the Western theology, *the revealer of its relativity*).

Unlike scholastic theology, *Greek Fathers created a new “meta-ontology”*. In a personalistic view, ontology is fundamentally “givenness” exactly onto-givenness. Distinguishing between existence-energy (the fact that God exists), being-nature (what is God) and hypostasis-person (*who* and *how* God is) Cappadocian Fathers and St. Gregory Palamas have done ontology (these categories are ontological).³¹ Some still consider an open issue the energies.³²

The twentieth century was, par excellence, one of “christian philosophy” as hermeneutics. The discussions are still developing to the incompatibility of, tan-

30. ANDRÉ DE HALLEUX, “Palamisme et Scolastique. Exclusivisme dogmatique ou pluriformité théologique?,” *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 4 (1973), p. 409-410. See also: André de Halleux, “Personnalisme ou essentialisme trinitaire chez les Pères cappadociens? Une mauvaise controverse,” *Revue théologique de Louvain* 17 (1986), p. 129-155 and 265-292; ANDRÉ DE HALLEUX, “«Hypostase» et «personne» dans la formation du dogme trinitaire (375-381),” *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 79 (1984), p. 313-369, 625-670; CHRISTOPHER STEAD, “Individual Personality in Origen and the Cappadocian Fathers,” *ArcheĪ e telos: l'antropologia di Origene e di Gregorio di Nissa. Analisi storico-religiosa*, ed. U. Bianchi and H. Crouzel (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1981), p. 182; JEAN PÉPIN, “Yparxis et Hypostasis en Cappadoce,” *Hyparxis e Hypostasis nel Neoplatonismo: Atti del I Colloquio Internazionale del Centro di Ricerca sul Neoplatonismo (Universita' degli Studi di Catania, 1-3 ottobre 1992)*, ed. F. Romano and D. P. Taormina (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1994), p. 76; L. TURCESCU, “Prosopon and Hypostasis in Basil of Caesarea's *Against Eunomius* and the Epistles,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 51: 4 (1997), p. 384-385.

31. CHRISTOPHER STEAD, *Divine substance* (Oxford: University Press, 1977), p. 209-210, 214-215 and 218, discusses the idea of the substance of God in theological tradition having as central point the Nicene *homoousios*. So he says, from Origen's *Commentary on Hebrews*, the word *homoousios* is associated with phrases describing the Son's derivation “from the substance” of the Father. Neo-Platonist writers roughly contemporary with Origen also used the term *homoousios* but only to suggest that the soul is akin to and consubstantial with divine things (*Ennead*, iv. 7.10). Porphyry also appears to have used the term *homoousios* to state the affinity of the human intellect with divine Mind (the second hypostasis of his trinity). However, Origen also used the term *homoousios* to indicate the Son's relationship to the Father; and he was the first greek writer to do so. It is therefore in Origen that we find the first suggestion of the trinitarian use of *homoousios* (being of the same nature with the Father).

32. BERNARD POTTIER, *Dieu et le Christ selon Grégoire de Nysse*, Namur 1994, p. 140-141: “An open question: energies”.

gentiality or continuity between philosophy and christian theology, these discussions were started at the beginning of the last century³³. Based on Étienne Gilson's statement by which he considers "Christian revelation as an indispensable auxiliary of reason", J.L. Marion says: "*The revelation suggests to reason to rationally approach themes that reason could not, by itself, neither treating them, nor even to intuit them*".³⁴ But Marion begins the challenge of defining «christian philosophy» exclusively as a hermeneutics: the revelation would remain secondary to the philosophy, only doubling its results, there would be no more a «christian philosophy», but only a christian interpretation of philosophy. But Marion shows us that the definition of «christian philosophy» proposed by Gilson, can be read "*not only as hermeneutics, but first and once as heuristic*". *The double function of love-charity, as hermeneutic and heuristic* assumes the faith in Christ who, both in the world itself as well as in the conceptual universe *introduces new phenomena, saturated with meaning and glory, which contributes to overcoming the metaphysics of the end and lead to the development of phenomenology*. In this sense, says Marion "*the whole assembly of philosophy might be called a «christian philosophy», in such way is saturated by phenomena and concepts introduced in it, directly or indirectly*"³⁵.

33. Vezi, în acest sens: É. BRÉHIER, "Y a-t-il une philosophie chrétienne", *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 2 (1938), H. De Lubac, "Sur la philosophie chrétienne", în *Nouvelle revue théologique* 63 (1936). É. Gilson, *L'Esprit de la philosophie médiévale*, Paris 1932, Idem, *Christianisme et philosophie*, Paris 1949, J. BEAUFRET, "La philosophie chrétienne", în *Dialogue avec Heidegger*, vol. II, Paris 1973, sau "Heidegger et la théologie", în M. Couratier (ed.), *Étienne Gilson et nous*, Vrin, Paris 1980. De asemenea: KARL BARTH, *La Philosophie protestante au XIXe siècle*, 1947, Maurice Blondel, *La Philosophie et l'esprit chrétien*, PUF, 1950, STANISLAS BRETON, *La Passion du Christ et les philosophies*, 1954, GABRIEL MARCEL, *Existentialisme chrétien* (en collaboration), Plon, 1947, JACQUES MARITAIN, *De la philosophie chrétienne*, 1933, Xavier Tilliette, *Le Christ de la philosophie*, Cerf, 1990, CLAUDE TRESMONTANT, *La Métaphysique du christianisme et la naissance de la philosophie chrétienne*, Paris, Seuil, 1962.

34. JEAN-LUC MARION, *The Visible and the Revealed*, Fordham University Press, 2008, [romanian translation: Deisis, Sibiu 2007, p.121-122]: "*In brief, the aid of that has enjoyed «Christian philosophy» is a theological interpretation, possible but not needed, of some purely philosophical concepts*", "*Let us take the most famous sentence of É. Gilson, «the Exodus metaphysics» here «Christian philosophy» required to make of the quasi-Aristotelian concept of actus purus essendi as the equivalent to a purely theological and biblical statement: Sum qui sum (Exodus 3, 14).*"

35. *Ibidem*, p. 138-140.

Speaking of religion and the *poverty of philosophy*, William Desmond protest anew that the practice of philosophical thought is essentially agonistic and he advocates for a “sabbath for thought”, a day of being awake, when the rest is entirely energizing: “*I believe the relation between philosophy and being religious is again at issue. Something about being religious awakens us from the sleep of autonomous reason, satisfied with itself. There is no Sabbath for autonomous reason satisfied with itself.*”³⁶ Desmond’s remarks are searching against a dominant self-understanding of philosophy in relation to religion and he concludes that “*a philosopher without reverence is a thinker defective in delicatessen*”: “*We might have thought we had conceptually consummate(d) religion, even the consummate religion, but instead of finding ourselves within the whole that finally has closed a self completing circle around itself, we are drawn on into a new outside, a new desert even, indeed a new poverty beyond the play of the first poverty and richness. [...] We are saturated with knowings that, so to say, do not save; knowings that seem to make us more and more lost, even though they illuminate many a dark spot in the mysterious cosmos we inhabit. The more light we throw on things, the more things as a whole seem to become dark. The more we know, the more we sink into absurdity.*”³⁷

For David Evans philosophers have a perennial concern with the foundations of religion and the metaphysical status of God as part of what there is. To give his analysis adequate historical scope, he will be concentrated his attention on three philosophers (cosmological argument of Aristotle, teleological argument of Aquinas, and ontological argument of Anselm) “*whose work straddles two millennia and whose philosophical presence is also millennial in the more aspirational sense of the word. These thinkers do much to define the past and to determine how it might develop into the future.*”³⁸ Besides these three logical form of the arguments which he favours concerning the existence of God, fourth philosopher, that Evans lose sight, is Maximus the Confessor with an argument

36. WILLIAM DESMOND, *Is There a Sabbath for Thought? Between Religion and Philosophy*, Fordham University Press, New York 2005, p. 352-353.

