

**Neither Created-Name-Adoration nor Name-Fighting:  
Orthodox Christian Dogmatic Theology on *Divinity, Energy, and Name***

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The Orthodox Church does not follow Pavel Florenskii or Sergius Bulgakov in their “name-worshipping” or “sophiology” or other syncretistic theories that confuse Creator with creation or that distort the doctrine of the Trinity with something like a fourth hypostasis. At the same time, the Orthodox Church also does not follow Sergius Stragorodskii’s misleadingly-titled *Synodal Letter* (May 1913) against “name-worshipping,” a letter that distorted and condemned the Orthodox teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas on “energy” and “name.” Unfortunately, Sergius’s anti-Palamite errors were sometimes rejected and sometimes accepted by some flip-flopping, heavily anti-Hesychast, westernizing, and confused Halki Seminary professors near Constantinople. These unfortunate errors and mutually refuting opinions among a few Russian and Greek theologians and bishops (more than fourteen contradictory Russian and Greek opinions) were largely the result of westernizing influences before the revival in the extensive study of Saint Gregory Palamas’s writings. It is a myth, however, that Palamite writings were unavailable during this period of westernization. They were in fact widely available, just not fashionable to study in westernized Eastern seminaries of the time. The consensus of the Church accepts the Orthodox Palamite doctrines that 1) God’s energy is God Himself, not really inferior deity; 2) God’s energies “dwell in” sacred words; 3) God’s “name” frequently is used to mean “God Himself” or the “energy that is God Himself”; and 4) It would be madness to equate uncreated divine energy (God Himself) with created human names for God (letters, sounds, thoughts). With those four doctrines in mind, we can see that Saint John of Kronsdtadt was perfectly Orthodox when he taught that God “attaches” Himself to His name when it is pronounced in true prayer (because God does dwell in sacred words) and the saint was also perfectly Orthodox when he taught that “God’s Name is God Himself” (because “name” often means glory, power, or energy and God’s glory, power, or energy is God Himself). The consensus of the Orthodox Church also accepts Saint Tikhon’s February 1921 resolution of the name-glorification controversy. That resolution set aside Sergius’s Stragorodskii’s anti-Palamite (heretical) language of 1913, and replaced it with language from a 1914 decision that overturned Sergius’s opinion. The 1914 and 1921 decisions brought reconciliation in pure Orthodox doctrine and were accepted by the Church, whereas Sergius’s anti-Palamite (heretical) language of 1913 was rejected by the Church. Western cultural influences over Eastern Christian cultures, intellectuals, educational institutions, and bishops, especially theological tendencies originating in the West (Augustianism, Barlaamism, Scholasticism) are largely responsible for the errors of Sergius and those who temporarily followed him. The temporary approval of anti-Palamite teaching by Sergius and some at Halki is inseparable from the westernizing tendencies that produced the new-calendar and ecumenism in Greek churches.

**ORTHODOX CONSENSUS, DOGMA, AND NON-ORTHODOX INFLUENCES**

The historic Ecumenical Synods of the Orthodox Church frequently repeated that Orthodox Christians are to “follow in the footsteps of the Holy Fathers.” This means that we are to follow the *consensus* of the Orthodox Church: the consensus of the Holy Scriptures, councils, saints, and liturgical prayer books of the Church. When it comes to Christian dogma, it is this Orthodox patristic consensus that we follow, not the personal opinions of any one teacher or church writer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Saint Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium* 4.3: “Now in the Catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all. That is truly and properly ‘Catholic,’ as is shown by the very force and meaning of the word, which comprehends everything almost universally. We shall hold to this rule if we follow universality, antiquity, and consent. We shall follow universality if we acknowledge that one Faith to be true which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity if we in no wise

In the modern world, “consensus” is often considered as positive, and “dogma” as negative. But in the Orthodox Christian Church, “dogma” often has a positive meaning; “dogma” often means “consensus.” In the Church, “dogma” can refer specifically to a *decree*, a teaching that has been decreed by a council of the Church and is accepted by the consensus of the entire Orthodox Church worldwide. Dogma can also refer to a Christian teaching that is accepted by the consensus of the entire Orthodox Church, with it never having been necessary for a council to issue a decree. At other times, the Church decided that it was necessary for a council to issue a formal, detailed definition of faith (*hóros písteōs*) in order to explain and defend particular teachings of the Orthodox Christian faith.

There are many examples through the centuries of councils that issued detailed definitions of dogma or clarifications on doctrine. The First Ecumenical Council defined as a dogma that Christ was “begotten ... before all ages” (begotten before time began) and “begotten not made” (begotten not created). The council anathematized the un-Orthodox teaching that “there was once when the Son was not” (the false teaching that there was a time when the Son of God did not exist). The Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils issued detailed clarifications about the Deity and humanity within the one person of Christ. The Seventh Ecumenical Council and the Hesychast/Palamite Council in Constantinople of 1351 defined the difference between the “absolute-worship” (divine-adoration) given to God and the “relative worship” (relative veneration) given to saints and holy icons. The Hesychast/Palamite councils (1341, 1347, 1351, 1352, and 1368) issued long definitions about God’s essence and energies. Those dogmatic definitions were many thousands of words. The *Synodicon of Orthodoxy*, which is read on the first Sunday of the Great Fast, summarizes the teaching of these synods on God’s energy. The *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* does not deal in detail with the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit, but the Council in Constantinople of 1285 and the *Synodicon of the Holy Spirit* deal with that doctrine in great detail. The Council of 1484 in Constantinople rejected the false Uniate Council of Florence and decreed that Latins who convert to Orthodoxy should be received (at least) by chrismation. (It had already become customary in certain areas of the Church to receive Latins by both baptism and chrismation. The Council of 1755/1756 in Constantinople decreed that Roman Catholics who convert to Orthodoxy should be received by baptism and chrismation.) Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople responded in detail (1573–1581) to the new teachings of Lutheran Protestantism. At least six Orthodox councils responded to the new teachings of Protestantism (especially Calvinist Protestantism) which seemed to influence Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril Loukaris of Constantinople (1572–1638). Patriarch Dositheus II of Jerusalem (1641–1707) and the Council of Jerusalem (1672) issued long theological definitions in response to the new teachings John Calvin (“Reformed” theology). There were also several important letters issued by the patriarch and/or synods in Constantinople in the nineteenth century (1836, 1838, 1848, 1868, and 1895). Several of those letters responded to aggressive Latin and Protestant propaganda efforts in Orthodox lands. Those Orthodox responses dealt with Orthodox dogma, but they were made necessary because of the political, cultural, and religious pressures that Islamic, Roman Catholic, and Protestant powers put upon Orthodox populations. The best way to understand those historical situations is to look at both dogma and at the cultural and political pressures that were opposed to Orthodox dogma.

After the rise of Islam in the seventh century, the fall of Constantinople to the Latin army of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, and the fall of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire to the Muslims in the fifteenth century, many Orthodox lands and peoples found themselves under military occupation by hostile armies and governments. Certain Greek, Belarussian, Ukrainian, Carpatho-Rusyn, Romanian, and Serbian territories suffered under Roman Catholic military occupations. For several centuries it was extremely difficult for Orthodox Christians to print books in Greek or in other Eastern Christian languages. It was especially difficult to do so in the Turkish Empire, and for many years Greek books were published mostly in Italian, Romanian, and German cities. The Turks put restrictions on Orthodox education. Several Eastern bishops and theologians were educated in Western schools or Eastern schools that were heavily influenced by Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Influential bishops who received such a non-Orthodox

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depart from those interpretations which it is clear that our ancestors and fathers proclaimed; consent, if in antiquity itself we keep following the definitions and opinions of all, or certainly nearly all, bishops and teachers alike.”

education included Patriarch Meletios Pegas (1549–1601), Patriarch Cyril Loukaris (1572–1638), Patriarch Metrophanes Kritopoulos (1589–1639), Metropolitan Peter Mogila of Kiev (1596–1646/1647), and many others. Many of the professors in the Halki Seminary (1844–1971) in Constantinople were heavily influenced by the German Protestant professors under whom these Greeks often studied. At times, these Protestantized Halki seminary professors would attack Orthodox doctrine on the basis of German Protestant prejudices against Orthodox theology. These were the same Protestant-educated theology professors who wrote the un-Orthodox encyclical on ecumenism in 1920 and who pushed through the uncanonical calendar change in 1924 and subsequently.

During all of the modern period, the teachings of the seven ecumenical councils and the Hesychast/Palamite councils (of the fourteenth century) were available in printed texts and could be known, both in the Turkish Empire and in the West. (In this paper I use the phrase “Palamite texts” to refer to all the writings that contain the teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas and the Hesychast councils on the energy of God, including the saint’s own writings, the synodal decrees, and the writings of the saint’s disciples such as the monk David Dishypatus and others.) Palamite texts were also available, at least to some degree, in the Russian Empire. Despite the availability of Palamite texts in much of the Orthodox world, some Eastern bishops and theologians tended to ignore the theological teachings of the Palamite councils, due to western influences on academic theologians in the Christian East. It is important, thus, to keep two points in a careful balance. The first point is that the Orthodox teaching on God’s energies was never “lost,” since the texts of the Palamite synodal decrees were easily available in Greek churches and in the West, and to some degree in the Russian Empire. The second point is that the Orthodox teaching on God’s energies was sometimes ignored or misunderstood. In the spiritual life of the Church, these truths were never lost, but, because of western influences on the Christian East, it was not “fashionable” in academic circles to explain these truths with quotations from actual Palamite texts. The Palamite texts and teachings were never lost, but they were often ignored or misunderstood by academic theologians in the Orthodox East. Occasionally these Orthodox teachings were even attacked (in both Slavic and Greek areas), because of non-Orthodox influences.

## DOCTRINAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In order to make a complex theological controversy more understandable, it is fair to say that the name-glorification dispute (1908 to 1921) was about two questions: (1) Is it Orthodox or heretical to say “the name of God is God Himself”? (2) Is it Orthodox or heretical to give “worship” to God’s “name”? The holy traditions of the Orthodox Church (Scripture, councils, saints, liturgical books) contain very precise and detailed answers to these questions. The answers are somewhat complex, but they are extremely precise. Answers can be found especially in the dogmatic definition of the Seventh Ecumenical Council about the two kinds of “worship” and in the two dogmatic statements of the “Palamite/Hesychast” Council of Constantinople of 1351 (sometimes called the Ninth Ecumenical Council) about “worship,” about created “*logia* [oracles, sayings, words, revealed names],” and about “energy.”

In this traditional Orthodox teaching, God’s “name” can have two meanings: (1) God Himself or God’s uncreated power/energy (which is God Himself). (2) A created, human word, or, God’s renown (or praise) within creation. In Orthodox teaching, “worship” has two meanings: (1) Divine-adoration (absolute-worship) given to God-the-Creator alone. (2) Relative-veneration given to created persons or things that are especially sacred. So, it is perfectly Orthodox to say “God’s name is God Himself” when “name” means the “divine power/energy that is God Himself” or when “name” means “the thing itself.” (The ancient Greek word “*ónoma*” could mean a symbolic “name” that represents something, but “*ónoma*” could also mean “the thing itself” or “the person himself.”) However, it is still heresy to claim that God’s created “name” (consisting of human sounds or letters) is God Himself or the uncreated divine power/energy that is God Himself. That would be a heretical confusion of Creator and creation. The prayers of the Orthodox Church are full of divine-adoration (absolute-worship, *latreía*) given to God’s “name.” In these prayers, God’s “name” clearly means “God Himself” or the “divine, uncreated glory/authority/power/energy/presence that is God Himself.” It would be un-Orthodox to claim that this worship is merely “relative-veneration,” as if God’s energy was a created thing. God’s energy is God Himself, not a created force. However, when God’s “name” means a

human/created word, Christians are to give it “honor” or “relative-veneration” never “divine-adoration [absolute-worship].” The Ten Commandments command us not to pronounce the Lord’s name in any disrespectful or improper way. We are always to give great respect, honor, and reverence to God’s human/created names. Similarly, Orthodox Christians bow down before and kiss the Book of the Holy Gospels, because God “dwells in” sacred things such as the relics of the saints, icons, and liturgical objects, including the “God-given oracles [sayings]” of the Gospel. Material (created) objects that are especially sacred are given relative-veneration. The Orthodox tradition instructs us that the statement “the name of God is God Himself” is perfectly Orthodox when “name” refers (as it often does) to “the divine, uncreated power or energy that is God Himself” (or simply to “God Himself”). It would be heresy to say “the name of God is God Himself” when referring to an actual created/human name. It is perfectly Orthodox to give divine-adoration (absolute-worship) to God’s “name,” as Orthodox Christians frequently do in the prayers of the Church, when God’s “name” refers to God’s “uncreated glory that is God Himself” or simply to “God Himself.” It would be heresy to ever give divine-adoration (absolute-worship) to a material/created/human name.

## HISTORICAL DISPUTES AND THE RESOLUTION

Unfortunately, because of political circumstances in Constantinople and Russia, the Church was not able to produce a detailed dogmatic statement based on the detailed statements from 787 and 1351. The political circumstances were these: There was a Greek faction in Constantinople that was modernizing, westernizing, liberal, progressive, reform-minded, and ecumenist. From 1912 to 1920, in the administration of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, some of the most influential teachers, writers, and publishers wanted to westernize the Orthodox Church, including through ecumenism and the new calendar. These individuals, such as Metropolitan Germanos P. Strenopoulos of Seleucia (later of Thyatira and London), who was the head of Halki (Chálkē) Theological Seminary, were highly influenced by the western secular and theological educations that they received (often from liberal German Protestants). These theologians were often ignorant of, or hostile to, the 1351 council’s traditional Orthodox teaching about God’s uncreated energies, about God-given words in which God dwells, and about deification. Historians have documented that Patriarch Joachim III, an impressive patriarch in some ways, was influenced by this westernizing tendency and faction.<sup>2</sup> Statements issued by the Constantinople Patriarchate were often influenced by the un-

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<sup>2</sup> On Patriarch Joachim III’s anti-Orthodox environment, see Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish relations, 1918–1974* (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1983). For historical scholarship on western heterodox influences on theologians and bishops in the Orthodox East, see George A. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology Since 1453* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1976); Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453–1821): Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens* (Munich: Beck, 1988); Gerhard Podskalsky, *Ἡ Ἑλληνική Θεολογία ἐπὶ Τουρκοκρατίας 1453–1821: Ἡ Ὀρθοδοξία σὴ Σφαίρα Ἐπιρροῆς τῶν Δουτικῶν Δογμάτων μετὰ τὴ Μεταρρύθμιση* (tr. Georgios D. Metallinos; Athens: Μορφωτικὸ Ἰδρυμα Ἐθνικῆς Τραπέζης, 2005); Georgios D. Metallinos, “Das Problem der deutschen Einflüsse auf die griechische akademische Theologie in der Gründungsphase der Athener Universität,” *Orthodoxes Forum* 3 (1989): 83–91; Georges V. Florovsky, *Πυτι ρυσκαγο δογολογία* (Paris: YMCA-Press; Belgrade: Svetlost, 1937), at *Βιβλιομεκα “Βῆχxu”*, 2003, <http://www.vehi.net/florovsky/puti/index.html>; English, Georges V. Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology* (tr. Robert L. Nichols, 2 parts, vols. 5–6 of *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, gen. ed. Richard S. Haugh, part 1; Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1979; part 2; Vaduz: Buechervertriebsanstalt; Belmont, MA: Notable and Academic Books, 1987); John N. Karmiris, *Ἐπερόδοξοι ἐπιδράσεις ἐπὶ τὰς ὁμολογίας τοῦ ΙΖ’ αἰῶνος* (Jerusalem, 1949); Theodore H. Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People Under Turkish Domination* (Bibliotheca Graeca Aevi Posterioris 1; Brussels: De Meester, 1952); Stevan Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968); Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (1963; Baltimore: Penguin, 1984); Timothy Ware, *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); Charles A. Frazee, *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece, 1821–1852* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969); Charles A. Frazee, *Ὀρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία καὶ ἑλληνικὴ ἀνεξαρτησία 1821–1852* (tr. Ioseph Roelides; Athens: Δόμος, 1987); Yannis Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca* (Collana di studi religiosi; Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane, 1992); Christos Yannaras, *Ὀρθοδοξία καὶ Δύση σὴ Νεώτερη Ἑλλάδα* ([1992]; 3d ed.; Athens: Δόμος, 1999); Christos Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Definition in the Modern Age* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006); David Brewer, *Greece, the Hidden Centuries: Turkish Rule from the Fall of Constantinople to Greek Independence* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010); Eftichia Arvaniti, “Double-Identity Churches on the Greek Islands under the Venetians: Orthodox and Catholics Sharing Churches (Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries),” in Trine Stauning Willert and Lina Molokotos-Liederman, eds., *Innovation in the Orthodox Christian Tradition? The Question of Change in Greek Orthodox Thought and Practice* (Farnham, Eng.: Ashgate, 2012); Charles A. Frazee, *Constantinople, Rome, and the Churches of Greece* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2014); Gregory

traditional and un-Orthodox academicians affiliated with Halki Seminary. These statements were often *not* the result of a traditional, canonical synod of bishops. This is especially the case with the 1920 pro-ecumenism encyclical, which was issued by the patriarchate when there was no patriarch, let alone a larger international synod presided over by a patriarch of Constantinople. Even when there was a patriarch on the throne, the patriarchate published statements (sometimes presented as a “Patriarchal and Synodal” decision) that were hastily drafted (under the influence of Halki reformers) that contradicted Orthodox doctrine.