37. DESMOND, *Is There a Sabbath*, pp. 106-107 and 109.

38. DAVID EVANS, *Innovation and Continuity in the History of Philosophy*, in *Reading Ancient Texts. Volume II: Aristotle and Neoplatonism*, Essays in Honour of Denis O’Brien, Edited by Suzanne Stern-Gillet and Kevin Corrigan (Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History, Volume 162), Leiden/Boston, 2007, p. 251-263, here p. 252.

derived from the patristic tradition of a mystical liturgical and ecclesial experience, which otherwise would influence the Western philosophy. Thomas d'Aquinas made a strict distinction between the two orders of the natural and supernatural, of *reason and revelation, of metaphysics and theology* properly so-called. He makes a special use of philosophy, by opening it to the light of revelation, believing that the absolute transcendence of God can only be properly expressed in a metaphysical language. For indeed *de divinis loquimur secundum modum nostrum* (we speak of divine things in our own way). For Tomas as well as for Gilson's existentialist thomisme "*between God and his creation there is discontinuity of being, but also a continuity in the intelligible order*".³⁹ We will not find such an interpretation in Eastern theology. The basic ground for *apophysis* in the Cappadocian system was that the God who was beyond thought was nevertheless not beyond faith. There could not be a fundamental *opposition between divine providence and human free will*, so also there could not be a permanent contradiction between reason and correct faith. The doctrine of resurrection, for example, was demonstrated by faith and by the authority of Scripture; nevertheless Gregory of Nyssa urged, in requesting Macrina to push her philosophical speculations further: "Since the weakness of the human understanding is strengthened still further by any arguments [*logismois*] that are intelligible to us, it would be well not to leave this part of the subject without philosophical examination." (Gr.Nyss. *Anim.res.*, PG 46:108). Therefore, "*truth and objectivity [aletheia te kai bebaiotes]*" could be identified as "the basis of faith." (Gr. Nyss. *Cant.* 14, Jaeger 6:417).⁴⁰ There was, in the perspective of Cappadocian thought, no contradiction or disjunction at all between such a seemingly intellectualistic formula as that and the seemingly more personalistic thesis, "God remains the object of faith" (Gr. Nyss. *Maced.*, Jaeger 3-1:252-253). For in spite of his radically *apophatic* emphasis, especially in the polemics against Eunomius (Gr. Nyss. *Eun.* 2.89, Jaeger I:252-53), on the unattainability of any positive knowledge about the divine *ousia*, Gregory of Nyssa also insisted, specifically in opposition to Eunomius, that *the two formulas, "What God is" and "What God is also believed to be," had to be identical*. That was what

39. ETIENNE GILSON, *Christian Philosophy*, translated by Armand Maurer, PIMS (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies), Toronto 1993, p. 87-88.

40. JAROSLAV PELIKAN, *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism*, Yale University Press 1993, p. 117-119.

was meant by Nazianzen's axiomatic definition of faith as "the fulfillment of our reasoning" (Gr. Naz. Or. 29.21 (SC 250:224)).⁴¹

2. The philosophical influences received by Maximus and the Confessor's and the 'revive' of deification language

In matters of the spirit Maximus the Confessor writes, Robert Louis Wilken says that "his language is more scholastic than Augustine's".⁴² The most profound modern interpreter of Maximus's thought, Hans Urs von Balthasar⁴³, believed, however, that Maximus was much too original to be dependent on Augustine. For Maximus the Incarnation is likewise the real starting point for trinitarian theology. While upholding and developing the apophatic theological tradition of the Cappadocian Fathers and Ps.-Dionysius, wherein the essence of God remains utterly ineffable and incomprehensible, Maximus asserts that the incarnate Logos is giving creatures access to the mystery of the Tri-Unity and the personal, or hypostatic Godhead. It is the Son consubstantially related to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and eternally sharing with them a common activity (*energeia*), who assumes flesh. Like Paul M. Blowers stresses "Maximus sketches some definitive outlines of his theology in the earlier set of his *Ambiguities*, where he develops a Christocentric cosmology countering the radically platonized worldview of Origenism".⁴⁴

For Maximus God does not fit in the scheme of Aristotelian and Stoic categories (*Ambigua ad Iohannem* 7, 1081B), but He is characterized by "lack of any relation to any": "God is, in the proper sense, also beyond being" (*Ambigua ad Iohannem* 10, 38, 1180B-D). Taking advantage of Stoic distinction, states

41. PELIKAN, *Christianity*, pp. 220, 229. In their celebration of the uniqueness of faith, therefore, the Cappadocians could emphasize that no amount of philological learning was sufficient for the correct understanding of Scripture, which was accessible only "through spiritual contemplation [*dia tes pneumatikes theorias*]" and true faith. Yet that did not keep them from exploiting a natural knowledge of philology to the fullest;

42. ROBERT LOUIS WILKEN, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought. Seeking the Face of God*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, p. 305.

43. *Kosmische Liturgie* (Einsiedeln, 1988), 408-09. Apud, Wilken, *The Spirit*, 310.

44. Paul M. BLOWERS, art. "Maximus the Confessor (580-662)" in *Biographical dictionary of Christian theologians I* edited by Patrick W. Carey and Joseph T. Lienhard, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, London, 2000, p. 355-356.

that any knowledge of our about God refers only to “what it concerns God”, but it is not identifiable with God himself. The *logoi* of all things are located in God as “a unique, simple and unitary inclusion of all things” (*Ambigua* 7, 1077 sqq.), doctrine that comes through the Gregory of Nyssa right to the Stoics doctrine of the Logos which penetrate everything.⁴⁵ The rhythm of the entire process of the world (the procession, the output into existence, the multiplicity, from simplicity of God, and the return, returning from multiplicity to unity - *Ambigua* 7, 1081C), finds its correspondence to Dionysius the Areopagite (*Div. Nom.*, 11, 2, 949C). Maxim’s conception concept is however innovative as far as that in the mutual relations between the sensible and the intelligible world: first shown in the second as “footprints”, while the second one is in the first by *logoi* (*Questions ad Thalassium* 63, 685D).

The simultaneous presence of Plato and Aristotle’ motives is characteristic to Maximus. He is the final link of a large chain beginning with Philo and reach him through Alexandrian theologians, Cappadocian Fathers and Dionysius. Just as shown Claudio Moreschini, “*St. Maximus the Confessor had an extraordinary ability to combine metaphysical requirements with the effort of defining the faith dogma, and the monastic experiences with the depth thinking, succeeding to propose a new conception in which converge all cultural and religious influences*”.⁴⁶

St. Maximus the Confessor synthesized Aristotelianism influences with those of Platonism in order to exceed the daring speculations of cosmology origeniene. Thus, he formulates the *triad birth-movement-immobility*, polemizing with Origen’s conception concerning hennade by resorting to Aristotelian con-

45. MICHEL SPANNEUT, *Michel Spanneut. Le Stoïcisme des Pères de l’Église: De Clément de Rome à Clément d’Alexandrie*, (Patristica Sorbonensia, 1). Paris, Le Seuil, 1957, p. 296-324 and *Permanence du stoïcisme. De Zénon à Malraux* (Gembloux 1973) 130-178. See also: R. SORABJI, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford 2000), p. 337-339. J. MANSFELD, “Resurrection Added: The *interpretatio christiana* of a Stoic Doctrine,” *Vigilae Christianae* 37 (1983) 218-233 (reprinted in *Studies in Later Greek Philosophy and Gnosticism* [London 1989]; R. SORABJI, “Stoic First Movements in Christianity,” in S. K. Strange and J. Zupko (eds.), *Stoicism: Traditions and Transformations* (Cambridge 2004) 95-107: on the “first movements” (*propatheiai*) in Evagrius; A. LONG, “Soul and Body in Stoicism,” *Phronesis* 27 (1982) 34-57.

46. CLAUDIO MORESCHINI, *Storia della filosofia patristica*, Morcelliana Edizioni, collana Letteratura cristiana antica, Brescia 2004, traslation by Alexandra Chescu, Mihai-Silviu Chirila si Doina Cernica, Polirom, Iași 2009, pp. 705 and 709.

cepts which was balanced by the Christian and platonic doctrine: “*Maximum corrects Aristotle, considering that God is the author of any movement: indeed, he speaks of the cause as a «working power» whose providence carries every single thing to its purpose. Thereby, the Aristotelian doctrine of motion is examined from Christian premises, being related to God’s and reckoned as being his providence’s effect, and these Aristotelian and Christian concepts are combined with those of Dionysius the Areopagite*”.⁴⁷

In *Epistole* 12 (PG 91, 488B-C) Maximus put in opposition to “the principle of substance” (which is similar to the principle of nature) with the broader concept of “the principle of being”. Since the first substance in the Aristotelian meaning tends to disappear at Maximus, the element of individuality and particularity must be correlated with *ousia* in the second meaning. The consequence of compenetration between soul and body is the fact that the man, in its entirety, constitutes a form (*Ambigua* 42, 1324A), which corresponds to the Aristotelian doctrine. Therefore, body and soul must appear at the same time. “*He explains the close mutual belonging of soul and body with the help of Aristotelian philosophy in the sense that the soul gives the body the vital activity*”.⁴⁸

Also it is a Stoic conception that the soul completely penetrates the whole body, in every member of its, to assure life and motion, also as to make it one with himself. In the spirit of Plato’s Maximus divides the soul into concupiscent part, in the irascible and the rational one (*Ambigua* 10, 43, 1196A). The soul has two aspects, namely a contemplative aspect called mind (*νοῦς*), and an active (‘practical’) aspect (*τὸ πρακτικόν*) called reason (*λόγος*), which are the primary powers of the soul (*Myst.* 5, PG 91: 673c-676c). The primary activity (*ενέργεια*) of the mind is wisdom, while the primary activity (*ενέργεια*) of the reason is prudence. In *Mystagogia* chapter 4, Maximus speaks of the Church an image of man, and man as an image of the Church. Man is composed of body, soul, and mind;⁴⁹ the Church consists of nave, sanctuary, and the divine altar. Body and

47. *Ibidem*, p. 715. Also in the triad: being, well-being, and eternal well-being, were combined the Aristotelian expressions “by potency” and “by act”.

48. *Ibidem*, p. 720. Moreover, Maximus notes that the sensitive perceptions constitutes a parallels to the act of thinking (*Ambigua* 17, 1229A).

49. According to LARS THUNBERG, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, Second Edition. Chicago: Open Court, 1995, p. 107-113, this triad seems to have replaced the Pauline triad of spirit, soul, and body in Church Fathers after Evagrius Ponticus.

nave, soul and sanctuary, mind and the divine altar mutually mirror one another. These three pairs are respectively connected with the three stages of development, namely the first pair with ethical philosophy, the second with natural contemplation ‘spiritually interpreted’, and the third pair is connected with mystical theology.⁵⁰

Stoic, negative evaluation of concupiscence and fury is combined with the biblical influence on the one hand, and the Peripatetic, on the other, which allows a positive judgment concerning the lower parts of the soul. Maximus employs the stoic term “dominant part” (*Ambigua* 10, 2, 1112B) with reference to the intellect, which does not conceive it only as faculty of thinking, because it appears also as a transrational, intuitive organ, sole able to obtain knowledge and “gnostic” contemplation and capable to unite with God. Maximus assigns intellect the condition of being the image of God in man: “*image through the intercession of imitation holds the entire form of the original*” (*Quaestiones ad Thalassium* 55, 548D; 10, 288D). This he divides into intellect (νοῦς) and reason (λόγος). First, intellect is a contemplative faculty through which the soul can be united to God. It is a static and receptive faculty at the summit of the human construction. The intellect can function as a kind of landing area for God. Through the intellect the soul becomes luminous when in communion with God, and the soul in turn illumines the body. But this can happen only when the human ‘architecture’ is restored to its right hierarchical structure. Reason, again, is a practical faculty which governs the activity of the soul. It is the charioteer which drives the ‘two horses’, that is, the desiring and the incensive parts of the soul (*Ambig.* 15, PG 91, 1216AB).⁵¹

Regarding passion and its effects, Maximus uses the old Stoic tripartition in imagination, impulse (or passion) and consent. Through this concept of consent, Maximus understands the fall of intellect from its true nature, which should always be characterized by a “unitary identity”. In this context, we must recall the prologue of the *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* where it is said that “evil was not and will not be in subsistence in his own nature”. This expression of “secondary subsistence” represents “*a commonplace of late Neoplatonism, Stoics and Philo’s*”.⁵²

50. TORSTEIN THEODOR TOLLEFSEN, *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought*, Oxford University Press 2012, p. 170-171.

51. MELCHISEDEC TÖRÖNEN, *Union and Distinction in the Thought of St. Maximus the Confessor*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 167.

52. MORESCHINI, *Storia della filosofia patristica*, p. 723.

Jean-Claude Larchet⁵³ particular emphasis on the concept of “deification” (*theosis*) of man and the world. According to Saint Maximus, deification therefore corresponds to an immutable plan of God. At the end of time, God will unite with the all people (*Capita on love* I, 71), “unique divine power will be manifested in all things, a real and active presence, the same for everyone”, God will become everything for those who will be saved (*Mystagogy* 24, PG, 91, 709C). Thus God, united with humans at the end of the times, will deify their nature with His presence of the deifying energies, which does not mean that all will be deified.⁵⁴

Deification is a reintegration of man and a restoration of his being for the development into the divine pattern of the logos of eternal well-being. According to the terminology of *Ad Thalassium* 60, man, in the deified condition, enjoys God beyond rational and conceptual knowledge, in experience and sensation (πεῖρα and αἴσθησις). This must be the condition in which man no longer conceives of God as an object of reason or mind, but rather enters the union of love with the one that is loved. Maximus defines this sensation as the experience through “participation of the good things beyond nature”.⁵⁵ In deification man executes his natural activity by resting in the mode of the divine activity: the divine activity carries the human activity. According to Maximus there are three *logoi* that describe a triadic pattern, i.e., a unity in distinction, indicating that man is created as an image of the divine being (the Trinity), namely: the *logos* of being, the *logos* of wellbeing, and the *logos* of eternal well-being (*Cap. gnost.* 1,37-50, PG 90: 1097c-1101b). The three *logoi* then belong together and they constitute a single triadic conception in God. Man participates in God in accordance with this triad of *logoi*, but not in all three immediately. In *Chapters on knowledge* 1, 47-50 Maximus shows that the divine activity (ενέργεια) *ad extra* is manifested in ‘works without beginning’, and these are participated beings (ὄντα μεθεκτά). Tollefesen highlights: “As man moves on in accordance with his *logos* of eternal well-being, his receptive capacity is further expanded by divine

53. JEAN-CLAUDE LARCHET, *La divinisation de l’homme selon saint Maxime le Confesseur*, (Théologie et sciences religieuses. Cogitatio fidei, 194), Les Editions du Cerf, Paris 1996, p. 83-124.

54. *Ibidem*, p. 663-664.

55. TOLLEFSEN, *Activity and participation*, (2012) p. 180-181. His dynamic concept of participation is basically the presence of divine activity in created being.

grace, and the human being becomes a recipient of deification. At the highest level (the Sabbaths of Sabbaths, cf. Cap. gnost. 1, 39) one finds the spiritual stillness, or rest (ἡρεμία-πνευματική) of the rational soul, the mind being withdrawn even from the more divine logoi of higher contemplation. The soul dwells wholly in God alone in loving ecstasy, and it has become unmoved (ακίνητον) in God by mystical theology”.⁵⁶

St. Maximus characterized the deification as an «*enhypostatically enlightenment*», thus emphasizing its uncreated character because subsistence in / through the eternal hypostasis of the Word.⁵⁷ Also for St. Gregory Palamas God’s work or energy is not hypostasis, but in hypostasis, is not being, but in being, it’s not self-subsistence, but subsistence in being or in hypostasis (ἐνούσιος, ἐνυπόστατος, ἐνύπαρκτος): “just as Basil, who is great in every way, says, “The Holy Spirit is a sanctifying power which is substantial, real and enhypostatic.” Also in his treatises on the Holy Spirit he demonstrated that not all the energies derived from the Spirit are enhypostatic; and thereby he in turn clearly distinguished these from creatures, for there are realities derived from the Spirit which are enhypostatic, namely, creatures, because God made created substances”.⁵⁸

The mystical experience of *deification* reduces the *gulf* through existential fullness. While the Cappadocians bridged the ontological *gulf* through an ethical and an ecclesiological approach to *deification*, Dionysius and Maximus seemed to resolve the problem of the ontological *gulf* by highlighting the fullest possibilities of *being* in Christ.⁵⁹ This notion of union through participation was

56. *Ibidem*, p. 181-182.