Within this anti-traditional, anti-Palamite, and pro-Western environment in Constantinople, the patriarchate published a heretical opinion letter (of May 1913) authored by the Russian Archbishop Sergius Stragorodskii of Finland (later the uncanonical “Patriarch of Moscow”). Sergius’s letter was so theologically incompetent and biased that it taught the heresy of Barlaam (which denies or minimizes the Deity of God’s energies). Sergius’s opinion letter actually fell under many of the 27 anathemas in the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* against the Barlaamite heresy.

The May 16/29, 1913, meeting of the Most-Holy Russian Governing Synod had only seven bishops and two laymen, the theologian Sergei Viktorovich Troitskii (1878–1972) and the government official Vladimir Karlovich Sabler (1845–1929; renamed Vladimir Karlovich Desiatovskii circa 1914), who was the ober-prokuror (chief-procurator) of the synod (1911–1915). The bishops were Vladimir (Vasilii Nikiforovich Bogoiavlenskii) (1848–1918), Metropolitan of Saint Petersburg (1912–1915), synod chairman in May 1913, later Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia (1915–1918), martyred by communists in 1918; Sergius (Sergii Ivan Nikolaevich Stragorodskii) (1867–1944), Archbishop of Vyborg and all Finland (1915–1917), later communist-appointed Patriarch of Moscow (1943–1944); Antonii (Aleksei Pavlovich Khrapovitskii) (1863–1936), Archbishop of Volyn and Zhitomir (1902–1914), later Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia (1918–1936) and first-hierarchy of ROCOR (1920/1921–1936); Nikon (Nikolai Ivanovich Rozhdestvenskii) (1851–1919), Archbishop, formerly of Vologda (1906–1912), Chairman of the Publishing Council of the Most-Holy Synod (1903–1916); Evsevii (Evgenii Ivanovich Nikolskii) (1860–1922), Archbishop of Vladivostok and Kamchatka (1806–1920); Mikhail (Vasilii Feodorovich Ermakov) (1862–1929), Archbishop of Grodno and Brest (1912–1921); and Agapit (Antonii Josifovich Vishnevskii) (1867–1923), Archbishop of Ekaterinoslav (1911–1919). Both Sergius Stragorodskii and Agapit Vishnevskii had church renovationist tendencies and were officially attached, each for a short time, to the renovationist movement after the communist seizure of power, in opposition the canonical Orthodox Church of Russia headed by Saint Tikhon, the Patriarch of Moscow. All of these nine men appeared to be ignorant of the basic texts on God’s energy written by Saint Gregory Palamas and the Palamite Councils, and summarized in the full Byzantine Greek text of the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* (in the Greek Triodion). These bishops and theologians were ignorant of these basic theological texts even though several of those texts were easily available in Russia and several of these bishops and theologians could read Greek. Sergius Stragorodskii even quoted the *Synodicon* from the Greek Triodion, but not the parts on God’s energy.

Three opinion reports on the name-glorification controversy, and on the issue of “name” and “energy,” were submitted to the synod meeting, one by Sergei Troitskii, a second by Archbishop Antonii Khrapovitskii, and a third by Archbishop Nikon Rozhdenstvenskii. Archbishop Nikon was an impatient opponent of the Athonite name-glorifiers who was complicit in the Russian military’s violence against them on Mount Athos and subsequent abusive treatment of them under Russian control in the Mediterranean and in the Russian Empire. Archbishop Nikon Rozhdenstvenskii sometimes took a quite secular approach to the theological controversy, stating that “Jesus” was simply an empty name with no grace attached, and the name-glorifying monks were simply in delusion, according to Rozhdenstvenskii’s secularizing approach. Theologically, both Archbishop Antonii Khrapovitskii and Archbishop

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Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture: Inventing National Literature* (Theory and History of Literature 81; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Panagiotes K. Chrestou, “Neohellenic Theology at the Crossroads,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 28.1 (1983): 39; Nikos Kokosalakis, “Religion and Modernization in Nineteenth Century Greece,” *Social Compass* 34.2–3 (1987): 236–237; and H. A. Hodges, Introduction (1952) to *Unseen Warfare: The “Spiritual Combat” and “Path To Paradise” of Lorenzo Scupoli* (ed. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain; rev. Theophan the Recluse; tr. E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer; London: Faber and Faber, 1952; repr. ed.; Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1978).

Nikon Rozhdenstvenskii took a lukewarm position that partly affirmed the official Orthodox doctrine of Saint Gregory Palamas and partly denied it, favoring a portion of the Barlaamite heresy, which was advocated more explicitly in Sergius Stragorodskii's contribution (a fourth opinion document associated with the meeting of May 16/29). Sergius Stragorodskii's contribution was supposed to synthesize the other three written opinions, but it introduced a full-blown version of anti-Palamite heresy that was contradicted by Sergei Troitskii and Archbishop Antonii Khrapovitskii. Two days later, all four documents—which contradicted each other about basic doctrines, such as what God, Godhood (deity), attributes, and energies were—were published in a supplement to the synodal newspaper:

For several historical reasons, the Church was not able to produce a decree at that time that explicitly condemned the Barlaamite heresy that was advocated in Sergius's letter. Nevertheless, the letter was highly criticized at that time, and in various ways it was effectively ignored or set aside, several times. The All-Russia Council of the Orthodox Church of Russia (1917 to 1918) created a sub-commission of theologians with the task of composing a detailed report to the bishops with a theological answer to the name-glorification dispute. Communist persecution against the Church prevented the commission from issuing any theological report. However, it is a fact that the 1917–1918 council and Saint Tikhon (Patriarch of Moscow, 1917–1925) never advocated the Barlaamite heresy that was clearly supported in Sergius's opinion letter. Saint Tikhon, in the midst of great persecution by the Communists, brought peace and reconciliation to the Church over the name-glorification dispute, with four basic Orthodox doctrinal principles, in his February 1921 letter (which was based on a 1914 decision). Everyone—both the monastics known as “name-glorifiers” and their sometime-critics—agreed: (1) not to consider God's name to be God's essence; (2) not to consider God's name to be another Deity; (3) not to separate God and His name; and (4) not to deify (or give divine adoration to) God's created names consisting of human thoughts, sounds, or letters. The fourth point, effectively rejects the heresy that created names can be divine energy and it forbids the giving of divine-adoration (absolute-worship) to created names. The second point effectively rejects the heresy that claims that God's power or energy is separate from created names. These four simple doctrinal principles condemn the extreme “name-worshipping” heresy that claims that created names are divine power/energy and it excludes the extreme “name-fighting” heresy that claims that God is not attached to or present in created names but is somehow “separate” from his created names. The concise wording in the letter is “not to consider His Name to be God's essence, not to separate it from God, not to consider it another Deity, not to deify [or give divine-worship to] letters and sounds and random thoughts about God” (Имя Его не считать за сущность Божию, не отделять от Бога, не почитать за особое Божество, не обожать букв и звуков и случайных мыслей о Боге).<sup>3</sup> These principles were consistent with the dogmatic teaching of the Seventh Ecumenical Synod and the Synod of 1351, although those synods were not quoted.

## NON-ORTHODOX INFLUENCES ON THE CHRISTIAN EAST

After the Fourth Crusade took Constantinople in 1204, and especially after the Ottoman Turkish Islamic Empire expanded even further into many predominantly Orthodox lands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, including Constantinople, there was a great decrease in Orthodox patristic learning among the Orthodox Christian peoples. The type of Orthodox knowledge that one sees in Saints Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus, Photius the Great, and Gregory Palamas became hard to find. There was also a great increase in Roman Catholic and later Protestant influences on the Orthodox East, with Orthodox Christians often unable to debate Roman Catholics and Protestants with an equal degree of learning. For this reason, promising young Orthodox men were sometimes sent to study theology in Roman Catholic and Protestant schools in the West, with the idea that they would come back and defend the Orthodox faith. But there were many problems with this tactic. Some of these students who were sent to the West simply stayed there and became Roman Catholics or Protestants. Some came back to the East as open Uniates (Eastern Rite Roman Catholics) attempting to convert their fellow Easterners to Roman Catholicism and bring them

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<sup>3</sup> Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, *Рождественское послание [Nativity Epistle]* (no. 3244; February 19, 1921), in Evgeny Semenovich Polishchuk, ed., *Имяславие: Антология [Name-Glorification: An Anthology]* (Moscow: Факториал Пресс, 2002), 512.

into obedience to the pope of Rome. Other students returned to the East as crypto-Uniates attempting to *influence from within* in a secretive manner. Others, returned to the East as sincerely-believing Orthodox Christians, and upon their return sought to use their education to defend the Orthodox Faith against western inroads. However, they often also brought back with them, sometimes unconsciously, Roman Catholic and Protestant ways of looking at religious matters. Thus it became common for eastern theologians to use Protestant arguments against Roman Catholic positions and Roman Catholic arguments against Protestant positions. What these westernized Orthodox Christians did not fully appreciate is that there was often much more similarity between the theology of Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians (and especially between their approaches and unconscious assumptions) than these theologians were aware of. They often failed to see that in the approach of the Orthodox Church Fathers, not only were the answers not the same, but the approach and even the very questions themselves were often completely different.

This westernizing influence had a significant impact on the highest levels of the church hierarchy and was strongly encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church. George Maloney wrote that the papacy's policy

was to make out of certain influential Orthodox church leaders crypto-Romans who would remain in office as Orthodox while exercising a Roman influence on the other Orthodox faithful. The list of patriarchs and bishops who in the 17th and 18th centuries either had made a formal submission to Rome or at least were exceedingly friendly to and cooperative with Rome constantly grew to include Patriarchs Neophytos II [1602–1603, 1607–1612], Timothy II [1612–1620], Gregory IV [1623], Athanasios III [1634, 1652], Cyril II (Kontaris) [1633, 1635–1636, 1638–1639], and Parthenios II [1644–1646, 1648–1651].<sup>[4]</sup>

Father Georges Florovsky chronicled the western influences on academic theology in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, in his famous work *Ways of Russian Theology* (published in Russian in 1937, and translated into English in 1979–1987).<sup>5</sup> This work is polemical, and, some would say, not completely fair to all the theologians with whom it deals. But since its publication, it has become impossible to deny that many modern theologians in the Slavic Orthodox Churches were significantly influenced by non-Orthodox theological and philosophical perspectives imported from the West. Although there is no equivalent work written on the subject of western influences on theologians in the Greek-speaking Orthodox Churches, it undeniably occurred there too.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> George A. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology Since 1453* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1976), 175. At the time Maloney wrote this he was a Roman Catholic Jesuit scholar and himself a Uniate. He later joined the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The dates come from Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453–1821): Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens* (Munich: Beck, 1988), 399; Gerhard Podskalsky, *Ἡ Ἑλληνική Θεολογία ἐπὶ Τουρκοκρατίας 1453–1821: Ἡ Ὀρθοδοξία στὴ Σφαίρα Ἐπιρροῆς τῶν Δυτικῶν Δογμάτων μετὰ τὴ Μεταρρύθμιση* (tr. Georgios D. Metallenos; Athens: Μορφωτικὸ Ἰδρυμα Ἐθνικῆς Τραπεζῆς, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> See Georges V. Florovsky, *Пути русскаго богословія* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1937; Belgrade: Svetlost, 1937), at *Βιβλιοθεκα «Βῆξι»*, 2003, <http://www.vehi.net/florovsky/puti/index.html>; ET: Georges V. Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology* (tr. Robert L. Nichols; 2 pts.; vols. 5–6 of *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, gen. ed. Richard S. Haugh), pt. 1 (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1979), pt. 2 (Vaduz: Büchervertriebsanstalt; Belmont, MA: Notable and Academic Books, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the works by Florovsky, Maloney, and Podskalsky cited above, and the works by Jusdanis, Chrestou, Kokosalakis, and Hodges cited below, western influences are also documented in Ioannes N. Karmires, *Ἐπερόδοξοι ἐπιδράσεις ἐπὶ τὰς ὁμολογίας τοῦ 12' αἰῶνος* (Jerusalem, 1949); Theodore H. Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People Under Turkish Domination* (Bibliotheca Graeca Aevi Posterioris 1; Brussels: De Meester, 1952); Stevan Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968); Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* ([1963]; Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1984); Timothy Ware, *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); Charles A. Frazee, *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece, 1821–1852* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969); Charles A. Frazee, *Ὀρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία καὶ ἑλληνικὴ ἀνεξαρτησία 1821–1852* (tr. Ioseph Roelides; Athens: Δόμος, 1987); Yannis Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca* (Collana di studi religiosi; Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane, 1992); Christos Yannaras, *Ὀρθοδοξία καὶ Δύση στὴ Νεώτερη Ἑλλάδα* ([1992]; 3d edn.; Athens: Δόμος, 1999); Christos Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Definition in the Modern Age* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006); David Brewer, *Greece, the Hidden*

Indeed there were strong westernizing (and anti-Orthodox) pressures throughout the Christian East: in Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire; Saint Petersburg and the Russian Empire; Greek, Serbian, and Romanian territories that were under Western military occupation and political rule; and even in the new, modern state of Greece. This profound westernization had an enormous impact on theological education in Slavic, Ottoman, and Greek territories.

The very foundation of the modern Greek state involved a high degree of forced westernization of the country by the intellectual and political elite, who were often hostile to traditional Orthodoxy. The elite in Greek society

aspired in the eighteenth century to orient their community to the West. Believing that the power center was no longer the Ottoman Empire, nor even the Russian Empire, they sought access instead to the expanding capitalist states of Europe. Having become aware in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of different social, economic, and political structures in the West, and believing their interests lay with them, they proposed **a fundamental reordering of their community**. The changes ranged from the founding of an independent state to devising new protocols of social behavior.<sup>[7]</sup>

This process was also strongly pushed by westernized Greeks who were themselves actually living in western Europe, and wanted Greece to become like western Europe.

Greek intellectuals, scattered throughout Europe, learned how to deal with the dominant cultures and how to present their own society to their hosts. But this came at a price: they ended up replacing Ottoman domination for cultural, economic, and also political dependency on the West.<sup>[8]</sup>

This westernization was forced on an unwilling Orthodox Christian population.

The bulk of the Greek population did not consider itself European. Political and cultural institutions were imported into a ... society ... suspicious of western life and thought...<sup>[9]</sup>

**[Yet, t]he Greek intellectual and mercantile elites expected Greeks to become western. For them modernity and the West were synonymous.** <sup>[10]</sup>

This forced westernization profoundly affected not only the political, but also the intellectual, educational, and religious life of the country. Panagiotis Chrestou, a scholar of the church fathers and the former acting minister of education in Greece, writes:

After a ten-year destructive war, a tiny part of Greece was liberated from the

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*Centuries: Turkish Rule from the Fall of Constantinople to Greek Independence* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010); Efthychia Arvaniti, "Double-Identity Churches on the Greek Islands Under the Venetians: Orthodox and Catholics Sharing Churches (Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)," in Trine Stauning Willert and Lina Molokotos-Liederman, eds., *Innovation in the Orthodox Christian Tradition? The Question of Change in Greek Orthodox Thought and Practice* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2012); Charles A. Frazee, *Constantinople, Rome, and the Churches of Greece* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Gregory Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture: Inventing National Literature* (Theory and History of Literature 81; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), xii.

<sup>8</sup> Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity*, xii.

<sup>9</sup> Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity*, xiii.

<sup>10</sup> Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity*, xiv. See also Gregory Jusdanis, *The Necessary Nation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Turkish occupation and was constituted into an independent state in 1830.

The Bavarian government, which was established in Greece in the name of the young King Othon [Otto], detached the new state's dioceses from the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and proclaimed them to be an autocephalous church (1833). The members of the regency acted, of course, under the influence and with the cooperation of eminent members of the Greek intelligentsia, followers of the "Parisian" enlightener Adamantios Koraes.<sup>[11]</sup> ...

[Four years later they established] the University of Athens, which included a school of theology, the first among all its schools. The university [including the theology department] was patterned after the German educational system and **replaced an entire system of higher education existing then in the Greek world** (emphasis added).<sup>[12]</sup>

The new government, largely imported from the West, with the Roman Catholic king at its head, was hostile to traditional Orthodox Christianity, and it forcibly altered the hierarchical structure of the Church in order to make it subservient to the non-Orthodox government, in addition to forcibly closing down numerous monasteries and confiscating enormous amounts of land owned by the Church.<sup>13</sup> Despite the establishment of the University of Athens, the practice of sending promising theology students to study at non-Orthodox institutions in the West continued, and so did the heavy influence of western thought on their works. These western influences affected Greek theological education in Constantinople, Athens, Thessalonica, and even Jerusalem.

## **THE TEACHING OF THE HESYCHAST SYNODS AND THE MODERN PERIOD**

The writings of Saint Gregory Palamas and his disciples, the decrees of the Palamite synods, and the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* were never "lost" in the Orthodox Church. The *Synodicon* was published in Greek editions of the Lenten Triodion at least from the year 1600, and all the way to current editions. The *Synodicon* clearly taught, "there is in God both His essence and His essential and natural energy." Patriarch Dositheus II of Jerusalem (lived 1641–1707) published many texts from Saint Gregory Palamas and his disciples and decrees from the Palamite synods. Patriarch Dositheus' books were published in Moldavia-Wallachia and made their way into the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, and Western Europe. Saint Macarius of Corinth and Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain published key Palamite texts in the *Philokalia* in 1782, including the clear teaching that "God Himself is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy." Jacques-Paul Migne included several Palamite texts in his collection of writings of Church Fathers, some reprinted from Patriarch Dositheus or Saint Macarius and Saint Nicodemus. Feodor Uspenskii and Bishop Porfirii Uspenskii published several key Palamite texts in Russia.