57. *Questions to Thalassius* 61, (PG 90, 644D-645D) in *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, Selected Writings from St Maximus the Confessor, translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003) 131-143 [also in *Phil. rom.* vol. 3 (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2005) 304]: “He gives as a reward to those who obey Him the uncreated deification”, and “the uncreated deification is calling «the enhypostatically enlightenment» which has no creation”; “We suffer deity as beyond nature, but we don’t produce it”, because “no thing which is by nature does not produce deification” [cf. *Thal.* 22 cf. *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ* 115-118; also in *Phil. rom.* vol. 3 (ed. cit.) 84].

58. PALAMAS, *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* 122 (R. E. Sinkewicz ed.) 225. Basil the Great, saying that not all works are hypostasis, has shown that some works are created or they are themselves as creatures.

59. NICHOLAS BAMFORD, *Deified Person. A study of deification in relation to Person and Christian Becoming*, University Press of America, 2012, p. 14. “Communion is not *being* in itself,

echoed by Dionysius and Maximus who considered that the Divine revelatory *deification* experience had significant ontological implications to human *beingness* and existence. Patristic theology did have an essentialist context visible in St Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, St Maximus the Confessor, and later expressed through the energetic theology of Gregory Palamas of Thessaloniki. This energetic model provided the means to the affirm place for a focus on “Higher-Essence” in God which becomes inaccessible and provides the need to assert a participation in uncreated acts which restore the whole *being*.⁶⁰ In the Greek Fathers *deification* represented one of the basic features to express the relationship of God and the world (human beings), yet there was systematic approach to *deification*. Sometimes *deification* was understood sacramentally, at other times eschatologically and at others times it was understood through a personal experience.⁶¹

but allows the ground of *being* to be fulfilled. This ontological context to communion does not mean that communion has substance in itself but that it is generated by the uncreated activity established from the *enhyposstatic* source of the *tri-hyposstatic* Godhead.” (*ibidem*, p. 29). Also, see ANDREW LOUTH, “The Place of Theosis in Orthodox Theology,” in M. J. Christensen, *Partakers of Divine the Nature* (Grand Rapids: 2007), p.34; N. RUSSELL, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, (Oxford: 2004), pp. 115- 205; N. RUSSELL, “Theosis and Gregory Palamas: Continuity or Doctrinal Change,” *SVTQ* 50/4 (2006), pp.357-379; This understanding of *deification* in relation to participation was developed by Clement of Alexandria (*ibid.* p. 122) and Athanasius through the term *theopeo* (*ibid.* p. 176). Russell argues, that “participation” referred in the works of Gregory of Nazianzen, to the attaining the “imitation of Christ” (*ibid.* p.214). Later *deification*, as Russell shows, became more expressly related to the personal experience in Pseudo-Dionysius (*ibid.* p.260), Maximus (*ibid.* p.262) and in the monastic tradition which becomes the focus in Gregory Palamas. See also PAUL COLLINS, “Event: The How of Revelation,” in *Trinitarian Theology West and East* (Oxford: 2001), pp.7-33. STEPHEN FINLAN and VLADIMIR KHARLAMOV, *Theosis: Deification in Christian Theology* (Eugene: 2006); and M. J. Christensen and J. A. Wittung, *Partakers of the Divine Nature* (Grand Rapids: 2007).

60. NICHOLAS BAMFORD, *Deified Person*, p. 37. “Gregory Palamas’ need to focus on the Divine uncreated energies, for the superior “Higher Essence” remains ontologically far beyond the realm of human experience while the operational *hypostases* do not: we cannot partake of the Divine essence, we can only know the *hypostatic* operations....Nevertheless, the focus on the Divine essential-*Esse* to explain how the Divine nature relates to the very *Being* of God in a substantialist model is supported through a Pseudo-Dionysius and Palamite focus on Higher Ousia and even Lossky also argues that for Palamas the Divine Essence was the “superior divinity,” while the operations were inferior.” (*Ibid.*)

61. BAMFORD, *Deified Person*, p. 110.

By the late fifth century the language of deification and its underlying conceptuality were not much in use in theological discourse, for the appeal to deification as a metaphor for salvation was no longer in vogue. The reason for this is mainly to be found in the suspicion surrounding the teachings of Origen and those who shaped theological reflection along similar lines. It was against this background that *Ps-Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor* ‘revive’ the language of deification.⁶² The renaissance of the *theosis* theme in contemporary systematic theology is a measure of the Western theologians’ willingness to engage constructively with a typically “Eastern” idea. Clearly, the *notion of theosis is no longer “owned” by the Christian East.*⁶³

As might be expected, for Paul L. Gavrilyuk the claim to have a special form of perception that makes “*direct human contact with God possible is both epistemologically and metaphysically problematic*”. As a mental act, intellectual vision is less overtly tied to the body. The non-Christian Platonists as a rule treated embodiment as hindering, if not altogether blocking, the vision of the divine. “*Christian theologians ‘baptized’ the ‘Platonic’ version of intellectual vision with different results, tending to maintain an ambivalent attitude towards the role of the body in the contemplation of God. This ambivalence is already evident in Origen, who in some cases views embodiment as an impediment, and in other cases construes it as instrumental to the contemplation of God*”.⁶⁴ For Pseudo-Dionysius, the height of mystical contemplation presupposes the rising above all cognitive powers in the ultimate unification and simplification of the self. By comparison, Maximus’s incarnational vision is more comprehensive, with the body being more consistently integral to contemplation.

62. PAUL M. COLLINS, *Partaking*, p. 102.

63. PAUL L. GAVRILYUK, ‘The retrieval of deification: how a once-despised archaism became an ecumenical desideratum’, in *Modern Theology* 25: 2009, p. 657. See also: CARL E. BRAATEN and ROBERT W. JENSON, eds., *Union With Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998); J. TODD BILLINGS, *Calvin, Participation, and the Gift: The Activity of Believers in Union with Christ* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); A. M. ALLCHIN, *Participation in God: A Forgotten Strand in Anglican Tradition* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1984); JOHN ANTHONY MCGUCKIN, *Standing in God’s Holy Fire: The Byzantine Tradition* (Traditions of Christian Spirituality), Orbis Books, New York 2001.

64. PAUL L. GAVRILYUK and SARAH COAKLEY, *The Spiritual Senses. Perceiving God in Western Christianity*, Cambridge University Press (2011), p. 7-8.

This is manifestly a metaphysics of mystery, in every sense of the term: antinomy, mystical union, and sacrament. And yet we must never forget that the entire doctrine flows from the principle of radical rationalism: to be is to be intelligible. Thus we find that total radicalism leads inexorably to total mysticism. For Eric Pearl “any philosophy which does not include mysticism will be false as *philosophy*, that is, as an account of reality. If reason impels us to mysticism, then our metaphysics must be mystical in order to be rational”. In Maximus’ doctrine, then, Christ comes not to destroy but to fulfill the metaphysics of mystery elaborated by the philosophers. For him there can be no separation between philosophy and theology, or between natural and revealed theology. Thereby, Christology and liturgical mysticism are not additional to a neoplatonic, aristotelian, and other metaphysics. Pearl hopes that will serve to him to reclaim Maximus as “*thoroughgoing eastern Christian Neoplatonist, neither a proto-Thomist nor a proto-existentialist*”: “*Because this is the entelechy of reason, it is no surprise that similar mystical philosophies of identity and difference may be found elsewhere. But this theory reaches its fulfillment in Maximus’ Christological Neoplatonism. What is unique to Maximus is the anchoring of this ontology in the mystery of Christ. In Maximus, as in none of the comparable metaphysics outside the Christian tradition, the doctrine of universal theophany, of cosmic incarnation, is centred and grounded in the particular, historical incarnation. Maximus does not attempt to rationalize the mystery of Christ by expaining it in terms of an independently established theory of participation, nor does he regard it merely as the supreme instance of a general metaphysical principle. Rather, he sees all ontology summed up in that mystery, which is itself the first principle of metaphysics. And it is precisely this Christocentric doctrine that allows Maximus, not to reject, but to retain and perfect the Neoplatonic metaphysics*”.⁶⁵ Eric Pearl states that Maximus accepts the principle that the hypostasis of union which is Christ is the Logos and the idea of enhypostasization, and makes these central to his Christology.⁶⁶

Melchisedec Törönen skillfully attends to the subtleties and nuances in Maximus’s logic of union and difference. Törönen’s sets out the “logic” of union-

65. ERIC DAVID PEARL, *Methexis: Creation, incarnation, deification in Saint Maximus Confessor*, Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1991, p. 314-315.