The Orthodox patristic teaching on God's essence and energy was rejected in Roman Catholicism and Protestantism and, sadly, was often ignored in Eastern Orthodox confessions of faith, catechisms, and textbooks of dogmatic theology. This is because, after the Protestant Reformation and the Roman Catholic Council of Trent and Counter-Reformation, many Orthodox confessions of faith, catechisms, and textbooks of dogmatic theology were influenced by Protestant and Roman Catholic questions, terminology, and, sometimes, answers. For example, despite his heroic efforts to oppose Protestant and Roman Catholic distortions of Orthodox teaching, Patriarch Dositheus was influenced by Roman Catholic writings. In the end, Patriarch Dositheus revised his teaching on the afterlife, because he had previously included a notion that was close to the Roman Catholic view of "Purgatory."

The synods, confessions of faith, and catechisms of Patriarch Dositheus' era did not reflect Orthodox patristic

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<sup>11</sup> Koraes had great contempt for traditional Orthodox Christianity and he had enormous influence on the intellectual foundations of the modern Greek state.

<sup>12</sup> Panagiotes K. Chrestou, "Neohellenic Theology at the Crossroads," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 28.1 (1983): 39.

<sup>13</sup> Nikos Kokosalakis, "Religion and Modernization in Nineteenth Century Greece," *Social Compass* 34.2–3 (1987): 236–237.

teaching in all its purity and fullness and the Orthodox Church views these modern sources as imperfect and some as outright wrong (Cyril Loukaris's). So, the texts from Saint Gregory Palamas and his disciples and the decrees of Palamite synods that were published in Patriarch Dositheus' great books (*Book of Reconciliation*, *Book of Joy*, *Book of Love*, etc.), are much more authoritative, because they are much more faithful to the Orthodox patristic consensus, than the texts that were newly composed in modern times to respond to Protestant and Roman Catholic debates.

The doctrines of Saint Gregory Palamas, Patriarch Philotheus, and the Hesychast Councils were truly preserved within the Orthodox Church during the Western and Turkish captivities, since these teachings were included in Orthodox liturgical books, other books that defended Orthodox theology from the errors of the West, and even in western editions and collections of the writings of the Church Fathers—but these teachings were attacked by Western theologians and were, sadly, often ignored by westernized Orthodox academic theologians and bishops because they were not fashionable. The Orthodox teachings on the essence and energies were always preserved and understood within the spiritual life of the Orthodox Church, especially in monastic circles and in the inner life of the Church. There was a dichotomy—a great chasm or gulf—between what the Church teaches and understands in her spiritual life (the life of prayer and communion with God) and what western-educated academic theologians in the East understood and misunderstood about the energies and revelation of God.

### **TEXTBOOKS OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY: HOW EASTERN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN OFTEN IGNORED SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS'S TEACHING ON ESSENCE AND ENERGY**

Academic authors of books on Orthodox dogmatic theology have a long history (from the 1600s to well into the 1950s) of virtually ignoring the teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas and of the entire Orthodox Church on the essence and energies of God. Sadly, this is equally true of both Slavs and Greeks.

Makarii Bulgakov (1816–1882), who was Metropolitan of Moscow (1879–1882), authored what may be the most influential textbooks on Orthodox dogmatic theology ever written in the Russian language.<sup>14</sup> Some of these books were also translated into Bulgarian, Greek, and French.<sup>15</sup> Despite this great influence, Metropolitan Makarii's books had one obvious omission: he virtually ignored Saint Gregory Palamas and the Palamite councils. In his major

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<sup>14</sup> Makarii Bulgakov, *Введение въ православное богословіе* (Saint Petersburg: Е. Фишера, 1847), <http://books.google.com/books?id=rC1GAAAAYAAJ>; 5th edn. (Saint Petersburg: Р. Голике, 1897), <http://books.google.com/books?id=BqAYAAAAYAAJ>; Makarii Bulgakov, *Православно-догматическое Богословіе* ([1st edn.]; 5 vols.; Saint Petersburg, 1849–1853), vol. 1 (1849), <http://dlib.rsl.ru/01004430701>; vol. 2 (1851a), <http://dlib.rsl.ru/01004440064>; vol. 3 (1851b), <http://dlib.rsl.ru/01004430703>; vol. 4 (1852), <http://dlib.rsl.ru/01004430705>; vol. 5 и последний (1853), <http://dlib.rsl.ru/01004430702>; Makarii Bulgakov, *Православно-догматическое Богословіе* (5th edn.; 2 vols.; Saint Petersburg: Р. Голике, 1895), vol. 1, <http://books.google.com/books?vid=HARVARD:32044009713710>; Makarii Bulgakov, *Руководство къ Изучению Христіанскаго Православно-Догматическаго Богословія* ([1913]; 2d edn.; Saint Petersburg: Синодальной Типографіи, 1874), <http://books.google.com/books?id=DfAMAAAIAAJ>.

<sup>15</sup> Makarii Bulgakov, *Ръководство за изучаването на христіанското православно-догматическо богословіе* (2 vols.; Sofia: Просвещение, 1898); Makarii Bulgakov, *Δογματικῆς θεολογίας τὸ περὶ μυστηρίων* (tr. Vasileios Philippides; Athens: Χ. Ν. Φιλαδέλφειος, 1875); Makarii Bulgakov, *Εὐχερίδιον τῆς κατὰ τὴν Ὁρθόδοξον εἰς Χριστὸν Πίστην δογματικῆς θεολογίας* (tr. Neophytos Pagidas; Athens: Ν. Καρριωτάκης, 1882); Makarii Bulgakov, *Εἰσαγωγή εἰς τὴν Ὁρθόδοξον θεολογίαν* (tr. Nikolaos S. Papadopoulos from the 2d Russian edn.; 3 vols.; Leipzig and Athens, 1858–1861), vol. 1 (Leipzig: Giesecke und Devrient, 1858), vols. 2–3 (Athens: Δ. Εἰρηνίδης, 1961), <http://books.google.com/books?id=opAYAAAAYAAJ>; Makarii Bulgakov, *Introduction à la théologie orthodoxe* (Paris: Joel Cherbuliez, 1857), [http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebookbatch.ATLAP\\_batch:ATLAP000019748](http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebookbatch.ATLAP_batch:ATLAP000019748); Makarii Bulgakov, *Théologie dogmatique orthodoxe* (2 vols.; Paris: Joel Cherbuliez, 1859–1860), vol. 1, <http://books.google.fr/books?id=bx4DAAAQAQAAJ>; vol. 2, <http://books.google.com/books?id=Qzc-AAAAcAAJ>.

work on dogmatic theology,<sup>16</sup> Metropolitan Makarii “mentions Palamas only in a footnote.”<sup>17</sup> Other Orthodox writers on dogmatics made similar omissions, when it would have been appropriate to quote from the four major Palamite/Hesychast synods, or from the short summary in the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy*.

Father Michael Pomazansky, although very devoted to traditional Orthodox teaching, also did not include quotations from Saint Gregory Palamas, the Hesychast synods, or the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* on the energies of God. Pomazansky wrote his major work on Orthodox dogmatic theology in 1963, and revised it in 1973.<sup>18</sup> This was years after the revival of the study of Saint Gregory Palamas had begun, yet, sadly, Pomazansky has “no reference” at all<sup>19</sup> to the teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas. In Father Seraphim Rose’s 1983 English translation of Father Michael’s Russian book, Saint Gregory Palamas is only mentioned in an appendix added by the translator. Only years later, after it became embarrassing for a serious work like this to be published without some reference to Saint Gregory Palamas’s teachings, did an editor from the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood in Platina, California, add references to Saint Gregory into several footnotes.<sup>20</sup> The editors of the third English edition also add some quotations from Father Dumitru Stăniloae about human deification through God’s energies, to make up for Father Michael’s omissions.<sup>21</sup>

Both Father Michael Pomazansky and Father Seraphim Rose desired to be faithful to Orthodox Christian tradition; and they were both more faithful to Orthodoxy than some of those individuals, such as Father John Meyendorff, who played leading roles in the revival in the study of Saint Gregory Palamas, but who also supported the un-Orthodox compromises of Sergianism and ecumenism. Father John Meyendorff’s errors were much more broad and destructive in effect than were Father Michael Pomazansky’s and Father Seraphim Rose’s omissions of the Hesychast synodal decrees.

Historically, Slavs, Greeks, and Romanians were guilty of omitting Saint Gregory Palamas when he should have been quoted. Later, Slavs, Greeks, and Romanians were involved in the revival in the study of the saint’s writings in the twentieth century.

In 1907, Chrestos Androutsos (1869–1935) wrote one of the most academically-influential books on Orthodox dogmatic theology ever written in the Greek language in modern times.<sup>22</sup> He was criticized for being heavily influenced by Protestant theology. For decades, the type of theology contained in Androutsos’s book was considered “standard” Orthodox teaching by several professors at the National and Capodistrian University of Athens, Halki Seminary in Constantinople, the Aristotle University of Thessalonica, and in other places in Greek higher education. Later authors—both serious scholars like Panagiotes N. Trepelas and Ioannes N. Karmires as well as authors of “popular,” introductory books like Athanasios S. Frangopoulos of the Soter Brotherhood of Theologians<sup>23</sup>—were

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<sup>16</sup> Makarii Bulgakov, *Православно-догматическое Богословие* (5th edn.; 2 vols.; Saint Petersburg: P. Голике, 1895), vol. 1, <http://books.google.com/books?vid=HARVARD:32044009713710>; Makarii Bulgakov, *Théologie dogmatique orthodoxe* (2 vols.; Paris: Joel Cherbuliez, 1859–1860), 1:179, <http://books.google.com/books?id=JwARAAAIAAJ>. Other important works of Russian dogmatic theology include Filaret (Dmitrii Grigorevich Gumilevskii), *Православное догматическое богословие* (2 vols.; Chernigov, 1864; 2d edn.; 1865; 3d edn.; 2 vols. in 1; Saint Petersburg, 1882); Sil’vestr Malevanskii, *Opus pravoslavnao dogmaticeskago bogosloviia istoricheskoi izlozhenii dogmatov* (5 vols.; Kiev, 1878–1891); Nikolai Malinovskii, *Pravoslavnoe dogmaticeskoe bogoslovie* (4 vols; 1895–1909), vol. 1 (Khar’kov, 1895); vol. 2 (Stavropol’, 1903); vols. 3–4 (Sergiev-Posad, 1909); Nikolai Malinovskii, *Ocherk pravoslavnao dogmaticeskago bogosloviia* (2 pts.; Kamenets-Podol’sk, 1904).

<sup>17</sup> Kallistos Ware, Bishop of Diokleia, forew. to Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God: Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* (6 vols.; tr. and ed. Ioan Ioniță and Robert Barringer; Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994–2013), 1:xxi, xxvii.

<sup>18</sup> Michael Pomazansky, *Православное догматическое богословие в сжатом изложении* (Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1963; rev. edn.; 1973); tr. as Michael Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: A Concise Exposition* (tr. Father Seraphim Rose; Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1983; 2d edn.; 1994; 3d edn.; ed. St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood; 2005).

<sup>19</sup> Ware, forew. to Stăniloae, *Experience of God*, 1:xxi, xxvii.

<sup>20</sup> Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* (3d edn; 2005), 59, 71, 111, 114, 133, 138, 159, 161, 187, 201, 203, 204, 208, 209, 215, 225.

<sup>21</sup> Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* (3d edn.; 2005), 221, 222.

<sup>22</sup> Chrestos Androutsos, *Δογματική τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ανατολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (Athens: Κράτος, 1907; 2d edn.; Athens: Ἀστήρ, 1956). See also the critiques in Konstantinos I. Dyonouniotes, *Ἡ Δογματική τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἀνδρούτσου κρινομένη* (Athens: Σ. Κ. Βλαστός, 1907) and Demetrios S. Mpalanos, *Κρίσις τῆς Δογματικῆς τοῦ κ. Χριστοῦ Ἀνδρούτσου* (Jerusalem: Ἴερὸν Κοινὸν τοῦ Πανάγιου Τάφου, 1907).

<sup>23</sup> Athanasios S. Frangopoulos, *Ἡ Ὀρθόδοξος Χριστιανικὴ Πίστις μας: Σύντομη καὶ περιεκτικὴ ἔκθεσις τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Πίστεως* (Athens:

strongly influenced by Androutsos’s westernized approach to theology. In Androutsos’s work the “Palamite teaching is ignored”; Androutsos “makes [only] a cursory reference to the divine energies” on only one page, “without alluding to Palamas.”<sup>24</sup> In Panagiotes N. Trempeles’s massive, three-volume textbook of Orthodox dogmatic theology,<sup>25</sup> the teaching of Saint Gregory is “allowed no more than a passing mention” and it is “printed in small type!”<sup>26</sup>

In Ioannes N. Karmires’s synopsis of Orthodox dogmatic theology,<sup>27</sup> “Nothing is said about the essence-energies distinction,” in either the Greek original or the English translation.<sup>28</sup> This was also highly unexpected because Karmires published the decrees of two of the four major Hesychast synods. Karmires’s omission was also unexpected since Karmires was the advisor and supporter of Father John S. Romanides who sought to defend the Orthodox teachings on the Fall of Adam (against some exaggerated western concepts of “original sin”)<sup>29</sup> and on the essence and energies of God. Romanides, however, departed from the consensus of the Orthodox Church by his support for compromises with the Monophysite heresy. Some Greek theologians who were influenced by Romanides (such as Christos Yannaras) took his emphasis on apophatic (negative) theology and pushed it in the direction of agnosticism—that human beings cannot have genuine knowledge about God, dogmas, and morality. (I should say, however, that Yannaras writes in contradictory ways: Sometimes he writes as if he actually believes in Orthodox dogma. At other times he writes like a “postmodern” philosopher who believes that truth is only relative and never absolute.) Trempeles had predicted this trend towards agnosticism when he disagreed with Romanides in 1959 about the doctrine of the Fall of Adam and Eve and other theological issues.<sup>30</sup>

It should be noted, however, that there have been a small number of recent, major works of Orthodox dogmatic theology that were written with the expressed intent of differentiating Orthodox theology (both doctrinal content and methodology) from western works as well as from westernized Orthodox attempts. Probably the most comprehensive was written by Father Justin Popović of Serbia and is entitled *Dogmatics of the Orthodox Church: Orthodox Philosophy of Truth* [*Dogmatika Pravoslavne Crkve: Pravoslavna filosofija istine*]. The first two volumes were published in 1932 and 1935 respectively. The third and last volume was not published until 1978, a year before Father Justin’s death, with the first two volumes being reprinted in 1980.<sup>31</sup> A French translation, in five volumes,

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Ἀδελφότης Θεολόγων Ὁ Σωτήρ, 1973); English: Athanasios S. Frangopoulos, *Our Orthodox Christian Faith: A Handbook of Popular Dogmatics* ([1973]; 2d edn.; Athens: Brotherhood of Theologians O Sotir, 1984).

<sup>24</sup> Ware, forew. to Stăniloae, *Experience of God*, 1:xxi, xxvii; see Androutsos, *Δογματική*, 45.

<sup>25</sup> Panagiotes N. Trempeles, *Δογματική τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (3 vols.), vols. 1–2 (Athens: Ἀδελφότης Θεολόγων Ἡ Ζωή, 1959); vol. 3 (Athens: Ἀδελφότης Θεολόγων Ὁ Σωτήρ, 1961); FT: Panagiotes N. Trempeles, *Dogmatique de l’Église Orthodoxe Catholique* (tr. Pierre Dumont; 3 vols.; Textes et études théologiques; Chevetogne: Éditions de Chevetogne, 1966–1968; Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1966–1968).

<sup>26</sup> Ware, forew. to Stăniloae, *Experience of God*, 1:xxi, xxvii; see Trempeles, *Δογματική*, 1:178–179; Trempeles, *Dogmatique*, 1:213–214.

<sup>27</sup> Ioannes N. Karmires, *Σύνοψις τῆς δογματικῆς διδασκαλίας τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (Athens: Ἀποστολική Διακονία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1957); ET: John N. Karmiris (Ioannes N. Karmires), *A Synopsis of the Dogmatic Teaching of the Orthodox Catholic Church* (tr. George Dimopoulos; Scranton, PA: Orthodox Christian Edition, 1973).

<sup>28</sup> Ware, Forew. to Stăniloae, *Experience of God*, 1:xxi, xxvii; see Karmires, *Σύνοψις*; Karmiris, *Synopsis*.

<sup>29</sup> John S. Romanides, “Original Sin According to St. Paul,” *St. Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly* 4.1–2 (1955): 5–28; John S. Romanides, *Τὸ προπατορικὸν ἁμάρτημα, ἦτοι, Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν ἔρευναν τῶν προϋποθέσεων τῆς διδασκαλίας περὶ προπατορικῆς ἁμαρτηματικῆς ἐν τῇ μέτρῃ τοῦ Ἁγ. Εἰρηναίου ἀρχαία ἐκκλησία ἐν ἀντιβολῇ πρὸς τὴν καθόλου κατεύθυνσιν τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου καὶ τῆς δυτικῆς μέχρι Θωμᾶ τοῦ Ἀκινάτου θεολογίας, Ἐναίσιμος ἐπὶ διδακτορία διατριβὴ ὑποβληθεῖσα εἰς τὴν Θεολογικὴν Σχολὴν τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ καὶ Καποδιστριακοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν* (Doctor of Theology thesis, University of Athens; Athens: Ἀποστολική Διακονία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1957; repr. with new prol.; Athens: Δόμος, 1989); ET: John S. Romanides, *The Ancestral Sin: A Comparative Study of the Sin of Our Ancestors Adam and Eve According to the Paradigms and Doctrines of the First- and Second-Century Church and the Augustinian Formulation of Original Sin* ([Greek original, 1957]; tr. George S. Gabriel; Ridgewood, NJ: Zephyr, 2002), <https://archive.org/details/ancestralsin0000roma>.