66. *Ibidem*, p. 188.

and-distinction not only in Trinitarian and Christological contexts but in Maximus's cosmology, ecclesiology, anthropology, hermeneutics, and spiritual doctrine. Törönen's monograph throws into question the time-honored thesis, developed both by Hans Urs von Balthasar and Lars Thunberg, that the Chalcedonian Definition of 451, with its grammar of union without confusion in Jesus Christ, ultimately inspired in Maximus the Confessor a thoroughgoing logic of union and distinction running the full gamut of his theology. Chalcedonian Christology factors into that logic but is not exhaustive of it ("pan-Chalcedonianism" and "mystification of Chalcedon"⁶⁷), Törönen argues. Maximus's pervasive emphasis on "union and distinction" and "unity and difference" finds its roots in a variety of sources ("Porphyrian telescope logic"⁶⁸).

There is, however, a philosophical tradition which stands out in Maximus' works, that of the Neoplatonic Aristotelian commentaries,⁶⁹ a tradition Maximus knew directly. Unlike Boethius or Abelard in the Latin-speaking world, or the fifteenth-century Greek patriarch Gennadius Scholarius, Maximus was not an Aristotelian commentator himself. He, nevertheless, was acquainted with this tradition and made a considerable use of it as a tool to serve his own primarily theological and exegetical purposes. *His concern, we should not forget, was to continue, not the philosophical tradition of the Aristotelian commentators, but the theological one of the Fathers.* In *Opusculum* 21, in which he discusses the notions of property, quality, and difference, Maximus makes a point characteristic of his stance: *"The meaning of these terms in the secular philosophers is very complex, and it would take [too] long to expound [all] their subdivisions. One would have to extend the account so much that it would no longer comply with letter-writing but would become a business of book-writing. In contrast, the explanation of these [terms] by the divine Fathers is compact and brief, and is*

67. MELCHISEDEC TÖRÖNEN, *Union and Distinction in the Thought of St. Maximus the Confessor*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 138 and 2.

68. *Ibidem*, p. 161.

69. RICHARD SORABJI (ed.), *Aristotle Transformed: The Ancient Commentators and their Influence* (London: Duckworth, 1990); Klaus Oehler, "Aristotle in Byzantium", *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 5 (1964), p. 133-46; LINOS G. BENAKIS, "Commentaries and Commentators on the Logical Works of Aristotle in Byzantium", in R. Claussen and R. Daube-Schackat (eds.), *Gedankenzeichen: Festschrift für Klaus Oehler zum 60. Geburtstag*, (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1988), p. 3-12.

not done in relation to some substratum, that is, essence or nature, but in relation to the things that are considered in essence, and indeed, in hypostasis” (Opusc. 21, PG 91, 248BC). Clearly, Maximus knew what the ‘philosophers’ were saying, although he abstains from expounding their doctrine.⁷⁰

Maximus counts the four adverbs in the definition of faith from Chalcedon (ad 451) as a basic logical tool (*Ambiguum* 5 confirms this) for describing the relation between uncreated and created being: without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation (ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιάφετος, ἀχωρίστος). 214. At this point Tollefsen disagree with Törönen (2007) who, in the introduction to his book, complains about the pan-Chalcedonianism making these adverbs basic logical concepts in Maximus. Tollefsen agree with Törönen that union and distinction are basic logical concepts in Maximus’ thinking, but is not the so-called Chalcedonian logic a special application of these concepts?⁷¹

3. The *logos* constitutes the profound unity and co-existence of essence and energy. A theological foundation for an ascetic spirituality - relationship between Logoi and the Uncreated Energies

Maximus holds that not only is man deified by the penetration of the fullness of the divine activities into his natural functions; the incarnated God Himself is humanized by the penetration of the activity of the human nature into the divine nature. *The idea of mutual interpenetration* (περιχώρησις) have a soteriological importance. So, the divine activity penetrates into the human nature of Christ, but this nature is preserved, secured by its natural logos in God. What is changed is the so-called ‘mode’ of being (*tropos*), i.e. the way in which the human nature exists and executes its natural functions. Therefore, the human nature of Christ is deified *by participation* in the divine activity. Maximus sees this

70. TÖRÖNEN, *Union and Distinction*, p. 19. See also: Christopher Stead, *Doctrine and Philosophy in Early Christianity. Arius, Athanasius, Augustine*, Variorum Collected Studies. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000, especially chapter XX: Logic and the application of names to God, p. 303-320.

71. TOLLEFESSEN, *Activity and participation*, (2012) p. 179, n. 75.

glorification and deification as the divine purpose for the whole created world. According to *Ambiguum* 7 the *Logos with His logoi is the unparticipated source*, but even so, every creature participates in (μετέχει) God proportionally.⁷²

*This christological ratio between divine logoi and uncreated energies is brought straight by Karayiannis in his comment regarding the ontology of divine energy: “Christology gives to the divine energies the soteriological dimension, because Christ works salvation through the synergy between divine energy and his human energy”.*⁷³

From the works of Gregory Palamas, as well, the primary sense of *energeia* is activity. The *energeia*, he says, quoting St John of Damascus, is ‘the essential motion of nature’ (ἡ οὐσιώδης τῆς φύσεως κίνησις).⁷⁴ This resounds with Maximian terminology.⁷⁵ Palamas denies that the activities could be hypostasized. Rather they are the processions, manifestations, and natural activities of the Spirit.⁷⁶ This resounds with Dionysian terminology. Gregory several times stresses the uncreated character of the activity. God’s activity is not something that begins and ends, but is a permanent expression of the divine being itself. Palamas does not seem to have developed a doctrine of *logoi* as acts of will, in the way St Maximus did, but, rather, Palamas identifies the activities and the *logoi*.⁷⁷

Certainly Maximian idea of a dyophysite reciprocity between God and man that is the key to his soteriology. The text of *Ambigua*, 10 describes a double movement and the term “theandric” becomes his preferred expression of the divine-human reciprocity in action: “*They say that God and man are exemplars (paradeigmata) one of another; and that God makes Himself man for man’s sake out of love, so far as man, enabled by God through charity, deified himself; and that man is wrapped up by God in mind to the unknowable, so far as man has manifested through virtues the God by nature invisible.*” The goal of the Incarnation is precisely to make possible a communion between energies, which

72. *Amb.* 7, PG 91: 1080b.

73. VASILIOS KARAYIANNIS (archim.), *Maxime le Confesseur, Essence et Énergies de Dieu* (Théologie Historique 93), Beauchesne, Paris 1993, pp. 169-173, 488.

74. *Capita* 150, 143.

75. PALAMAS, *Triads* 3.2.6 and 7; cf. Maximus, *Cap. gnost.* 1.48, PG 90: 1100c.

76. *Capita* 150, 71.

77. *Capita* 150, 87; *Triads* 3.3.10.

alone can bring into being the divinization that is the final goal of human life. That expresses *this reciprocity in action* (is what L. Thunberg might call an “*on-to-tropo-logical*” kind)⁷⁸.

God the Logos with all His *logoi* is the transcendent cause of all creatures. He is not participated in by anything. But there is a divine activity which is manifested for the creation and redemption of the world. This activity is the object of participation. Thereby the divine activity presents God as a simple undivided whole to each participant. When God so wills, creatures emerge into the presence of being by the actual reception of the divine activity to the degree delimited by the *logoi*. The created essence does not exist by a created being (*esse*), but by the reception of God’s activity (*ἐνεργεῖα*) as Being. Likewise, the created being is not deified by the reception of a created perfection, but by the reception of God’s activity as Eternal Being.⁷⁹ However, according to St Maximus, the uncreated and the created are kept within their proper spheres according to the *ontological ‘logic’ of His logoi*. An adequate understanding of St Maximus’ doctrine of divine *logoi* presupposes that we see clearly both the distinctions between divine essence, activity (energies), *logoi*, and created beings, and the ways these elements are connected with one another. So there is a distinction between the divine *logoi* and the activities. Relating to the assertion that *Maximus is a pre-Palamitic Palamist* I agree with T. Tollefsen who noticed the anachronism of such interpretations: “*I shall not, however, take for granted, says Tollefsen, that Maximus is a pre-Palamitic Palamist, even though he, in the end, may be found to develop a doctrine of divine essence and activities that is largely equivalent to the teaching of St Gregory Palamas... it could be highly tempting to describe the path from the Cappadocians via Maximus to Gregory Palamas as a teleological development towards a natural conclusion... earlier thinkers strug-*

78. LARS THUMBERG, *Man and the Cosmos. The vision of St Maximus the Confessor*, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York 1985, pp. 53-54, 72. Based on Thumberg’s statement according to which even the Incarnation itself may be described as a perichoresis (L. THUMBERG, *op. cit.*, p. 27), Michael E Butler argues that deification itself is defined as a perichoresis in Maximus, but he wonders if there’s a “unidirectional or reciprocal perichoresis” (MICHAEL E. BUTLER, *Hypostatic union and Monotheletism: The dyothelite christology of St. Maximus the Confessor*, Fordham University, 1994, p. 164-166);

79. TORSTEIN THEODOR TOLLEFSEN, *The Christocentric Cosmology of St Maximus the Confessor*, Oxford University Press 2008, p. 220.

gled with the problems of their own days, and not with problems belonging to fourteenth-century Byzantium.”⁸⁰

Maximus expresses *doctrine of deification* in *Ambiguum* 10, where he says the deified person has become without beginning and end (ἀναρχος καὶ ἀτελεύτητος), and that he possesses the divine and eternal life of the indwelling Logos.⁸¹ Man becomes interpenetrated by God, and he becomes God even he is a creature. Maximus states that man is made God, except for identity of essence (χωρὶς τῆς κατ’ οὐσίαν ταυτότητος).⁸² His character as God is neither by his own nature, because as a creature he has his beginning from non-being, nor by participating in God’s very nature, but by grace and participation in the divine activity: “In Christ who is God and the Logos of the Father there dwells in bodily form the complete fullness of deity by essence (ὅλον κατ’ οὐσίαν οἰκεῖ τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς); in us the fullness of deity dwells by grace (ἐν ἡμῖν δὲ κατὰ χάριν οἰκεῖ τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος) whenever we have formed in ourselves every virtue and wisdom, lacking in no way which is possible to man in the faithful reproduction of the archetype.”⁸³ St Gregory Palamas repeats the Maximian idea and even strengthens it when he says that those who attain deification ‘become thereby uncreated, unoriginate, and indescribable (ἀκτίστους, ἀνάρχους καὶ ἀπεριγράπτους).’⁸⁴

Utilization of St Maximus’ thought and the integration of the Saint’s *logoi* doctrine with that of the uncreated energies as elaborated by St Gregory Palamas, signify an issue which has yet to receive a definitive clarity among St Maximus’ many commentators.⁸⁵ For David Bradshaw it’s clear that in the minds of

80. TOLLEFSEN, *The Christocentric Cosmology*, p. 139.

81. *Amb.* 10, PG 91: 1144c.

82. *Amb.* 41, PG 91: 1308b.

83. *Cap. gnost.* 2.21, PG 90: 1133d.

84. *The Triads* 3.1.31, trans. by Gendle (1983), 86. Cf. TOLLEFSEN, *The Christocentric Cosmology*, p. 212-213.

85. The issue is treated very briefly by LARS THUNBERG, *Man and the Cosmos* (New York: SVS Press, 1985) 137-43; VASILIOS KARAYIANNIS, *Maxime le Confesseur: Essence et Energies de Dieu* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1993) 215-22; and JEAN-CLAUDE LARCHET, *La Theologie des Energies Divines: Des origines à saint Jean Damascene* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2010) 392-5. Key texts from St Maximus on this question include: *Amb.* 7.12, PG 91:1276A-1277B (energies, not *logoi*); *Amb.* 7.15-21 PG 91:1077C-1084B (*logoi*, nor energies); *Amb.* 22.2, PG 91:1256D -1257C (both energies and *logoi*); *Amb.* 42.14, PG 91:1328B-1329D (*logoi*); *Cap. Gnost.* I. 47-50,55, PG 90:1100C-1104C; II.60, 88, PG 90:1106A, 1120C. On the other hand, Thunberg (*op. cit.*, 140), J.

Maximus the rational principles (*logoi*) play a role similar in many aspects to that of energy (*energeiai*) to Cappadocian, but “this functional similarity should not lead to the identification of *logoi* with the energies”.⁸⁶ The reason that the term *logos* is used instead of *energeia* is to highlight the fact that God is present in the beings not only as the creator and sustainer of them, but as their meaning and purpose.

The question of how the *logoi* are connected with the uncreated energies of God in Maximus’s theology has been a “thorn in the flesh”⁸⁷ for Western scholars. Sherwood directly criticizes this interpretation of Lossky’s, saying that the latter “understands the *logoi* in an Areopagitic and Palamite sense.”⁸⁸ Riou stands alone among the Western scholars in that, without entering into discussion about Palamism, he simply remarks, “Maximus himself calls the *logoi* ‘divine energies’ in Chapter 22 of the *Ambigua*.”⁸⁹ By contrast, an Orthodox the-

FARRELL (*Free choice in St. Maximus the Confessor*, St. Tikhon’s, 1989, p. 139), KARAYIANNIS (*op. cit.*, 215) and Larchet (*op. cit.*, p. 395) cite the one text that includes both *logoi* and energies (*Amb* 22.2, PG 91.1257 AB) – a text not cited by Balthasar, Sherwood, or Lossky, as notes KARAYIANNIS, *op. cit.*, 219 n. 285.

86. DAVID BRADSHAW, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom*, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 216. “The common outlook for many centuries has been that the Hellenistic teaching about *logos* found an heir in the Christian *logos*” (VLADIMIR CVETKOVIC, *Ontologies of freedom and necessity: an investigation of the concepts of *logos* in Greek philosophy and Christian thought*, Durham University, 2001 p. 108).

87. NIKOLAOS LOUDOVIKOS, *A Eucharistic Ontology. Maximus the Confessors Eschatological Ontology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity*, Translated by Elizabeth Theokritoff, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2010. Here Loudovikos analyzes the “direct hermeneutic connection in Maximus between the *logoi* of entities and eucharistic theology”. This means that the Eucharist remains the *locus par excellence* of this dialogical/synergetic encounter of human *logos*/will with the divine logical providence/judgment, which asks for this dialogue (*Ib.*, p. 93). The concept of “mode of existence” in Maximus’s theology has decisive consequences for his theory of the *logoi* of entities. The inner principles of entities attain substantive existence only as concrete modes of existence, manifesting personal otherness. The “eucharistic doctrine of the person” is the “communal reciprocity between man and God through the inner principles of entities, which function as gifts” offered and bestowed, forming the foundation for the communion of persons between God and man, a communion ultimately expressed as a “eucharistic reciprocity” of “offering” and “partaking” (*Ib.*, p. 96-97).

88. V. LOSSKY, *Mystical Theology*, p. 95; P. SHERWOOD, *The Earlier Ambigua*, pp. 178-9. Cf., Loudovikos, *Eucharistic Ontology*, p. 97.