<sup>30</sup> For Trempeles’s prediction that extreme apophatic (negative) theology would lead to agnosticism, see Andrew J. Sopko, *Prophet of Roman Orthodoxy: The Theology of John Romanides* (Dewdney, BC: Synaxis Press, 1998), 19–45, Kindle, ch. 2. Sopko is one-sided in favor of Romanides, but Trempeles’s fears have, in part, come true. The original correspondence between Trempeles and Romanides can be found in John S. Romanides and Panagiotes N. Trempeles, *Ἐγχειρίδιον: Ἀλληγογραφία π. Ι. Σ. Ρωμανίδου καὶ καθ. Π. Ν. Τρεμπέλα: Καταγραφή ἑνὸς θεολογικοῦ διαλόγου* (gen. intr. Hierotheos Vlachos, Metropolitan of Naupaktos and Hagios Vlasios; spec. intr. Georgios D. Metallenos; Athens: Ἄρμυς, 2009), [http://oodegr.co/oode/biblia/romanidis\\_trebellas/2\\_metallinos.htm](http://oodegr.co/oode/biblia/romanidis_trebellas/2_metallinos.htm).

<sup>31</sup> Justin Popović, *Πравославна Философија Истине: Догматика православне цркве* (3 vols.; 1:1932, 2:1935, 3:1978), vol. 1 (Sremski Karlovci: Чуковин, 1932; repr. edn.; Belgrade: Манастир Свете Ђелије код Ваљева, 1980), <https://svetosavlje.org/dogmatika->

appeared in 1992–1997<sup>32</sup> and a Russian translation is available online. Father John Meyendorff wrote that with this work, Father Justin “has shown that it is not the mere fact of writing a textbook that leads to ‘scholasticism.’” His work “succeeds, much better than all its predecessors, in reflecting the basic value-structure of scripture and patristics, centered on the theocentric nature of man and the notion of ‘deification’ as its meaning and goal.” Father Justin “proved that it was possible to write theology systematically while also remaining faithful to the patristic tradition.”<sup>33</sup> Father Justin does quote directly from Saint Gregory Palamas’s *Triads*, but, unfortunately, he does not quote from the decrees of the four major Palamite synods. Thus his section on the energies of God does not give the Orthodox teaching in its fullness.

Another work of Father Justin’s that sharply differentiates traditional Orthodox theology from that of the West is his *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism [Pravoslavna Crkva i ekumenizam]* (1974). A Greek translation appeared in the same year, followed later by Russian, Bulgarian, and English translations.<sup>34</sup> Despite the fact that Father Justin is highly revered, even among many of those involved in the ecumenical movement, they have a tendency to ignore this work of his because it so strongly condemns the entire relativistic basis of the present-day ecumenical movement.

Father Justin was an admirer of Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) of Kiev. Metropolitan Antonii stated that contemporary theology should be based on the Fathers of the Church and not on westernized modern theologians. Metropolitan Antonii himself has been criticized for being influenced by non-Orthodox sources. However, he was undoubtedly correct that Orthodox theology should not be based on medieval and modern Latin and Protestant theology, but on authentic Orthodox patristic sources. Father Justin tried to implement this by quoting Church councils and saints, and not quoting modern theologians. Although Metropolitan Antonii was aware of religious trends in the West, and was sympathetic to those in the West who expressed interest in the Orthodox Church, he affirmed unequivocally that only the Orthodox Church was the true Christian Church and that western believers, no matter how sympathetic to Orthodoxy they may be, needed to convert to the Orthodox Church to be considered members of

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pravoslavne-crkve-tom1/; vol. 2 (Sremski Karlovci: Чуковин, 1935; repr. edn.; Belgrade: Манастир Свете Телије код Ваљева, 1980), <https://svetosavlje.org/dogmatika-pravoslavne-crkve-tom2/>; vol. 3: *Еκκλeσιολογία: учење о цркви* (Belgrade: Манастир Свете Телије код Ваљева, 1978), <https://svetosavlje.org/dogmatika-pravoslavne-crkve-tom3-1/>; <https://svetosavlje.org/dogmatika-pravoslavne-crkve-tom3-2/>.

<sup>32</sup> See Justin Popović, *Philosophie orthodoxe de la vérité: Dogmatique de l’Eglise orthodoxe* (tr. Jean-Louis Palierne; pref. Atanasije Jevtić; intr. Patric Ranson; 5 vols.; Collection La Lumière du Thabor; Lausanne: L’Age d’homme, 1992–1997).

<sup>33</sup> John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 224–225.

<sup>34</sup> See Justin Popović, *Православна Црква и екуменизам* (Хиландарски потукази 1; Thessalonica: Манастир Хиландар, Света Гора, 1974), <http://svetosavlje.org/biblioteka/Ekumenizam/justin.htm>; Justin Popović, *Pravoslavna Crkva i Ekumenizam* ([2d edn.; Manastir Hilandar, 1995]; online edn.; ed. Ivan Tašić), [http://svetosavlje.org/biblioteka/Ekumenizam/Lat\\_justin.htm](http://svetosavlje.org/biblioteka/Ekumenizam/Lat_justin.htm); GrT: Justin Popović, *Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία και Οικουμενισμός* (tr. Amfilohije Radović and Atanasije Jevtić; Thessalonica: Ορθόδοξος Κυψέλη, 1974); Justin Popović, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* (tr. Benjamin Emmanuel Stanley and Mother Maria; Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2000); RT: Justin Popović, *Православная Церковь и екуменизм* (tr. Andrei Kuraev; Moscow: Изд-во Моск. подворья Свято-Троиц. Сергиевой лавры, 1997), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/index.php?act=lib&id=261>; BT: Justin Popović, *Православната Църква и икуменизъм* (Mount Athos: Славянобългарски манастир Свети Вмчк Георги Зограф, 2004). On ecumenism see also George Macris, *The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement During the Period 1920–1969* (Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1986).

Justin Popović, *Православна Црква и екуменизам*, Хиландарски потукази 1 (Thessalonica: Изд. Manastira Hilandara, Sveta Gora, 1974); Greek: Justin Popović, *Ορθόδοξος Εκκλησία και Οικουμενισμός*, Μετάφρασις ιερομ. Αμφιλοχίου Ράντοβιτς και ιερομ. Αθανασίου Γιάβριτς (Thessalonica: Έκδοσις Ορθόδοξος Κυψέλη, 1974); Bulgarian: Преподобни Иустин Попович, *Православната Църква и икуменизъм* (Света гора Атон: Славянобългарски манастир Свети Вмчк Георги Зограф, 2004); Macedonian: Јустин Поповиќ, Преподобен Отец, “Хуманистичкиот и Богочовечкиот прогрес,” [http://uspenie.kolivart.com/sovremeni\\_podvznici/56](http://uspenie.kolivart.com/sovremeni_podvznici/56); English: Justin Popović, Archimandrite of Čelije, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism* (by Archimandrite Justin Popović; tr. Benjamin Emmanuel Stanley; cor. Mother Maria; intro. Radovan Bigović; pub. note by Proto-Stavrophore Milenko Zebić; Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2000), <https://www.reissinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/St-Justin-Popovich-The-Orthodox-Church-and-Ecumenism.pdf>, where Father Justin quotes extensively from Nikolaj Velimirović, *Poruka Srpskom Narodu kroz Tamnički Prozor [Words to the Serbian People Through the Dungeon Window]* (Himmelsthür, 1985; repr. Belgrade: Svetosavska Književna Zadruga). Bishop Nikolaj and Father Justin state that “a war against truth is a war against divine and human nature” (Justin, *Orthodox Church*, 171) and they offer extensive criticism of “the deicidal idolatry of European culture” (169).

Christ's Church.<sup>35</sup>

Another important work of contemporary Orthodox dogmatic theology is Father Michael Azkoul's *The Teachings of the Holy Orthodox Church*, only one volume of which has been published.<sup>36</sup> This is a serious introduction to Orthodox dogmatic theology currently available in English. Father Michael discusses the Orthodox teaching on essence and energy, but he does not quote the council decrees, as he should have. In recent years, Father Michael released some public letters that showed confusion about basic doctrines, such as his misleading claim that we “may” can God's energies “God” and his false claim that Orthodox Christians do not worship God's essence or energy but only the three divine persons of the Trinity. The Seventh Ecumenical Council teaches that we do give divine-worship to “the divine nature” (essence) and the liturgical books have many prayers in which we worship the “might” or “power” (energy) of God.

Despite the fact that major Orthodox texts on the essence and energies of God have been available in all the major printed editions of the Greek Lenten Triodion as far back as 1600 (and up to the present day), in the writings of Patriarch Philotheus and the decrees of Hesychast councils published by Patriarch Dositheus II of Jerusalem, in the *Philokalía* (1782), in Migne's collection in the 1800s, in Feodor Uspenskii and Porfirii Uspenskii, etc., leading Orthodox academic theologians specializing in dogmatics from the 1700s to the 1950s very often ignored this basic and crucial Orthodox dogma. Some, both in Russia and in Constantinople, denied the Orthodox dogma. A few of these supposed experts on Orthodox theology “failed Orthodoxy 101” (to borrow an expression of Metropolitan Ephraim's) when they opposed the Orthodox teaching on God's energies and on hesychastic prayer. They failed, not because the Orthodox teachings were “lost”—as the myth falsely claims. They failed because the West was slandering the Orthodox teaching as “pantheism” and it was not academically fashionable to defend the Orthodox teaching in the East by quoting the Hesychast council texts, even in “Orthodox” academic environments and Orthodox academic textbooks of theology.

Due to the revival since 1944 in the study of Saint Gregory Palamas and the study of the hesychastic monastic traditions of the Church, Saint Gregory's teaching is widely known in both East and West. Even some secular authors mention Saint Gregory Palamas's teaching. In his extremely influential book, first published in French in 1944, Vladimir N. Lossky wrote, “The δυνάμεις [*dynámeis*, powers], or energies, in which God proceeds forth are God Himself.”<sup>37</sup> Similarly, Timothy Ware, in his introductory book on Orthodoxy that has been widely distributed throughout the world, writes that “[God's] energies are not something that exist apart from God ... they are God Himself.”<sup>38</sup> Timothy Ware, later Father/Bishop/Metropolitan Kallistos, became less and less traditional in his approach to doctrine and in his support for ecumenism through the years. But he was absolutely correct to state that, in the tradition of the Church, the Palamite synods have virtually the same authority and importance as the Seven Ecumenical Councils.

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<sup>35</sup> See Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* ([1963]; London: Penguin Books, 1993), 308–309, where he contrasts the traditional Orthodox view of who constitutes a member of the Church (as voiced by Metropolitan Antonii Khrapovitskii) with the revisionist view of other modern theologians of Orthodox background. Ware himself eventually revised his earlier, more Orthodox understanding of ecclesiology.

<sup>36</sup> Michael S. Azkoul, *The Teachings of the Holy Orthodox Church*, vol. 1: *God, Creation, Old Israel, Christ* (Buena Vista, CO: Dormition Skete, 1986). Now see its replacement with the second part included: [Michael S. Azkoul], *The Teachings of the Holy Orthodox Church* ([2d edn.]; pts. 1–2 in 1 vol.; pref. Archbishop Gregory of Colorado; Buena Vista, CO: Dormition Skete, 2020). Another useful series is Clark Carlton, *The Faith: Understanding Orthodox Christianity* (1995; [The Faith Series 1]; Salisbury, MA: Regina Orthodox Press, 1997); Clark Carlton, *The Way: What Every Protestant Should Know About The Orthodox Church* ([The Faith Series 2]; 1997; Salisbury, MA: Regina Orthodox Press, 1998); Clark Carlton, *The Truth: What Every Roman Catholic Should Know About The Orthodox Church* ([The Faith Series 3]; Salisbury, MA: Regina Orthodox Press, 1999); Clark Carlton, *The Life: The Orthodox Doctrine of Salvation; An Orthodox Catechism* (The Faith Series 4; Salisbury, MA: Regina Orthodox Press, 2000).

<sup>37</sup> Vladimir N. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* ([French 1944]; tr. Fellowship of Saint Alban and Saint Sergius; London: James Clarke, 1957), 72.

<sup>38</sup> Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (1963; London: Penguin Books, 1984), 77.

## HALKI: ANTI-HESYCHASM, NAME-FIGHTING, ECUMENISM, AND THE NEW CALENDAR

In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the patriarchate's Halki Seminary, and the patriarchate's newspaper *Ekklesiastikē Alētheia*<sup>39</sup> had many internal problems. Key persons at the patriarchate, seminary, and newspaper had received their highest-level theological education from western (mostly Protestant) theologians and had adopted western theological prejudices. Several of these individuals wanted to make significant concessions to the Church of England and the Anglican Communion. In fact, some of the same individuals in the patriarchate who ignored or distorted the teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas also condemned the great Saint Symeon the New Theologian at the same time that they were seeking unity with non-Orthodox Anglicans.

Influential professors at Halki included Metropolitan Germanos P. Strenopoulos of Seleucia (Seminary Dean), Archimandrite Ioannes Eustratiou, Archimandrite Demetrios Georgiades, Deacon Vasileios K. Stephanides, Vasileios Antoniadis, and Panteleon Komnenos.

Germanos P. Strenopoulos (1872–1951), the dean of Halki Seminary,<sup>40</sup> studied at the universities of Strasbourg, Lausanne, and Leipzig, receiving his Doctor of Philosophy degree from Leipzig after submitting his dissertation entitled “The Philosophical Theories of Hippolytus.” He was Metropolitan of Seleucia and later Metropolitan of Thyateira (resident in London). As editor of the patriarchate's newspaper, he published documents in 1913 that denied the Orthodox dogma on the deity of God's energies. He was the principal author of the ecumenist encyclical of 1920 that tried to introduce Protestant ecclesiology into the Orthodox Church. He was very active in ecumenism<sup>41</sup> and the change to the new calendar.

The German-educated Greek deacon at Halki, Father Vasileios K. Stephanides, was later an archimandrite and professor in Athens, and the author of a widely used Greek textbook on church history.<sup>42</sup> The book was also widely criticized for its western methodology. In this textbook he shows clear anti-Orthodox prejudices against patristic, Hesychast monasticism. Stephanides speaks disparagingly of Saint Symeon the New Theologian's writings on love for God, the vision of God, human union with God, and the unity of Christ's two natures. Stephanides denigrates the saint's allegedly “erotic expressions”<sup>43</sup> and “mysticism”<sup>44</sup> and associates the saint with the heresy of “monophysitism.”<sup>45</sup> This slander—that Orthodox Byzantine Christology and “mysticism” is really the heresy of “monophysitism”—is a direct anti-Orthodox borrowing by Stephanides from his anti-Orthodox German professors. Thus there is an unmistakably direct line from the German Protestant professors to the Constantinopolitan professors' attacks on the Orthodox theology of Saint Symeon the New Theologian and Saint Gregory Palamas.

Greek academic theologians in both Constantinople and Greece shared these prejudices. The German-educated Athenian patrology professor Demetrios Mpalanos wrote of the “morbid mysticism”<sup>46</sup> of Saint Symeon the New Theologian. Panagiotes K. Chrestou wrote concerning Mpalanos's statement, “All the narrow-mindedness of Neohellenic [modern Greek] rationalistic theology is contained within this short sentence.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* [*Ekklesiastikē Alētheia*] (newspaper; Constantinople, 1880–1923), <http://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/126427?ln=en>.

<sup>40</sup> Germanos P. Strenopoulos, metropolitan of Seleucia, dean of Theological School of Halki; Ioannes Eustratiou, archimandrite; Demetrios Georgiades, archimandrite; Vasileios K. Stephanides, deacon; Vasileios Antoniadis; and Panteleon Komnenos, *Γνωμοδότησις τοῦ Συλλόγου τῶν Θεολόγων Καθηγητῶν περὶ τῆς ἐσχάτης ἐμφανισθείσης ἐν Ἀγίῳ Ὁρει παρὰ τοῖς Ρώσσοις μοναχοῖς καινοφανοῦς διδασκαλίας περὶ τῆς θεότητος τοῦ ὀνόματος “Ἰησοῦς”*: Κατ' ἐντολὴν τῆς Ἀγίας καὶ Ἱερᾶς Συνόδου (Halki, March 30, 1913), in *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* (Constantinople), April 20, 1913, 123–125, <http://www.omologitis.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/gnomatef.pdf>.

<sup>41</sup> Vasil T. Istavridis, “The Work of Germanos Strenopoulos in the Field of Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations,” *Ecumenical Review* 113 (April 1959): 291, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1758-6623.1959.tb01916.x/abstract>.

<sup>42</sup> Vasileios K. Stephanides, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*: Ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μέχρι σήμερον (2d edn.; Athens: Αστὴρ, 1959).

<sup>43</sup> “ἐρωτικὰς ἐκφράσει” (Stephanides, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, 470).

<sup>44</sup> “μυστικισμὸν .... μυστικισμὸν ... μυστικισμὸς” (Stephanides, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, 471).

<sup>45</sup> “μονοφυσιτισμὸς .... μονοφυσιτισμὸν” (Stephanides, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, 471).

<sup>46</sup> “νοσηρὸν μυστικισμὸν” (Demetrios S. Mpalanos, *Οἱ βυζαντινοὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ 800 μέχρι τοῦ 1453* [Βιβλιοθήκη Ἀποστολικῆς Διακονίας; Athens: Ἀποστολικὴ Διακονία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1951], 87).

<sup>47</sup> Panagiotes K. Chrestou, “Neohellenic Theology at the Crossroads,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 28.1 (1983): 53.

It was the same westernized modern Greek academic theologians and bishops, in both Constantinople and Greece, who were traitors to Orthodoxy by condemning Saint Symeon the New Theologian and condemning Saint Gregory Palamas's teaching, who also condemned the Orthodox Christians who remained faithful to the traditional calendar and who opposed the heresy of ecumenism. These westernized, un-Orthodox Halki seminary professors dominated the Ecumenical Patriarchate at that time. They condemned Orthodoxy in these ways because they were the products of their Protestant theology professors and of Latin and Protestant influences on the Orthodox East.

In contrast to this distorted academic theology produced under a "western captivity," if anyone reads or listens to and prays the Scriptures and the Orthodox Services (including the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* read on the first Sunday of the Great Fast each year), or reads the *Philokalia*, or maybe reads even a tiny bit of Saint John of Damascus, anyone can learn the Orthodox teaching about God's energies, about Christ's deified humanity, about quiet (hesychast) prayer, and about deification.

### **A FUNDAMENTAL THEOLOGICAL DISTINCTION: CREATOR AND CREATION; THERE IS NO INTERMEDIATE SUBSTANCE OR FORCE**

It makes sense to begin this theological section with the fundamental Orthodox-patristic dogmatic distinction between the uncreated and the created. Even some highly educated theologians, both in the West and in the East did not fully understand or accept the Orthodox patristic teaching on this. But the clear patristic distinction between uncreated and created underlies (and is assumed) by numerous other Orthodox patristic teachings. If one does not understand this teaching, then much of what the major Orthodox councils taught in their definitions of faith cannot be fully understood.

According to Orthodox doctrine, there is the Creator Himself and there is creation. Nothing else. Nothing else exists other than the Creator Himself and His creation. There is no in-between substance or essence or force or power or energy of any kind that is intermediate between the Creator and creation. There is certainly no in-between "Deity/Divinity" between the Uncreated Creator and created things. (That is why Father Sergius Bulgakov's personal views on "Sophia" [an Orthodox word that he misused] were heretical. Bulgakov confused the Uncreated with the created. Father Pavel Florenskii appeared to do the same.) Saint John of Damascus explains the consensus dogma of Orthodoxy:

there is no intermediate nature between the created and the uncreated, neither is there any such energy. If it [an energy] is uncreated, it will indicate an uncreated essence only. The natural properties [energies] must correspond with the nature absolutely.... The natural energy, moreover, does not come from anything outside the nature.

μέσον γὰρ τούτων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐνέργεια ὡςπερ οὐδὲ φύσις. Εἰ οὖν κτισή, κτιστὴν μόνην δηλώσει φύσιν· εἰ δὲ ἄκτιστος, ἄκτιστον μόνην χαρακτηρίσει οὐσίαν. Δεῖ γὰρ πάντως κατάλληλα ταῖς φύσεσιν εἶναι τὰ φυσικά· ρίσει οὐσίαν. Δεῖ γὰρ πάντως κατάλληλα ταῖς φύσεσιν εἶναι τὰ φυσικά.... Ἡ δὲ κατὰ φύσιν ἐνέργεια οὐ τῶν ἐκτὸς ὑπάρχει.<sup>48</sup>

In other words, God has an uncreated essence (substance) and therefore also has an uncreated energy (operation or activity). A human being consists of a created substance/essence/nature and therefore his energy (operation or activity) is by definition also created.

Even the ancient Hebrews had a basic understanding of the difference between the uncreated and the created, since the prophets taught the Israelites that only God (the Creator) could be given divine-worship. The prophets taught further that it would be the great sin and heresy of *idolatry* to give divine-worship to any created thing, whether it was

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<sup>48</sup> Saint John of Damascus, *Ἐκθεσις ἀκριβῆς τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου πίστεως* [Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith] 3.15.59.

an angelic spirit that served God or a human being or an animal or a statue. The distinction between Creator and created was necessary in order to know Who to worship and how not to fall into idolatry. The Hebrew translators of the Old Testament into Greek used two different words in order to differentiate between bowing or honor or veneration in a general sense (which was called *proskýnēsis*) and absolute-divine-worship or absolute-divine-adoration (which was called *latreía*). In Genesis 23:7, Abraham bowed down (*prosekýnēsen*, gave *proskýnēsis*) to the pagan Hittites, as a gesture of honor. In 1 Paralipomena (1 Chronicles 29:20), the congregation of Israel “bowed down and fell down before [*proskýnēsan*, which can also be translated “worshipped”] God and the king.” In both cases there was the giving of *proskýnēsis* to a man, but there was no giving of divine-adoration (*latreía*) to a man as if to Deity. There was no idolatry involved in bowing to the Hittites out of respect or bowing to the king out of honor.

### VENERATION TO CREATED PERSONS AND ICONS; AND DIVINE-ADORATION TO THE CREATOR ALONE

Saint John of Damascus expressed the Orthodox dogma clearly: “*latreía* is different from *proskýnēsis*” (ἕτερον γάρ ἐστι λατρείας προσκύνησις);<sup>49</sup> “The created thing is given *proskýnēsis*, but not given *latreía* as God” (ἵνα μὴ ὡς Θεὸς λατρευομένη προσκυνῆται ἢ κτίσις).<sup>50</sup> Saint Theodore of Studium put it this way: “We give the saints *proskýnēsis*, but we do not give them *latreía*” (προσκυνοῦμεν τοῖς ἁγίοις, ἀλλ’ οὐ λατρεύομεν αὐτοῖς).<sup>51</sup>

According to Orthodox dogma, “adoration” or “absolute worship” (*latreía*) must be given only to the Creator (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, essence and energy), not to any created person or created thing. *Latreía* is the special word that the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Fathers, the Seventh Ecumenical Council, and the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* use to refer precisely to the “absolute worship” that can be given only to God.

It is also Orthodox dogma that we must give honor, veneration, relative worship, or “worship according to relation” (*proskýnēsis katà schésin*) to the Most-Holy Mother of God, Saint John the Baptist, the angels, all of the other saints, the figure of the Cross, the Book of the Holy Gospels (and the Holy Scriptures as a whole), the icons of Christ and the saints, the tombs and relics of the saints, church buildings and holy places, and liturgical vessels and vestments. This honor or veneration is called “relative worship” or “worship according to relation” (*proskýnēsis katà schésin*) because God “dwells in” that holy person or object and because the honor ultimately passes on to God Himself. There is thus a close relationship between the honor that is shown to the saint or holy icon and the honor shown to the Creator (although there is a clear difference). As the Seventh Ecumenical Council states,

to these [icons] should be given due reverence [*aspasmós*] and *worship consisting of honor* [*timētikē proskýnēsis*], not indeed that true adoration [*latreía*, absolute worship] of our faith, which pertains alone to the divine nature; but to these [holy icons], as to the figure of the honored and life-giving Cross and to the holy Gospels and to the other sacred objects, incense and lights are offered according to ancient pious custom. For the honor that is paid to the icon passes on to the prototype, and he who

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<sup>49</sup> Saint John of Damascus, *Λόγος Α' ἀπολογητικὸς πρὸς τοὺς διαβαλόντας τὰς ἁγίας εἰκόνας* [First Discourse in Defense against Those Who Attack the Holy Icons] 8.

<sup>50</sup> Saint John of Damascus, *Λόγος Α' ἀπολογητικὸς πρὸς τοὺς διαβαλόντας τὰς ἁγίας εἰκόνας* [First Discourse in Defense against Those Who Attack the Holy Icons], 15, original in Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graecae*, 94:1244; P. B. Kotter, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 3 (Patristische Texte und Studien 17; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), at *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, no. 2937.005, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu>; compare the English in Andrew Louth, trans., *St. John of Damascus: Three Treatises on the Divine Images* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003).

<sup>51</sup> Saint Theodore, Abbot of Studium Monastery, *Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Πλάτωνα περὶ τῆς προσκυνήσεως τῶν εἰκόνων* [Letter to Plato about the Veneration of the Holy Icons], original in Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graecae*, 99:504; compare the English translation in Thomas Cattoi, trans., *Theodore the Studite: Writings on Iconoclasm*, *Ancient Christian Writers* 69 (New York: Newman Press, 2014/2015), 135–139.

worships/venerates the icon worships/venerates in it the person who is depicted.<sup>52</sup>

Saint Gregory Palamas and the Council in Constantinople of 1351 put it this way:

we worship relatively [*proskynoûmen schetikōs*] the holy icon of the Son of God ..., piously offering up the worship [*proskýnēsin*] to the prototype; and the honored wood of the Cross, and all the symbols of His sufferings... the divine temples and places, and the sacred vessels, and the God-given oracles [*theoparádota lógia*],<sup>53</sup> because God dwells in [*enoikoûnta*]<sup>54</sup> them. In the same manner, we worship/venerate also the icons of all the saints .... We worship/venerate also the very tombs [*soroús*]<sup>55</sup> of the saints, because the sanctifying grace did not depart from these most sacred bones, as death did not separate Deity from the Lord's body during the three days.

προσκυνοῦμεν σχετικῶς τὴν ἁγίαν εἰκόνα ... υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, πρὸς τὸ πρωτότυπον ἀναφέροντες εὐσεβῶς τὴν προσκύνησιν, καὶ τὸ τίμιον τοῦ σταυροῦ ξύλον ... πρὸς δὲ καὶ τὸν τύπον τοῦ τιμίου σταυροῦ, καὶ τοὺς θεῖους ναοὺς καὶ τόπους καὶ τὰ ἱερά σκεύη καὶ θεοπαράδοτα λόγια, διὰ τὸν αὐτοῖς ἐνοικοῦντα θεόν. ὡσαύτως προσκυνοῦμεν καὶ τὰς τῶν ἁγίων πάντων εἰκόνας .... προσκυνοῦμεν καὶ αὐτὰς τὰς τῶν ἁγίων σορούς, ὡς τῆς ἁγιαστικῆς χάριτος τῶν αὐτῶν οὐκ ἀποπτώσεως ἱερωτάτων ὄστων.<sup>56</sup>

As Saint Gregory Palamas indicates, God dwells not just in the saints and icons but also in the *lógia*, the oracles/sayings of God, of the prophets, of the God-Man, and of the written Scriptures. Indeed, many Holy Fathers teach about the divine grace that dwells in the material (created) words that are used by Orthodox Christians to speak the truth. Saint Justin the Philosopher and Martyr summarizes what Orthodox Christians believe about God's uncreated grace dwelling in the created words of the Gospel:

we have not believed empty myths, or words without any foundation, but [words] filled with divine spirit, and big with power, and flourishing with grace

οὐ κενοῖς ἐπιστεύσαμεν μύθοις οὐδὲ ἀναποδείκτοις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ [λόγοις] μεστοῖς πνεύματος θείου καὶ δυνάμει βρῦουσι καὶ τεθῆλοσι χάριτι

The phrase translated “big with power” (*dynámei brýousi*) could also be translated “full of power,” “swelling with power,” “abounding with power,” “teeming with power,” “bursting with power,” or “overflowing with power.” This is what the Holy Fathers teach about the uncreated grace, truth, and power that dwells in the created words of the God-given Scriptures and the God-given dogmas of the Church councils.

We can also see from Saint Gregory Palamas's words that *proskýnēsis* refers to worship or veneration in a

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<sup>52</sup> Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicaea II, 787), *Όρος [Decree]* in DEC 1:135–136; *timētikē proskýnēsis* is here translated as “worship consisting of honor” as distinguished from *worship consisting of true [absolute] adoration*.

<sup>53</sup> *Theoparádota lógia* can mean both “God-given sayings” and “God-given Scriptures.”

<sup>54</sup> *Enoikoûnta* refers to God “dwelling in, abiding in, making His home in” created things such as the saints, relics, icons, and the Holy Scriptures.

<sup>55</sup> *Soroús* can mean both “tombs” and “relic boxes.”

<sup>56</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Όμολογία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου πίστεως [Confession of the Orthodox Faith]*, in John N. Karmiris, ed., *Τὰ δογματικά καὶ συμβολικά μνημεῖα τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας: Dogmatica et symbolica monumenta Orthodoxae Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 1st ed., 2 vols. (Athens, 1952–1953), 1:344, <http://www.symbolle.gr/chrtoms/dogma/1171-fides19>; compare the English in Jaroslav J. Pelikan and Valerie R. Hotchkiss, eds., *Creeeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, 4 vols. and 1 CD (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 1:377.

broad sense, and can cover different types of worship or veneration. The word *proskýnēsis* can cover both the absolute worship (*latreía*) given to God alone and the relative veneration given to saints and holy icons and to Holy Scripture.

Historically (but not always in modern understanding), the English word “worship” also had a broad meaning, like *proskýnēsis*. Traditionally, in the English language, “worship” could be given to a king or a magistrate, not just to God. To this day, in the United Kingdom, Canada, and other Commonwealth nations, magistrates are called “Your Worship,” whereas judges (who are higher than magistrates) are called “Your Honor.” So, in British or British-influenced courts, “worship” can be *less* than “honor.” In older English translations of the Bible, “worship” *can* sometimes be properly given to the king or other human beings, like *proskýnēsis* in the Greek Bible. In traditional English translations of the New Testament, Christ tells a parable in which an honored wedding guest will be given “worship” (*dóxa*, glory) at the wedding reception.<sup>57</sup> In traditional English translations of the Old Testament, the congregation of worshippers “worshipped” both the Lord and the “king.”<sup>58</sup> In Revelation 3:9, God will cause unbelievers to come to the knowledge that God loves those who believe in Christ and will cause these former unbelievers to “bown down” (*proskynēsousin*, which can also be translated to *worship*) before the feet of Christian believers.

In patristic Latin, *adoratio* sometimes approached the narrow definition of *latreía* (absolute adoration/worship given to God alone), but in modern English it is now common to use “adore” more broadly. Many people say things like “the baby is absolutely adorable” or “he absolutely adores his mother.” For this reason, *latreía*, for purposes of clarity, can be translated as “absolute worship” or “divine-adoration.” The word *proskýnēsis* can be translated as “worship” according to traditional English standards, but we need to remember that it includes the “relative worship” (*proskýnēsis kat’ schésin* or *schetikē proskýnēsis*)—the veneration—that is given to saints, icons, and the Holy Scriptures, as well as the worship given to God.

### THE WORDS “GOD,” “DEITY,” AND “DIVINE”

In English, the words deity, divinity, divineness, and divine can cause confusion. In English (at least in practical usage), the word “divinity” can sometimes (not always) have a weaker meaning than “deity.” There is more clarity in Greek, but even in Greek one word can sometimes have two very different meanings.

*The words “God” and “Godhead/Godhood/Deity.”* The saints who wrote in Greek would often (but not always) use the word *Theós* (God) and the word *Theótēs* (Godhead/Godhood/Deity) interchangeably or as near synonyms. The word *Theótēs* can be translated into English with several terms: Godhead, Godhood, God, Deity, Divinity, God’s nature, divine nature, the state of being God, etc. The word *Theós* (God) and the word *Theótēs* are sometimes used as synonyms or near-synonyms when it comes to the doctrine of the Divine Trinity (Trinitarian doctrine or Triadology) and the doctrine of the divine essence and divine energies. However, when it comes to the doctrine of the two natures in the one person of Christ (Christology), the Holy Fathers often use the two words with a careful distinction. The reason is as follows: The Holy Fathers teach that the flesh of Christ “became God” in the Incarnation, but Christ’s flesh did not “become the divine nature.” Several councils and the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* go into great detail concerning the truth that Christ’s flesh is “God” but not “the Divine Nature.” In order to protect this truth, the councils and saints do not generally say that Christ’s flesh “became *Theótēs* [Godhood, divine nature].” The teaching of the councils is that Christ’s flesh remains created for all of eternity, but Christ’s flesh is “deified” and “endowed with the *attributes* of the [uncreated] divine nature,” but it is *not changed into* the divine nature. In the one undivided person of Christ, there is a “communion of attributes” (*koinonía idiōmátōn*) between the divine and the human. Therefore, Christ’s flesh is created and remains created, but is endowed with uncreated attributes. Because

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<sup>57</sup> Luke 14:10, in Wycliffe 1395, Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, Bishops Bible 1568, Geneva Bible 1599, Authorized King James Version 1611, with variations in spelling.

<sup>58</sup> 1 Paralipomena [1 Chronicles] 29:20, in Wycliffe 1395, Coverdale 1535, Bishops’ Bible 1568, Geneva Bible 1587, Authorized King James Version 1611, English Revised Version 1881, Douay-Rheims American Edition 1899, American Standard Version 1901, with variations in spelling.

Christ is one undivided person, He is God both in His divine nature and in His created, fleshly nature—but one nature is *not changed into* the other nature.

“God” and “Deity” are mostly interchangeable in Triadology, but not Christology. The liturgical prayer books of the Orthodox Church largely, with some exceptions, can use the words “God” and “Deity/Godhead/Godhood” interchangeably. For example, the liturgical books use “tri-hypostatic [three-person] Deity” (τριυπόστατος Θεότης) and “tri-hypostatic [three-person] God” (τριυπόστατος Θεός) interchangeably.<sup>59</sup> Although the words “God” (Θεός, Бор) and “deity” (Θεότης, Божество) are sometimes different *grammatically* (“God” and “Godhood”), they can be used interchangeably when referring to the Holy Trinity. They both refer to the one true God or the nature of the one true God.

“God” and “Deity” are not interchangeable in Christology. When speaking of Christ’s two natures, the words “God” and “Deity/Godhood” *are* distinguished in Orthodox doctrine. The Church teaches that Christ’s human nature “became God” at the Incarnation, but His human nature did not “become Deity/Godhood.” The created/human nature was not changed into the divine essence/nature. The Church teaches that Christ’s human nature (His human soul and material body) was endowed with the “attributes” of the divine nature, but was not changed into the divine nature. Christ’s body also “shares the divine rank” and is given the same absolute-divine-worship that is given to the person and essence of God the Father. Christ’s flesh is not given a lesser form of veneration. He is one united person and is given one worship. (We will cover this in more depth below, when we cover the teaching of the Sixth Ecumenical Council and Saint John of Damascus.)