89. A. RIOU, *Le Monde et l’Eglise Selon Maxime le Confesseur*, Beauchesne, 1973, p. 60. Cf., LOUDOVIKOS, *Eucharistic Ontology*, p. 98.

ologian such as Bulović can say that the divine energies are the “logoi of things”: “The doctrine of the “logoi of things” makes no sense and cannot stand in the absence of the doctrine of a real distinction between essence and energy, nature and will. And on the other hand, without the doctrine of the “logoi of things” the Christian dogma of the creation of the world would become shaky and vulnerable, being unable to explain how it is that the world has a beginning, while the creative power and energy of God is without beginning. So this doctrine concerning God’s “logoi” and ideas is essentially identical to the doctrine of the divine energies”.⁹⁰

The *logos* constitutes the natural energy within an essence. The principle is the profound unity of essence and energy and their co-existence: “We all possess both logos and its natural energy.”⁹¹ Loudovikos see the uncreated essential principle functioning as a “limit” and “definition” for the uncreated energy: “Anyway, we see that in Maximus the doctrine of a distinction between essence and energies in God cannot be understood without the doctrine of the uncreated logoi of entities in God, which in turn expresses and promotes the distinction between essence and will in God made by Athanasius and the Cappadocians.”⁹²

Palamas is making use of this teaching of Maximus’s when he grounds the reality of the uncreated energies in the personal/hypostatic character of the living God of Holy Scripture. The theory of the essential principles of entities in its connection with the theology of the uncreated energies of God is what explains the “personal” character of those natural energies and “leads us to the eucharistic foundation of the theology of the uncreated energies in Maximus, as also in Palamas”, says Loudovikos.⁹³

As it was emphasized by Calinic Berger *St Maximus provided the core of St Nilos’s synthesis and his discovery of St Maximus came at the apex of his*

90. IRENEI BULOVIĆ, *To Mysterion tis en ti Triadi diakriseos*, pp. 153-4. On the identification of energy and force in God (in the theology of Mark of Ephesus), see the thesis of I. Bulovic cited above (pp. 199, 113). Cf., *Ibidem*.

91. *Opuscula*, PG 91: 36B. Cf. PG 9K137A: “If He received the essential *logoi* of which He Himself was the hypostasis, then presumably He also had the natural animate energy of the flesh, the energy whose essential principle is spread throughout our nature. And if as man He had the natural energy constituted by the principle of [human] nature, then clearly as God too He had a natural energy, which was manifested by the principle of the supra-essential Godhead”.

92. LOUDOVIKOS, *Eucharistic Ontology*, p. 100.

93. *Ibidem*, pp. 101, 121, n. 228.

work on St Gregory Palamas: "Palamas explicated theological aspect of our union with God through His uncreated energies, the Philokalia elucidated the human aspect by providing practical guidance in prayer and life, and St Maximus placed the path, the goal, the world, and the Church, in a synthetic and all-encompassing vision, which was notably and outstandingly Christocentric."⁹⁴

Therefore, readers of Fr. Staniloae's work cannot but take note of his widespread and systematic use of Maximus' doctrine of the *logoi*, which he closely relates to doctrine of the uncreated energies of St Gregory Palamas.

First, while Staniloae maintains the ontological connection established by St Maximus between the one Logos and the many *logoi* in his overall doctrine of participation, he creatively draws out the implications contained in the Confessor's teaching that the one Logos is the hypostatic or *personal* Logos of God.⁹⁵ Due to this fact, in Staniloae's view, the *logoi* of things possess ontological and existential (that is, personal) dimensions simultaneously. From the ontological perspective, the *logoi* are the unchanging models and goals of all things, according to which God creates, sustains, and guides them to Himself. The *logoi* pre-exist in an eternal, undifferentiated, and unchanging unity in God the Logos, and without departing from this simple unity, become differentiated and dynamic in the act of creation.⁹⁶ More specifically, they are divine "wills" or the "thoughts of God, in conformity to which things are brought into existence through the divine will."⁹⁷

94. CALINIC BERGER, "A Contemporary Synthesis of St Maximus' Theology: The Work of Fr. Dumitru Staniloae", in Bishop Maxim (Vasiljević), *Knowing the Purpose of Creation through the Resurrection*, Sebastian Press & The Faculty of Orthodox Theology - University of Belgrade, 2013, p. 389-405, here pp. 395, 398.

95. "Moreover, would he not also perceive that the many *logoi* are one Logos, seeing that all things are relating to Him without being confused with Him, who is the essentially and personally distinct (ἐνούσιόν τε καί ἐνυπόστατον) Logos of God the Father, the origin and cause of all things..." (*Amb.* 7.15, PG 91:1077CD). Cf., Calinic Berger, "A Contemporary Synthesis", p. 398-399.

96. "... the one Logos is many *logoi* and the many are One. According to the creative and sustaining procession of the One to individual beings... the One is many" (*Amb.* 7.20, PG 91:1081C); "...every divine energy indicates through itself the whole of God, indivisibly present in each particular thing, according to the logos-through which that thing exists in its own way... [God] is truly all things in all things, never going out of His own indivisible simplicity (*Amb.* 22,3, PG 91:1257BC). Cf Dionysius, *DN* 4.13 " [He is in] all things through a superessential and ecstatic power whereby He yet stay within Himself..."

97. In *Ambigua*, 28 St Maximus, following Dionysius, calls the *logoi* "wills" [θέληματα] (*Amb.* 7.24, PG 91:1085BC; *DN* 5.8, 824C).

One consequence of St?niloae's personal-ontological interpretation of the *logoi* is that the contemplation of nature, which is the ability to see the *logoi* of things unaffected and undistorted by passionate attachment, becomes clearly a form of personal dialogue between God and the human person. Through ascetic purification and the seeking of the *logoi*, St?niloae's emphasis on the *personal* aspect of the Logos-*logoi* doctrine and highlights his notion that "person" or interpersonal communion, is always the goal (of the contemplation of nature), and "nature" is the means and irreducible ground of this communion. In this manner, "the *Logos-logoi* doctrine allows Fr. St?niloae to establish a *theological foundation for an ascetic spirituality* which leaves no aspect of reality outside of the divine-human dialogue".⁹⁸

Staniloae deftly integrates the *logoi* and uncreated energies, all the while remaining within the framework established for the *logoi* by St Maximus. It could be said that *Staniloae sees the logoi and energies as complementary*, which can be demonstrated by drawing attention to some of Staniloae's basic distinctions in this regard.

First, each logos, while clearly pre-existing and uncreated, is always identifiable through a *specific* created thing or *specific* attribute of God. The uncreated energies, on the other hand, are not integrally connected to specific beings or attributes. Therefore, the *logoi*, to an extent, have become intelligible through their manifestation in particulars; the energies are not associated with particulars and thus remain beyond intelligibility.⁹⁹ However, this does not mean that uncreated energies cannot be mediated through created things.

Secondly, this distinction can be seen in the fact that the uncreated energies reveal the *logoi* in things and the attributes of God "in motion." This becomes especially clear in natural contemplation, in which the ascent through created things to see their *logoi* occurs not only through ascetic purification, but with

98. Cf., CALINIC BERGER, "A Contemporary Synthesis", p. 398-399.

99. The *logoi* can in turn become transparent to the energies, as St Maximus states in Amb. 22.2 (PG 91:1257 AB), and Staniloae said, "the *logoi* are seized with the mind, but their energetic character with our entire being" (*Ambigua*, 226, n. 295; "Commentaire des Ambigua," translated by Père Aurel Grigoras, in *Saint Maxime le Confesseur: Ambigua*. Trans. Emmanuel Ponsoye (Paris: Les Éditions de l'Ancre, 1994). Cf., CALINIC BERGER, "A Contemporary Synthesis", p. 400-401.

the help of "grace", which Staniloae identifies as the uncreated energies.¹⁰⁰ *The energies serve to illumine the mind to see the logoi in things and lead the mind through the logoi to their source, the one, personal Logos of God.*

The distinction between the *logoi* and energies is also evident in Staniloae's description of the difference between contemplation in this present life and in the future age. In the present life, we look directly at created things and through them we behold their *logoi*, which reveal the one Logos. However, in the future age we will see the *logoi* directly in the one Logos, because they will *become transparent in the infinite light of the uncreated energies*.¹⁰¹

A final note should be made regarding the fact that on a few occasions *Staniloae states that the logoi are uncreated energies*.¹⁰² These instances should be seen in their context: in each, Staniloae is referring specifically to the creation and sustaining of things, which in his interpretation occurs through the divine will of God, in accordance with the *logoi*, and by means of the uncreated energies. By referring to the *logoi* as energies in this context, Staniloae is not disregarding the distinction between the *logoi* and the divine energies, which is clearly articulated and maintained throughout his works. Instead, he is emphasizing that the *logoi*, as "divine wills" or "creative, volitional powers of God"¹⁰³ there-

100. It could be argued that St Maximus also equates "grace" and "divine energy," both of which convey "deification" after the cessation of natural powers (compare *Cap. Gnost.* 1.47, 90:1100C and 2.88, 90:1166D; Also compare, *Amb.* 7.12, 91:1076CD with *On the Lord's Prayer*, 90:877A). In his description of Melchizedek, St Maximus refers to the "divine and uncreated grace, which exists eternally and is beyond all nature and time" (*Amb.* 10.44, 91:1141B), which Staniloae notes alludes to Palamas' teaching long before Palamas (*Revista Teologică* 34: 3-4 (1944); p. 141, n. 164). Cf., *ibidem*.