*Why Orthodox patriarchs are sometimes called “most-divine.”* Converts to Holy Orthodoxy from Protestantism are sometimes shocked at the exalted language that can be used for the patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria. An Orthodox patriarch, out of honor for the office, can sometimes be called “His Most-Divine All-Holiness” (Ἡ Αὐτοῦ Θειοτάτη Παναγιότης). In that title “Most-Divine” does not refer to Deity but to an important human person in the Church. In this title, there is an absolutely crucial difference in spelling. The words *theiōtēs* and *theiōtātē* have an iota and refer to the holiness of the office of bishop, in which all Orthodox dioceses share. An Orthodox patriarch, being a mere man, is never called *theiōtēs*, which lacks the iota and refers to “deity,” but a patriarch can be called *theiōtātē*, which can be translated “most-divine,” but refers to the holiness of the office of bishop.

The adjective *theios* (θεῖος), also with an iota, is translated as “divine” or “of God” or “holy.” *Theios* can refer both to God and also to created persons or things that are holy. For example, the “divine energies” are God Himself, but the “divine canons” are created material words written on material paper (but they are based on uncreated truth). So, when we say “the divine energies” we are saying that the energies are God Himself, but when we say “the divine Chrysostom” we are saying that Saint John Chrysostom was very holy (he was not Deity).

In order to respect, in English, these distinctions that exist in Greek, one can use “Deity” for *Theiōtēs* (which refers to the Uncreated) and one can use “divinity” for *theiōtēs* (which has the iota, is a much rarer word, and can refer to created holiness in addition to the Uncreated God).

## **THE DEITY (GODHOOD) OF THE ENERGIES OF THE TRINITY: ORTHODOX WORSHIP OF ONE GOD**

The first doctrine and first commandment of Orthodox Christianity is that there is one and only one God and that human beings are to give divine-worship (*latreía*) to the one God alone and to love Him with all of our strength.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See, the alteration between “tri-hypostatic Deity” (τριυπόστατος Θεότης) and “tri-hypostatic God” (τριυπόστατος Θεός) in, for example, the Κανὼν Τριαδικῶς, Ἐν τῷ Μεσονυκτικῷ, Κυριακῇ τῶν Ἁγίων ΤΙΗΉ Θεοφόρων Πατέρων τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ, in *Πεντηκοστάριον χαρμόσυνον: τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πάσχα μέχρι τῆς τῶν Ἁγίων Πάντων Κυριακῆς ἀνήκουσαν αὐτῶ ἀκολουθίαν περιέχον* (διορθωθὲν καὶ δι’ ἐνὸς προλόγου πλουτισθὲν ὑπὸ Βαρθολομαίου Κουτλουμουσιανοῦ τοῦ Ἱμβρίου Δημοσίευσῆ· Athens: Ἀποστολικὴ Διακονία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1959), 174–176; cf. English in *The Canon of the Trinity, Midnight Service, The Sunday of the 318 Holy and God-Bearing Fathers at Nicaea, in The Pentecostarion* (tr. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston; Boston, Mass.: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 2014), 206–209.

<sup>60</sup> Exodus 20:2–17; Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 5:6–21; 6:4–5, 13–14; 10:20; Joshua 24:14; 1 Kingdoms 7:3; Matthew 22:35–40; Mark 12:28–31; Luke 4:8; 10:25–28

God-the-Creator and His creation are distinct, but God is present everywhere and fills all created things. God is *present in* and *works through* holy persons and things. The Church teaches that all Christians should give relative-veneration (*proskýnēsis katà schésin*) to the angels, saints, relics, liturgical vessels, icons, and the “God-given *lógia*” (*lógia* = oracles, sayings, narratives) of the Holy Scriptures. Christians must do this because God “dwells in” all of these sacred persons, objects, and words. Christians are to give divine-worship to God alone and to “everything that is God”—and to give relative-veneration to that which is especially sacred, which God “indwells.”

Concerning the doctrine of God’s oneness, the Orthodox Church teaches that “When we speak of one Deity, we speak of everything that is God, both the essence and the energy.” This is because “Every power or energy [of God] is God Himself.” Therefore, Orthodox Christians give divine-worship to one and the same God (*autòs ho Theós*, “the same God” or “God Himself”) in essence and energy in one Deity. As we will see below, Saint Gregory Palamas points out that it is a great error to assert that Christians worship “[only] one and not the other.” (It should be remembered that God’s *nature* is sometimes used narrowly as a synonym for *essence* and sometimes broadly to refer to *essence and energy*. The broader usage is predominant below, but in other passages Saint Gregory Palamas and others use *nature* in the narrower sense.)

The one true God is the undivided Trinity (ἀδιαίρετος Τριάς): the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one in essence. Saint Gregory Palamas teaches us in his *Confession of the Orthodox Faith* that God is “Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity” (μονὰς ἐν τριάδι καὶ τριάς ἐν μονάδι).<sup>61</sup> The saint teaches us about “Deity seen in Trinity” (τῆς ἐν τριάδι νοουμένης θεότητος). We are also taught that “there is one all-powerful God in one Deity” (εἷς ἐστι παντοδύναμος θεὸς ἐν μιᾷ θεότητι).<sup>62</sup> As the service devoted to the First Ecumenical Synod teaches, God is “[a] Trinity of one nature and [a] Unity of three hypostases [persons].”<sup>63</sup> In English, God is often called *triune*, meaning that God is a *Trinity in Unity*, an *undivided Trinity*.

The Orthodox teaching on essence and energy goes back to the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures and the ancient Fathers of the Church, including Saint Maximus the Confessor and the Sixth Ecumenical Synod. However, it was in the writings of Saint Gregory Palamas, the decisions of several Palamite synods (1341, 1347, 1351, 1368), and the summary in the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* where the traditional teaching of the Church is expounded in greater detail. Especially important is the *Tome or Decree* of the Synod of Constantinople of 1351. This synod is sometimes called the Ninth Ecumenical Synod of the Orthodox Church. Several bishops and theologians, both among the traditional Orthodox and the ecumenists, believe very strongly that this synod should be reckoned as the Ninth Ecumenical Synod of the Orthodox Church. All Orthodox Churches accept this synod’s decision as having universal authority in the Church.

Saint Gregory Palamas taught clearly that “Every power or energy [of God] is God Himself” (ἐκάστη δύναμις ἢ ἐνέργεια [τοῦ Θεοῦ] αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός).<sup>64</sup> This is because “God Himself is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy” (ὁ αὐτός Θεός ἐστιν ἡ θεία οὐσία καὶ ἡ θεία ἐνέργεια); or, to translate the same Greek phrase slightly differently, “the same God is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy.”<sup>65</sup> The *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* in the

<sup>61</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ὁμολογία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου πίστεως* [Confession of the Orthodox Faith].

<sup>62</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ὁμολογία* [Confession].

<sup>63</sup> Κανὼν Τριαδικός, Ἐν τῷ Μεσονυκτικῷ, Κυριακῆ τῶν Ἁγίων ΤΙΗ΄ Θεοφόρων Πατέρων τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ, in *Πεντηκοστάριον χαρμόσυνον: τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πάσχα μέχρι τῆς τῶν Ἁγίων Πάντων Κυριακῆς ἀνήκουσαν αὐτῷ ἀκολουθίαν περιέχον* (διορθωθέν καὶ δι’ ἐνός προλόγου πλουτισθέν ὑπὸ Βαρθολομαίου Κουτλουμουσιανοῦ τοῦ Ἰμβρίου Δημοσιεύσει· Athens: Ἀποστολικὴ Διακονία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 1959), 174–176; cf. English in *The Canon of the Trinity, Midnight Service, The Sunday of the 318 Holy and God-Bearing Fathers at Nicaea*, in *The Pentecostarion* (tr. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston; Boston, MA: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 2014), 206–209.

<sup>64</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἰωάννην Γαβρᾶν* [Letter to John Gabras] 13.

<sup>65</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Κεφάλαια ἑκατὸν πενήκοντα φυσικὰ καὶ θεολογικά, ἠθικά τε καὶ πρακτικὰ καὶ καθαρτικὰ τῆς βαρλααμίτιδος λήμης* [One Hundred Fifty Chapters on Nature, Theology, Morality, and Practice, Purifying the Baarlamite Defilement] 145, in *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν: Συνερανοσθεῖσα παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ θεοφόρων πατέρων ἐν ἧ΄ διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν καὶ θεωρίαν ἠθικῆς φιλοσοφίας ὁ νοῦς καθαίρεται, φωτίζεται, καὶ τελειοῦται* ([1st ed.]; ed. Saint Macarius of Corinth and Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, Venice: Antonio Bortoli, 1782), 1007. The full sentence is in the form of a question: “And how will there be many gods because of God possessing an energy, since the energy pertains to one God or, rather, since God Himself is both the divine essence and the divine energy?” (πολλοὶ δὲ πάλιν πῶς ἔσονται θεοὶ διὰ τὸ ἔχειν τὸν θεὸν ἐνέργειαν, εἴπερ ἐνός ἐστὶ θεοῦ, μᾶλλον δὲ ὁ αὐτός θεός ἐστιν ἡ θεία οὐσία καὶ ἡ θεία ἐνέργεια;). The point is

*Lenten Triodion* uses similar language: “there is in God both His essence and His essential and natural energy” (οὐσίαν τε ἐπὶ Θεοῦ, καὶ οὐσιώδη καὶ φυσικὴν τούτου ἐνέργειαν).<sup>66</sup>

The great Synod of Constantinople of 1351 decreed that Saint Gregory Palamas’s teaching was a genuine, binding dogma of the Orthodox Church and that it had been taught by ancient Orthodox theologians —not invented by Saint Gregory Palamas. The synod quotes approvingly Saint Anastasius of Sinai’s teaching that “obviously” God’s energies are “God.”<sup>67</sup> The synod teaches in great detail that there can never be any division between God’s essence and God’s essential energy. This is because God’s energy is the activity or “movement” (κίνησις) that flows “without separation” (ἀχωρίστως) from God’s essence. There is a distinction without any separation between God’s essence and essential energy/activity/movement.

The Synod of 1351 decreed that God’s energy is *not* “outside the divine essence,” but rather, is “an essential and natural activity/movement of God,” which “emanates and flows from the divine essence as from an ever-flowing spring and never appears without this [essence].” God’s energy “always remains indivisible from the divine essence, and from eternity exists along with it, and is inseparably united [to God’s essence], because it cannot be separated from the divine essence by any age or temporal or spatial interval, but timelessly and pre-eternally emanates from it and inseparably exists together with it.”<sup>68</sup> As the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* summarizes, God’s energy “everlastingly emanates without separation from the very essence of God” (ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς θείας οὐσίας ἀχωρίστως ἀεὶ προιοῦσαν).<sup>69</sup>

## CHRISTIANS WORSHIP GOD’S ENERGIES AS GOD HIMSELF, BECAUSE GOD’S ENERGIES ARE GOD HIMSELF

Saint Gregory Palamas, the Palamite synods, the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy*, the *Triodion*, the *Philokalia*, and the consensus-dogma of the Orthodox Church teach that “one and the same God” (i.e., “God Himself”) is both incommunicable essence and communicable energy<sup>70</sup> in one and only one deity/divinity. *Divinity* is often used to translate *theótēs* (θεότης). Unfortunately, some individuals believe that *divinity* may sometimes be something other than God or lesser than God. This is untrue. The word *theótēs* (θεότης) can be translated in several valid ways: *divinity*, *deity*, *divine nature*, *nature of God*, *God-nature*, *Godhead*, *Godhood*, *state of being God*, or even simply as *God*. “Deity/Divinity” is *God Himself*, or, more specifically, the *nature* of God Himself. That is why Saint Gregory Palamas and the Orthodox consensus state emphatically that God Himself is *one God in one Deity* (that is, *one God in a single God-nature*) in both essence and energy. “When we speak of one Deity, we speak of everything that is God, both the essence and the energy (ὅτε μίαν θεότητά φαμεν, πάντα ὅσα ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός φαμεν, καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν).”<sup>71</sup> There is “one Deity in essence and in energy (ἐν οὐσίᾳ καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ μία θεότης).”<sup>72</sup> “[T]here is one all-powerful God in one Deity (εἷς ἐστὶ παντοδύναμος Θεὸς ἐν μιᾷ θεότητι).”<sup>73</sup> “**God Himself** is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy” or (translated slightly differently) “**the same God** is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy (**ὁ αὐτὸς Θεός** ἐστὶν ἡ θεία οὐσία καὶ ἡ θεία ἐνέργεια).”<sup>74</sup> “[T]here is in God both His essence and His essential and natural

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that because “God Himself is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy” or (in a slightly different English translation) “the same God is [both] the divine essence and the divine energy” it is, therefore, incorrect to accuse Saint Gregory Palamas’s teaching on essence and energy as implying more than one God. The one God is both essence and energy.

<sup>66</sup> *Συνοδικὸν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας* [*Synodicon of Orthodoxy*], in *Τριῳδίων κατανυκτικόν* (4th ed.; Venice: Φοῖνιξ, 1876), 141; cf. English in *True Vine*, issue nos. 27–28 (Spring 2000): 65.

<sup>67</sup> Saint Anastasius of Sinai, *Ὁδηγός* [Guide] 35.

<sup>68</sup> Synod of 1351 in Constantinople, *Συνοδικὸς τόμος* [*Synodal Decree*] 26.

<sup>69</sup> *Συνοδικὸν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας* [*Synodicon of Orthodoxy*], in *Τριῳδίων*, 141; cf. *True Vine*, issue nos. 27–28:64.

<sup>70</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Υπὲρ τῶν Ἱερῶς Ἠσυχάζοντων* 3.2.2

<sup>71</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Κεφάλαια* 126, in *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν* (1782), 1002: ὅτε μίαν θεότητά φαμεν, πάντα ὅσα ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός φαμεν, καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν.

<sup>72</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Περὶ Ἐνώσεως καὶ Διακρίσεως* 22: ἐν οὐσίᾳ καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ μία θεότης.

<sup>73</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ὁμολογία*, approved by the Synod of 1351 in Constantinople: εἷς ἐστὶ παντοδύναμος Θεὸς ἐν μιᾷ θεότητι.

<sup>74</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Κεφάλαια* 145, in *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν* (1782), 1007: ὁ αὐτὸς Θεός ἐστὶν ἡ θεία οὐσία καὶ ἡ θεία ἐνέργεια

energy (οὐσίαν τε ἐπὶ Θεοῦ, καὶ οὐσιώδη καὶ φυσικὴν τούτου ἐνέργειαν).<sup>75</sup> “Every power or energy [of God] is **God Himself** (ἐκάστη δύναμις ἢ ἐνέργεια [τοῦ Θεοῦ] **αὐτός** ἐστὶν **ὁ Θεός**).”<sup>76</sup> “**God Himself** is the grace (**αὐτὸς ὁ Θεός** ἐστὶν ἡ χάρις)” and “that [grace] which the saints have received, the same by which they are deified, is **God Himself** (τὸ λαμβανόμενον τοῖς ἁγίοις, αὐτὸ τοῦτο καθ’ ὃ θεοῦνται **ὁ Θεός** ἐστὶν **αὐτός**).”<sup>77</sup> This God-given truth is confirmed both by the ancient (pre-Palamite) Fathers and by the synodal, dogmatic consensus of all of the Orthodox Church: “it is obvious (πρόδηλον, *plain to all*)” that God’s “energy” is called “God.”<sup>78</sup>

Indeed, the Orthodox Church teaches emphatically that Christians give *absolute-divine-worship* (λατρεία) to both God’s essence and energy because both, together and inseparably, are God Himself. Christians worship one and the same God in essence and energy in one and the same Deity. “We worship God in a single Deity (ἐν μιᾷ θεότητι), not only according to the uncreated essence, but according also to the things contemplated and theologized pertaining to God—His power, will, goodness, light, life, etc.—which is one and the same Deity of the three persons, being both essence and illumination and, simply, every divine power and energy. [The heretic] Acindynus, on the other hand, unlawfully divides (διχοτομεῖ) the one God into created and uncreated; and he cuts the one Deity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit into two disparate divinities, one truly superior and one truly inferior.”<sup>79</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas was emphatic that Christians worship God’s essence and energy and that it is a grave error to assert that Christians worship one but not the other. “We worship and revere one God, trihypostatic, active/energetic, willing mercy, and all-powerful, not that we worship and revere the one and not the other, but we glorify with one worship the one perfect Deity in essence and power and will and energy (Ἀλλὰ καὶ θεὸν ἕνα προσκυνούμεν καὶ σέβοντες ἡμεῖς, τρισυπόστατον, ἐνεργῆ τε καὶ θελητὴν ἐλέους καὶ παντοδύναμον, οὐ τὸ μὲν αὐτοῦ προσκυνούμεν καὶ σέβομεν, τὸ δ’ οὐ, ἀλλὰ τὴν μίαν ἐν οὐσίᾳ καὶ δυνάμει καὶ θελήσει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ τελείαν θεότητα μιᾷ προσκυνήσει δοξάζομεν).<sup>80</sup> Saint Justinian the Great made it a part of Roman law that Christians worship *all that is God*: His Deity, essence, and power: “**[W]e worship one essence** in three hypostases, one Deity, one power, a co-essential Trinity (**μίαν οὐσίαν** ἐν πρὶς ὑποστάσεσι **προσκυνούμεν**, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν δύναμιν, τριάδα ὁμοούσιον);<sup>81</sup> “**worshipping one essence** in three hypostases, one Deity, one power, a co-essential Trinity (Πιστεύομεν γὰρ εἰς ἕνα θεόν, πατέρα παντοκράτορα καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, **μίαν οὐσίαν** ἐν πρὶς ὑποστάσεσι **προσκυνούμεντες**, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν δύναμιν, τριάδα ὁμοούσιον).”<sup>82</sup> The Seventh Ecumenical Synod teaches clearly that Christians worship “the divine nature (τῆ θεία φύσει).”<sup>83</sup> Christians give one worship to one God in essence and energy in one Deity. There are Orthodox prayers specifically addressed to God’s energy. “Glory to Thy power, O Lord (δόξα τῆ δυνάμει σου Κύριε)” and “Glory to Thy power, O Christ (δόξα τῆ δυνάμει σου Χριστέ)” are frequently repeated in Orthodox liturgical books. In Saint Andrew of Crete’s *Great Canon of Repentance*, Christians pray: “O simple Unity praised in Trinity of persons, uncreated nature without beginning, save us who in faith worship Thy

<sup>75</sup> *Συνοδικὸν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας* [*Synodicon of Orthodoxy*], *Τριῶδιον*, 141; cf. *True Vine*, issue nos. 27–28:64: οὐσίαν τε ἐπὶ Θεοῦ, καὶ οὐσιώδη καὶ φυσικὴν τούτου ἐνέργειαν.

<sup>76</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἰωάννην Γαβρᾶν* [*Letter to John Gabras*] 13: ἐκάστη δύναμις ἢ ἐνέργεια [τοῦ Θεοῦ] **αὐτός** ἐστὶν **ὁ Θεός**.

<sup>77</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ἀντιρρητικοὶ πρὸς Ἀκίνδον* 3.8: τὸ λαμβανόμενον τοῖς ἁγίοις, αὐτὸ τοῦτο καθ’ ὃ θεοῦνται **ὁ Θεός** ἐστὶν **αὐτός**.

<sup>78</sup> Saint Anastasius of Sinai, *Ὁδηγός* [*Guide*] [in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Graecae*, 89:53], quoted in Synod of Constantinople of 1351, *Συνοδικὸς τόμος* [*Conciliar Decree*] 35: “it is obvious [πρόδηλον, *plain to all*]”

<sup>79</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ἐπιστολὴ τῆ Δεσποίνῃ τῇ Παλαιολογίνῃ*.

<sup>80</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Ἀντιρρητικοὶ πρὸς Ἀκίνδον* 6.24: Ἀλλὰ καὶ θεὸν ἕνα προσκυνούμεν καὶ σέβοντες ἡμεῖς, τρισυπόστατον, ἐνεργῆ τε καὶ θελητὴν ἐλέους καὶ παντοδύναμον, οὐ τὸ μὲν αὐτοῦ προσκυνούμεν καὶ σέβομεν, τὸ δ’ οὐ, ἀλλὰ τὴν μίαν ἐν οὐσίᾳ καὶ δυνάμει καὶ θελήσει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ τελείαν θεότητα μιᾷ προσκυνήσει δοξάζομεν.

<sup>81</sup> Saint Justinian the Great, *Codex* 1.1.5.§1: **μίαν οὐσίαν** ἐν πρὶς ὑποστάσεσι **προσκυνούμεν**, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν δύναμιν, τριάδα ὁμοούσιον.

<sup>82</sup> Saint Justinian the Great, *Against Nestorians* 4: Πιστεύομεν γὰρ εἰς ἕνα θεόν, πατέρα παντοκράτορα καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, **μίαν οὐσίαν** ἐν πρὶς ὑποστάσεσι **προσκυνούμεντες**, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν δύναμιν, τριάδα ὁμοούσιον.

<sup>83</sup> Seventh Ecumenical Synod (Nicaea II, 787), *Ὅρος* [*Decree*], in *DEC* 1:135–136: “the divine nature [τῆ θεία φύσει]”

power (ἡμᾶς σῶσον, πίστει προσκυνῶντας τὸ κράτος σου).” Christians *worship* God’s energies as God Himself, because God’s energies *are* God Himself.

The notion that Christians give divine-worship to the three divine persons (Father, Son, Spirit) alone, but “not the essence or the energy” is a grave distortion of Orthodox monotheism.

### **MORE DETAIL ON SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS’S USAGE OF *GOD AND DIVINITY***

Numerous times, and with various expressions, Saint Gregory Palamas teaches that there is one and the same God in essence and energy in one and only one *theótēs* (θεότης=Godhood=Godhead=deity=divinity). Numerous times, using varying language, he teaches that God’s energies are God and “God Himself.” Both the earlier holy fathers and the Synod of Constantinople of 1351 confirm this teaching. The synod quotes Saint Anastasius of Sinai teaching that “obviously” the designation “God” applies to God’s “energy.” In one place (and apparently only one place), Saint Gregory writes that “if” one were to refer to plural “divinities” (the higher essence and the derived operations) there would still be only one Deity. He cites the Book of Revelation using the words “the seven spirits of God” (as an acceptable expression) even though, strictly speaking, there is only one God and only one Holy Spirit. Similarly, he states in this one instance, “if” one were to speak of a “higher Deity” and a “lower Deity” in accordance with the saints, it would not necessarily be heresy. The Synod of 1351 stated that going forward, to avoid confusion, everyone should speak of “one Deity,” which is what the saint routinely did. But at the same time the synod taught at length that God’s essence is “cause” and God’s operations are “effect,” which should be uncontroversial. So it is simply inaccurate when some individuals, then or now, assert that Saint Gregory Palamas routinely taught of “multiple divinities.” Rather, he repeatedly and forcefully spoke of one and only one God in one and only one Deity.

The Palamite synods clarified with exactness that God’s energies are God, since they “flow without separation” from God’s essence and are the “movement” (κίνησις) of God’s essence. I will concede that one can find passages from Holy Fathers (before the Palamite synods clarified the issue) that associated “God” with “essence” and associated “that which is around God” or “that which pertains to God” with God’s “energies.” Everyone should concede, however, that the Holy Fathers (as a whole) did not do this in an *exclusive* way, just as when Saint Paul associated “God” with “Father” and associated “Lord” with “Christ” he was not doing so in an exclusive way. God the Father is also the Lord; and Christ is also God, in other passages of Saint Paul. Similarly, the Holy Fathers also speak of God’s essence as *theótēs* and speak of God’s energies as *Theós*. The Fathers did not say that God (Θεός) and Godhood/Deity (Θεότης) were exclusive of one another. Saint Gregory Palamas did not believe they were exclusive of one another, as Sergius’s misleadingly-titled *Synodal Letter* of 1913 claims they are exclusive.

When the Palamite/Hesychast synods and the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* confessed and proclaimed the “Godhood” (*theótēs*) of God’s energies, they were saying that the energies are *God*. These true Orthodox synods never said that the energies of God are *only* Godhood, or *may* be called Godhood if a person speaks more broadly than is common. These synods never said that the energies were not God or were certainly not God Himself, as the 1913 opinion falsely states. The truly Orthodox synods teach the exact opposite of what the false 1913 opinion does. By confessing the Godhood of the energies of God, the synods were proclaiming that the energies of God are God Himself.

In contradiction to basic Orthodox Christian dogma, Sergius’s 1913 opinion indicates the existence of something (the energy of God) that is Godhood if a person speak’s loosely, but not God. This is an impossibility according to Orthodox Christian truth. There exists only God and His creation, nothing more. It is true that some Fathers associated *God* with *essence* and associated “that which is around God” or “that which pertains to God” with the *energies* that proceed inseparably from God’s essence. But, crucially, these Fathers did not say that *God* and *Godhood* were exclusive of one another. Saint Gregory Palamas did not state that they were exclusive of one another, as the 1913 opinion does.

The Palamite synods clarified with exactness that God’s energies are God, since they “flow without separation” from God’s essence and are the “movement” (κίνησις) of God’s essence. I will concede that one can find passages from Holy Fathers (before the Palamite synods clarified the issue) that associated “God” with “essence” and

associated “that which is around God” or “that which pertains to God” with God’s “energies.” Everyone should concede, however, that the Holy Fathers (as a whole) did not do this in an *exclusive* way, just as when Saint Paul associated “God” with “Father” and associated “Lord” with “Christ” he was not doing so in an exclusive way. God the Father is also the Lord; and Christ is also God, in other passages of Saint Paul. Similarly, the Holy Fathers also speak of God’s essence as Θεότης and speak of God’s energies as Θεός. The Fathers did not say that God (Θεός) and Godhood/Deity (Θεότης) were exclusive of one another. Saint Gregory Palamas did not believe they were exclusive of one another, as Sergius’s misleadingly-titled *Synodal Letter* of 1913 claims they are exclusive.

It is very wrong to suggest that Saint Gregory Palamas used *God* and *Deity* in actual opposition to one another. Rather, Saint Gregory spoke of “one Deity, in essence and in energy” or “one Deity consisting of essence and energy” (ἐν οὐσία καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ μία θεότης, Saint Gregory Palamas, *Discourse on Divine Union and Distinction* 22, in *Grēgoriou tou Palama Syngrammata* 2:85). He also taught us that “there is one all-powerful God in one Deity” (εἷς ἐστι παντοδύναμος θεὸς ἐν μιᾷ θεότητι), Saint Gregory Palamas, *Confession of the Orthodox Faith*). In other words, there is one God consisting of one Deity/Godhood.

We must also remember that when it comes to Church Fathers before Saint Gregory Palamas, we are dealing with a time before the synods of the Church clarified how best to speak of these teachings. But even here, these early Fathers did not teach that there was actually Godhood that was not God, as the 1913 opinion falsely does. For these early Fathers, “that which is around God” or “that which pertains to God” was also God Himself, but not God’s incomprehensible essence. Saint Gregory Palamas clarified the intent of the imprecise expressions of a few of the earlier Fathers. The Palamite/Hesycahst synods thoroughly approved of Saint Gregory Palamas’s interpretations of the earlier Fathers. The 1913 opinion was in error in resorting to the occasional, imprecise expressions of a few earlier Fathers, and by rejecting the clearer language used by the synods and saints of the Church that explicitly clarified this dogma. The Holy Fathers never intended to distinguished or separate God and Godhood in the way that the 1913 opinion does. So, even if the 1913 opinion harkens back (in some way) to earlier (occasional and imprecise) expressions by a few individuals before Saint Gregory Palamas, the 1913 opinion even gets those expressions wrong and misrepresents them. Most importantly, Saint Gregory Palamas clarified that the energies of God are “God Himself,” whereas the 1913 opinion harshly rejects this divinely-revealed dogma of the Church. This theological error of 1913 was very serious and should not be minimized or defended today.

Saint Gregory Palamas never taught a separation or even a sharp differentiation between God and Deity, even though he and everybody else acknowledges that they are two words not one. In numerous passages, the saint refers to God’s essence as God and God’s energies as Deity. But he does not do this in a mutually exclusive way. There are several passages where the saint confesses the essence to be Deity and the energies to be God. There are also passages in which he teaches that the term Deity “most properly” refers to the energies. These passages can also be misinterpreted. The saint’s point in these passages is that the word Godhood, because of its etymology, applies most properly to properties or operations of God, not to God’s essence, because God’s essence is above all His properties, powers, or operations. If the saint states that God is above Deity, his point is that the word Godhood/Deity because of its etymology applies most properly to a property or operation of God not to God’s essence, because God’s essence is above all His properties, powers, or operations. The Orthodox Church acknowledges one God in essence and energy in one Deity (=theótēs, divine nature, Deity, Godhead, Godhood, God-nature, state of being God). When the Orthodox Church speaks of “one God and one Deity,” the Church is not using “God” to mean *essence* and “Deity” to mean *energy* in a mutually exclusive sense. Rather, the Church is saying that there is only one God in only one God-nature. The words “God [*Theós*]” and “theótēs” are not identical when we speak about Christ: Christ’s flesh is “God” but it is not “God-nature [*theótēs*].” When the Church speaks of the Divine Trinity, the words “God” and “God-nature [*theótēs*]” are used in a way that is very close, indeed in a way that overlaps: the Church worships the “trihypostatic [three-person] God” and the Church worships the “trihypostatic [three-person] Deity.” The notion that *God* means *essence* and *Deity* means *energy* in an exclusive sense is foreign to Orthodox doctrine and worship. Not only does the

Church confess one God in essence and energy in one Deity, the Church gives divine-worship (*latreía*) to one God in essence and energy in one Deity.

## UNDERMINING THE TRUE AND FULL DIVINITY OF GOD'S ENERGIES

There are many ways that one can fall into unintentionally undermining the true and full Deity of God's energies. And we know why this has happened in modern Eastern Christendom: *pseudomorphosis*. The dogmas of Saint Gregory Palamas, the two major decrees of the Holy Mountain on Hesychasm (the Athonite *Decree* (Τόμος) of circa 1340 and the Athonite *Confession* (Ὁμολογία) of circa 1368), the four *Decrees* (Τόμοι) of the major Palamite/Hesychast synods (1341, 1347, 1351, 1368), and the final and full Byzantine Greek (not Slavonic) text of the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy* (finalized at the Resident Synod of 1352 in Constantinople) are not nearly as well known as the dogmatic decrees of the Seven Ecumenical Synods. Our modern Orthodox Christian textbooks of dogmatic theology (in Greek, Slavic, and other languages) historically have not covered these dogmas adequately. Even the great Justin Popović, does a less than perfect job on this. Although Saint Justin of Čelije deserves great credit for quoting directly (a tiny bit) from Saint Gregory Palamas, he neglected to quote from these Athonite or synodal decrees at all. Greek and Russian predecessors of Saint Justin as authors of dogmatic theology textbooks hardly ever quoted any doctrinal texts from Saint Gregory Palamas or any related dogmatic texts from this general time period on God's energies. The synodal decrees and several other related texts are available in Patriarch Dositheus II of Jerusalem and in Migne. The full text of the *Synodicon* is in Orthodox Greek printings of the Lenten Triodion since the invention of mechanical printing (I checked one dated 1600 and another of disputed date, possibly earlier, and several from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries). So, there really is no excuse for this omission from the study of dogma in the Orthodox East other than the unfortunate reality of Western captivity and Eastern pseudomorphosis. These dogmas were attacked in the West and not academically fashionable in the Christian East. The German-Protestant-educated Halki theologians in 1913 quoted the *Synodicon* when they wanted an (off-topic) quotation about condemning heretics, but these very same Halki renovationists never quoted a single relevant passage from the *Synodicon* or any Palamite text in 1913, but, rather, published Archbishop Sergius Stragorodskii's Barlaamite *Letter* of May 16. These are the very same Halki theologians who rammed through the ecumenist encyclical of 1920 and the calendar outrage of 1924 and following years. Yet some old-calendarists believe, against the evidence, that Halki was Orthodox in every iota of doctrine until the moment of the calendar change. They seem unaware of the extreme anti-Hesychast and Westernizing tendencies in Halki and the Patriarchate at that time. I am unaware of any evidence that Patriarchs Germanus or Joachim (or their Protestant-minded Halki theological advisors) knew anything about Orthodox dogma on divine uncreated energies and on sacred created λόγια in which God dwells. The first texts the Patriarchate and Halki should have quoted were Saint Gregory Palamas's *Confession of the Orthodox Faith* and the decree of 1351, but they did not. They did publish some non-Palamite and anti-Hesychast theology in their official newspaper, *Ekklesiastikē Alētheia* (Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια), around 1912 to 1914 as some of the Russians did in *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*. So, we know the historical reasons why we see Barlaamite statements in Saint Petersburg and Istanbul around this time. It is most definitely not because "Palamite" texts (broadly defined) were unavailable (as the myth claims). Several Palamite texts are in Triodia, Dositheus, the *Philokalia*, Migne, Porfirii Uspenskii, Feodor Uspenskii, et alii, et cetera. Saint Gregory Palamas, the Athonite and synodal declarations, the *Philokalia*, the *Synodicon*, the Triodion, and the Pentecostarion (which refers to "trihypostatic God" and "trihypostatic deity" in an Orthodox manner that is very different from what Sergius, *Ekklesiastikē Alētheia* and the 2012 polemics had to say about "deity").

If we look in detail at Sergius's letter, we can see that Sergius made more than one explicitly Barlaamite statement. Sergius claimed that God's attributes and energies are "merely divinity, not God, especially not 'God Himself' (только Божествомъ, а не Богомъ, тѣмъ болѣе не «Богомъ Самимъ») (ἀπλῶς θεότητα, οὐχὶ δὲ Θεὸν, πολλῶ δ' ἦττον «αὐτὸν τὸν Θεὸν»)." Even worse, Sergius claimed that God's attributes and energies were not even "Divinity" in a normal or full sense:

Saint Gregory [Palamas] taught that we must attribute the term “Divinity” not only to the essence of God but also to the “energy” or to His energies, that is, to the divine attributes: wisdom, goodness, omniscience, omnipotence, etc., through which God reveals Himself to those outside, and in this way [Saint Gregory Palamas] taught that we should use the term “Deity” in a somewhat broader sense than usual.

Именно св. Григорій училъ прилагать названіе “Божество” не только къ существу Божію, но и къ Его “энергіи”, или энергіям, т[о] е[сть] Божественнымъ свойствамъ: премудрости, благодти, всевѣдѣнію, всемогуществу и проч., которыми Богъ открываетъ Себя во-внѣ, и, такимъ образомъ, училъ употреблять слово “Божество” нѣсколько въ болѣе широкомъ смыслѣ, чѣмъ обыкновенно.<sup>84</sup>

Ὁ ἅγιος δηλαδὴ Γρηγόριος ἐδίδασκε νὰ ἀποδίδωμεν τὴν ὀνομασίαν “θεότης”, οὐ μόνον εἰς τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὴν “ἐνεργεῖαν” ἢ τὰς ἐνεργείας αὐτοῦ, τοὔτέστιν εἰς τὰς θείας ιδιότητας, τὴν σοφίαν, τὴν ἀγαθότητα, τὴν παντογνωσίαν, τὴν παντοδυναμίαν κτλ., δι’ ὧν ὁ Θεὸς ἀποκαλύπτει ἑαυτὸν τοῖς ἔξω, καὶ τοιοῦτοτρόπως ἐδίδασκε νὰ μεταχειριζώμεθα τὴν λέξιν “θεότης” ἐν εὐρυτέρα πῶς ἐννοίᾳ ἢ ὡς συνήθως.