101. In other words, when we contemplate God directly we will contemplate the *logoi* of things in Him Himself, nor in things, as now. Then we will see them so much better illuminated, more profoundly, more clearly" (*Quest. ad Thal.* 55, PG 90.536). "Thus, if in this life we first behold created things and only through them, with great difficulty, God, then we will see first God and transparently in His light all created things, in a manner all the more clear and complete, and more deeply, than we see them in an earthly objectivity...? This light Staniloae calls the "energies of God, more infinite than an ocean" (*Comment on Cap. Gnost.* 2.88, PG 90:1165D [ET *Philokalia* 2:160, a text in parallel with *Amb.* 7.12, 91:1077AB], *Filocalia*, 2:201, n.1). See also, Introduction, *Filocalia* 2:22-3). Cf., Calinic Berger, "A Contemporary Synthesis", p. 402.

102. CALINIC BERGER, *Teognosia - sinteza dogmatica si duhovniceasca a parintelui Dumitru Staniloae*, Deisis, Sibiu, 2014, p. 135-142.

103. Dionysius the Areopagite (*DN* 5:8, PG 1:824C) affirmed that the *logoi* are divine wills.

by also possess an “energetic character”¹⁰⁴. Certainly, St Maximus does not call the *logoi* “energies” and neither does he assign them a directly energetic aspect, though he does refer to the *logoi* as *θελήματα*, citing Dionysius. Therefore, it would appear that, in this instance (of assigning an *energetic character to the logoi as θελήματα, and thereby calling them “energies”*), Staniloae is interpreting the *logoi* not entirely based on the Confessor’s own writings, but also *in the light of Dionysius*.¹⁰⁵ St?niloae establishes the relationship between deification, *logoi* and energies and their common roots in Christology, and express it in the following way, saying: “*The incarnation of the Word... gave man the possibility to see in the human face of Logos, concentrated anew, all the logoi and divine energies. This final deification will consist of a contemplation and experience of all the divine logoi and energies conceived in and radiating from, the face of Christ.*”¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

We ended our study with analyzing the *relationship between logoi and energeia* (the intentional or “logical” *energeia* and the ontology of divine energy as ontological “logic”) within the maximian cosmology, by referring to the palamite theology. The concept of *logoi* for St. Maximus play a role similar in many respects to that of energy (*energeia*) in Cappadocian Fathers, but the functional similarity it should not lead to the identification rationales with the energies. Because the St Maximus’ developement of the doctrine of divine

The *logoi* are not inert models, but creative, volitional powers of God, but that does not imply that they have an ontic existence, do not have self-existence.

104. CALINIC BERGER, “A Contemporary Synthesis”, p. 403.

105. Here is the passage from Dionysius (DN 5.8, PG 1:824C) which give the *logoi* an active/energetic aspect: “But we say that the being-making (οὐσιοποιούς) *logoi* of all beings, which pre-exist uniformly in God, are paradigm (παραδείγματα), which theology calls predeterminations, and divine beneficent volitions (θέλήματα), determinative and creative (ἀφοριστικά καὶ ποιητικά) of beings, according to which the Super-Essential both pre-determined and produced all beings.”

106. D. STANILOAE, *Spiritualitatea Ortodoxa* (Romanian version 1992) p. 319, and English translation, *Orthodox Spirituality*, Trans. Achrom. Jerome (Newnille) and Otilia Kloos (St. Tikhon’s Press, 2002), p. 374.

essence and activities is largely equivalent to the teaching of St Gregory Palamas, it could be highly tempting to describe the path from the Cappadocians via Maximus to Gregory Palamas as a teleological development towards a natural conclusion. From the works of Gregory it is easy to see that the primary sense of *energeia* is activity. The *energeia*, he says, is ‘the essential motion of nature’. This resounds with Maximian terminology (Palamas, *Triads* 3.2.6 and 7; cf. Maximus, *Cap. gnost.* 1.48). Also, we saw the Maximus’ influence on Palamas and the direct references in which Palamas employs *Maximus’ definitions describing the reciprocal perichoresis into the process of the divinisation*. Therefore Maximian idea of a dyophysite reciprocity (onto-topological) between God and man (*Ambiguum*, 10) is the key to his soteriology (L. Thunberg). Palamas comes to a definition proper of *theosis* who is actually a quotation from Maximus (*Thalas.* 61, PG 90, 636C, and from the *Scholia* 6, PG 90, 644C). “*Deification is an enhyposstatic and direct illumination which has no beginning*”, “a mystical union with God beyond intellect and reason” (*Triads* III. 1.28).

Therefore, connecting the theology of the uncreated energies with that of the uncreated *logoi*, simply proving the “personal” character of the uncreated energies to save us from lapsing into neo-Platonism, into impersonal energies or emanations. *The ontological dialogue between divine logoi and human logoi, accomplished in Christ, is the only natural context of the circulation of energies*, which proves also the personal/en-hyposstatic character of the uncreated energy. *This rational principles which produce the substance of beings and preexist in a unified way in/around God, are the taboric luminous garment of Christ*, as we found in the analysis of the texts of *Ambigua* 26, 41-71.

The holistic anthropology of deification through the enhyposstatically illumination in Palamite hesychasm was easily able to assimilate the St. Maximus theology of uncreated *logoi* which provides a comprehensive framework for hesychastic cosmology of the uncreated light. Hermeneutical key here is the uncreated light (linking divine *logoi* of St. Maximus to the uncreated *energeia* of St. Gregory Palamas) and Christological anthropology (which connects palamite pneumatology of grace [*charis*] with the maximian christological dyothelism).

I chose instead old dilemma “Logic or Life”, the couple “Logic and Spirituality”, in which philosophy functions as hermeneutics and heuristics towards mystical experience. The association of aristotelian-neoplatonic logic with Christian mysticism in this analysis dedicated to Maxim, is a partnership under-

stood as struggle of mystique against/for (at once) language/terminology, which actually represent a dynamic corrective against theological systematics.

St. Maximus the Confessor synthesized Aristotelianism influences with those of Platonism in order to exceed the daring speculations of cosmology origeniene. He had an extraordinary ability to combine metaphysical requirements with the effort of defining the faith dogma, and the monastic experiences with the depth thinking, succeeding to propose a new conception in which converge all cultural and religious influences.

So, giving justice to Maximus any philosophy which does not include mysticism will be false as *philosophy*. Our metaphysics must be mystical in order to be rational. In Maximus' doctrine, then, Christ comes not to destroy but to fulfill the metaphysics of mystery elaborated by the philosophers. For him there can be no separation between philosophy and theology, or between natural and revealed theology. Thereby, Christology and liturgical mysticism are not additional to a neoplatonic, aristotelian, and other metaphysics. Maximus *concern was to continue, not the philosophical tradition of the Aristotelian commentators, but the theological one of the Fathers*. He was not an Aristotelian commentator himself. The union and distinction are basic logical concepts in Maximus' thinking, but the Chalcedonian logic is the application of these concepts. Only in this way one can talk about christianization of aristotelian logic as we have seen above in the analyze of Maximian's concept of ἐνούσια and ἐνυπόστασις.