Sergius calls the normal, Orthodox, ecclesiastical, Palamite, synodal, dogmatic way of speaking about the attributes and energies of God *abnormal* (“a somewhat broader sense than usual”)! Sergius not only denigrates the Orthodox dogma, he also positively affirms and explicitly advocates Barlaamism. Sergius taught the Barlaamite error when he asserted that God’s energies are “not God” and “especially not ‘God Himself’” and “merely” Divinity in an *unusually-broad* sense of the word. What Sergius teaches in that text can never be defended: God’s attributes are not God and not Divinity in the normal sense, Sergius asserts.

For several historical reasons, the Church was not able to produce a major doctrinal definition or decree at that time that explicitly condemned the Barlaamite error that was advocated in Sergius’s letter. Nevertheless, the letter was highly criticized at that time, and in various ways it was effectively ignored or set aside, several times. The All-Russia Council of the Orthodox Church of Russia (1917 to 1918) created a commission of theologians with the task of composing a detailed report to the bishops with a theological answer to the name-glorification dispute. Communist persecution against the Church prevented the commission from issuing any theological report. However, it is a fact that the 1917–1918 council and Saint Tikhon (Patriarch of Moscow, 1917–1925) never advocated the Barlaamite error that was clearly supported in Sergius’s opinion letter. Saint Tikhon, in the midst of great persecution by the Communists, brought peace and reconciliation to the Church over the name-glorification dispute, with four basic Orthodox doctrinal principles, in his February 1921 letter (which was based on a 1914 decision). Everyone—both the monastics known as “name-glorifiers” and their sometime-critics—agreed: (1) not to consider God’s name to be God’s essence; (2) not to consider God’s name to be another Divinity; (3) not to separate God and His name; and (4) not to deify God’s created names consisting of human thoughts, sounds, or letters. The fourth point, effectively rejects the heresy that created names can be divine energy and it forbids the giving of divine-adoration (absolute-worship) to created names. The second point effectively rejects the heresy that claims that God’s power or energy is not present in created names. These four simple doctrinal principles condemn the extreme “name-worshipping” heresy that claims that created names are divine power/energy and it excludes the extreme “name-fighting” heresy that claims that God is not attached to or present in created names but is somehow “separate” from his created names. The concise wording in Saint Tikhon’s letter is “not to consider His Name to be God’s essence, not to separate it from God, not to consider

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<sup>84</sup> Sergius, *Επιστολή*, 189.

it another Divinity, not to deify [or give divine-worship to] letters and sounds and random thoughts about God (Имя Его не считать за сущность Божию, не отделять от Бога, не почитать за особое Божество, не обожать букв и звуков и случайных мыслей о Боге).” This was the Orthodox Church’s final decision, not Sergius’s false *Synodal Letter* of 1913.

### **SUMMARY ON DIVINE-WORSHIP GIVEN TO GOD’S ENERGIES**

The Orthodox Church gives divine-adoration (λατρεία) to one and the same God (“God Himself”) in one Deity in essence and energies, because all of God’s uncreated attributes, powers, and operations are Deity, God, God Himself. God’s energies are worshipped as God Himself, because they are God Himself. This doctrine is taught by Scripture, early synods and fathers, Saint Maximus the Confessor, Saint John of Damascus, Saint Gregory Palamas, his followers, the two Hesychast decrees of the Holy Mountain Athos, the four decrees of the Synods of Constantinople (1341–1368), the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy*, Dositheus II of Jerusalem, the *Philokalia*, the liturgical books, “Palamite” texts published in Migne, “Palamite” texts published in nineteenth-century Russia, and the consensus of all Orthodox Churches. It is settled dogma. Modern derivations from and permutations of the historic heresy of Barlaamism deny, or reduce, or chip-away-at, or treat-as-optional the Orthodox dogma of the true *theótes* (Godhood, Godhead, Deity, Divinity, divine nature) of God’s energies. Orthodox Christians give relative-veneration (not divine-adoration (λατρεία)) to God’s created names because God dwells in them. Modern nominalism or name-fighting is reluctant (maybe even embarrassed) to confess with the Church that God “dwells in” or “attaches to” created names and words. Some individuals even mistakenly call this Orthodox doctrine Kabbalistic, pagan, heretical, or anathematized. No Orthodox Christian should believe that a created name is God Himself or an uncreated divine energy. No Orthodox Christian should give divine-adoration (λατρεία) to a created name. No Orthodox Christian should deny that God’s energies are God. No Orthodox Christian should deny that God “indwells” or “attaches to” created names in Scripture and genuine Orthodox prayer. No Orthodox Christian should hold up as a standard of Orthodoxy such inaccurate assertions as that God’s energies are “not God, especially not ‘God Himself,’” but “merely Divinity” in an unusually broad sense. No Orthodox Christian should accuse Saint Gregory Palamas and his followers of using “Deity” in a sense that is broader than usual. Such errant statements are in danger of falling under the 9 (or 27!) anathemas of the *Synodicon* against Barlaamism. No Orthodox bishop, clergyman, monastic, or layman should be bludgeoned with a false accusation of “name-worshipping” simply because he rejects Sergius’s un-Orthodox letter of May 16, 1913. Orthodoxy itself rejects the false doctrines of that letter. Orthodoxy confesses the true and full Deity of God’s attributes and energies, which means that they are God Himself, and they are *worshipped* as God Himself, because they *are truly* God Himself.

### **THE ORTHODOX CHURCH REJECTS THE HERESY OF NAME-WORSHIP**

The Orthodox Church considers “name-worshipping” to be heresy. The heresy of name-worshipping is to give divine-worship to a *created* name or to claim that a created name is God or divine energy. The Orthodox Church teaches that it would be heresy to deify created letters and sounds or to claim that a created name can be God or divine energy. Orthodox Christians follow the final doctrinal decision of the Orthodox Church on this matter (Saint Tikhon of Moscow’s February 1921 doctrinal statement): “not to consider His Name to be God’s essence, not to separate it from God, not to consider it another Deity, not to deify [or give divine-worship to] letters and sounds and random thoughts about God” (Имя Его не считать за сущность Божию, не отделять от Бога, не почитать за особое Божество, не обожать букв и звуков и случайных мыслей о Боге).<sup>85</sup> To claim that a created name is divine energy would be to deify letters and sounds—that would be heresy, the heresy of name-worship. To claim that God’s energy

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<sup>85</sup> Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, *Рождественское послание [Nativity Epistle]* (no. 3244; February 19, 1921), in Evgeny Semenovich Polishchuk, ed., *Имяславие: Антология [Name-Glorification: An Anthology]* (Moscow: Факториал Пресс, 2002), 512.

is not present in His name when it is pronounced in authentic Orthodox prayer would be to separate God and His name—this would be heresy, the heresy of name-fighting. It is a dogma of the Orthodox Church that God’s uncreated power or energy (God Himself) “dwells in” holy created words as He dwells in holy created persons (the angels and saints) and holy created icons.<sup>86</sup> So, it is heresy to equate created names with divine energy, but it is also heresy to deny that divine energy dwells in the created names for God that are pronounced in true Orthodox prayer.

God’s “name,” however, does not refer only to created names and nothing else.

## GOD’S “NAME” HAS MANY MEANINGS

Orthodox Christians accept the obvious and well-known fact that, within Christianity, God’s “name” (*ónoma*) has a richness of meaning, not just created names. The *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (2000) states that God’s “*ónoma*” can mean “a tangible manifestation of the divine nature.” In Orthodox theology, this is called God’s “natural energy.” The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged* (1985), defines “*ónoma*” as “name” or “person.” The *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961), defines “*ónoma*” as “name” or “person,” with entries on “God being named from his operations [energies]” and on the “power [energy] of Christ’s name.” Even the *Oxford English Dictionary* (a secular work) indicates that, in Christian usage, God’s “name” can refer both to a human word and God’s power.

Indeed Holy Scriptures, Fathers, and liturgical prayers of the Orthodox Church frequently speak of God’s “name” as a synonym for “God Himself” or for “the uncreated glory, power, or energy that is God Himself.” The saints of the Old Testament taught, interchangeably, that God’s “glory” dwelled in the Temple, that God’s “name” dwelled there, and that “God” dwelled there. Saint Gregory Palamas teaches that “the divine name” (τοῦ θεοῦ ὀνόματος) dwelt in the Holy of Holies and that “God alone” (μόνον Θεῶ) dwelt there. Saint Gregory Palamas points out that the presence of “God alone” in the Holy of Holies is called the presence of “the divine name” in the language of the Bible.<sup>87</sup> So, both the Hebrew prophets and Saint Gregory Palamas would totally accept the language used by Saint John of Kronstadt: “the Name of God is God Himself” (Имя Божіе есть самъ Богъ).<sup>88</sup> The Lord Jesus Christ Himself spoke in a similar way, with “name” often meaning God’s “Deity” (Godhood, Godhead, divinity, divine nature) or “glory” or “energy” (God’s movement, activity, or operation to protect and sanctify believers). Saint Cyril of Alexandria repeatedly teaches over the course of numerous pages that when Christ says “name” (in John 17, etc.) this is synonymous with: “the glory of Deity .... the energy of Deity .... the authority of Deity .... the energy of the Father ... the glory and power of Deity .... the authority and glory of Deity” (δόξη θεότητος .... θεότητος...ἐνεργεία .... θεότητος ἐξουσία .... Πατρός ἐνεργειαν .... δόξη καὶ δυνάμει θεότητος .... θεότητος ἐξουσία καὶ δόξη)<sup>89</sup> (see the

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<sup>86</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, Metropolitan of Thessalonica, Ὁμολογία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου πίστεως [Confession of the Orthodox Faith], in John N. Karmiris, ed., Τὰ δογματικὰ καὶ συμβολικὰ μνημεῖα τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας; Dogmatica et symbolica monumenta Orthodoxae Catholicae Ecclesiae ([1st ed.]; 2 vols.; Athens, 1952–1953), at Συμβολή, <http://www.symbola.gr/chrtoms/dogma/1171-fides19>; cf. English in Jaroslav J. Pelikan and Valerie R. Hotchkiss, eds., *Creeeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition* (4 vols. and 1 CD; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>87</sup> “τὸ σκῆνωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ὀνόματος, ὡς ὁ Δαβὶδ φησι” and “τὸν γὰρ μόνον Θεῶ ἀποκεκληρωμένον τόπον ...” (Saint Gregory Palamas, Metropolitan of Thessalonica, *Ὁμιλία 53*, 19–20, in *Ἑλληνες Πατέρες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας: Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Ἄπαντα τὰ Ἔργα* [ed. Panagiotes K. Chrestou, Theodoros N. Zeses, V. D. Phanourgakes, and E. G. Meretakas; 12 vols.; Thessalonica: Πατερικαὶ Ἐκδόσεις Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμᾶς, 1981–], 11:284–286); cf. English in Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19–20, in Christopher Veniamin, ed. and tr., *Saint Gregory Palamas: The Homilies* (Waymart, PA: Mount Thabor Publishing, 2009), 422–423.

<sup>88</sup> “His Name is Himself” and “The Name of God is God Himself [Имя Божіе есть самъ Богъ]” (Saint John of Kronstadt, *Моя жизнь во Христѣ*, <http://books.google.com/books?id=pS5RAQAIAAJ>, cf. English in Saint John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ* [tr. E. E. Goulaeff; London: Cassell, 1897], 358, 477, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.fig:002575139>, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.fig:002575139>. Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk taught similarly, “[T]he glory of the Name of God is eternal, infinite, and unchanging, just as God Himself” (Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, *Ὁ ἰσθινομὲν Χριστιανισμὸς* [On True Christianity], 2:313–314, in *Творения иже во Святых Отца Нашего Тихона Задонскаго* [2 vols.; Saint Petersburg: Сойкинъ, 1912; reprint, Farnborough, Eng.: Gregg International Pub., 1970]).

<sup>89</sup> Saint Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, Ἐξηγήσεις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην Εὐαγγέλιον [Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint John], in Phillip Edward Pusey, ed., *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini: In D. Joannis evangelium: accedunt fragmenta varia necnon tractatus ad Tiberium diaconum duo*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1872), vol. 2, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.fig:002921833>, cf. English in David R. Maxwell, tr., and Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *Cyril of Alexandria: Commentary on John*, 2 vols., Ancient

next section below). Saint Clement of Rome teaches that God’s name is the “author-of-all-creation name” (ἀρχέγονον πάσης κτίσεως ὄνομα)<sup>90</sup> and Christians are “those who give divine-worship” (λατρευόντων)<sup>91</sup> to this uncreated power or energy (which the saint calls “name”). Similarly, the *Shepherd of Hermas* teaches that God’s “name” is “great and boundless and upholds the whole cosmos” (μέγα ἐστὶ καὶ ἀχώρητον καὶ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον βαστάζει),<sup>92</sup> that is, the “name” is limitless (uncreated) and sustains all of creation (the cosmos). So as we can see, the early Christians continued to speak like the Hebrew Prophets and Christ Himself did, using “name” to mean “God Himself” or God’s uncreated “power.” This has continued to the present day in the prayers and teaching of the Orthodox Church.

### CHRIST USES “NAME” TO MEAN UNCREATED “GLORY” AND “ENERGY”

Saint Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria (+444), writes many pages explaining that, when Christ used “name” (John 17 and elsewhere), our Savior meant the “glory,” “authority,” “power,” and “energy [movement, activity, operation]” of God.

[Christ] says to His Father, “I have made Your name known to the people,” saying “name” instead of “glory.” This is the usual practice of speech among us [Christians] as well.<sup>93</sup>

[Christ] says, “protect them by Your name [ὄνόματι] .... He wants the disciples to be protected by the power [δυνάμει] and authority [ἐξουσία] of the ineffable nature.<sup>94</sup>

the Savior Himself said ... “Holy Father, protect them by Your name ... in effect signaling to His disciples that the ability to save them was properly an energy [ἐνεργεία] of His Deity<sup>95</sup>

When He speaks to His Father and says, “Holy Father, protect them” [John 17:11], He immediately refers to the Father’s active power [ἐνεργὸν δύνανον] in all things .... by the “name” that was given to Him by the Father, that is, by the glory of the Deity.<sup>96</sup>

Saint Cyril also indicates that Christ “var[ies] the words” between “name” and “truth,” and that both (“name” and “truth”) are the “energy” of God.

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Christian Texts (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013–2015); Phillip Edward Pusey and Thomas Randell, tr., S. Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria: Commentary on the Gospel according to S. John, 2 vols., vol. 1 tr. Phillip Edward Pusey, pref. E. B. Pusey, vol. 2 tr. Thomas Randell, pref. H. P. Liddon, Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church Anterior to the Division of the East and West 43, 48 (London: Walter Smith, 1874–1885), vol. 2, <http://books.google.com/books?vid=harvard:32044050529759>.

<sup>90</sup> “to hope on Your author-of-all-creation name” (*1 Clement* 59.3). “ἔλπειζεν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀρχέγονον πάσης κτίσεως ὄνομα σου” (*Α’ Κλήμεντος* 59.3)

<sup>91</sup> “those who with a pure conscience give divine-worship [*latreuóntōn*] to His all-excellent name” (*1 Clement* 45.7). “τῶν ἐν καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει λατρευόντων τῷ παναρέτῳ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ” (*Α’ Κλήμεντος* 45.7)

<sup>92</sup> “The name of the Son of God is great and boundless and upholds the whole cosmos” (*Shepherd of Hermas* 91, Similitudes 9.14). “τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ μέγα ἐστὶ καὶ ἀχώρητον καὶ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον βαστάζει” (*Ποιμὴν τοῦ Ἑρμᾶ* 91, Παράβολα 9.14).

<sup>93</sup> Saint Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, *Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην Εὐαγγέλιον* [*Commentary on the Gospel According to John*], bk. 11, chap. 7 (on John 17:6–8), Greek in Phillip Edward Pusey, ed., *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini: In D. Joannis evangelium: accedunt fragmenta varia necnon tractatus ad Tiberium diaconum duo* (3 vols.; Oxford: Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1872), 2:679, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.fig:002921833>, at *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, no. 4090.003, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>, cf. English in David R. Maxwell, tr., and Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *Cyril of Alexandria: Commentary on John* (2 vols.; Ancient Christian Texts; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013–2015), 2:278.

<sup>94</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria, *Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην* [*Commentary on John*], 11.9 (on John 17:11), in Pusey, 2:696, Maxwell, 2:285–286.

<sup>95</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria, *Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην* [*Commentary on John*], 11.9 (on John 17:12–13), in Pusey, 2:699, Maxwell, 2:287.

<sup>96</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria, *Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην* [*Commentary on John*], 11.9 (on John 17:12–13), in Pusey, 2:705, Maxwell, 2:290.

[Christ] asked His Father to protect the disciples “by the name” .... In this passage [John 17:16–17], however, He wants His request on their behalf to be fulfilled “by the truth” of the Father.... Why does He want to vary the words? Surely it is to show that the energy [ἐνέργειαν] of the Father, carried out through Him in mercy to the saints, is not uniform.... He says that the disciples should be protected “by the name” of the Father, that is, by the glory and power of Deity [ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ Πατρὸς χρῆναι λέγων τηρεῖσθαι τοὺς μαθητὰς, οἰονεὶ τὸ ἐν δόξῃ καὶ δυνάμει θεότητος]<sup>197</sup>

### THE “NAME” OF JESUS CHRIST OFTEN MEANS “JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF”

How then can we understand the claim that the name “Jesus” is “God Himself.” The answer is found in traditional Orthodox liturgical language. At the Great Blessing of the Waters, on the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord, Orthodox priests worldwide pray that all of creation will glorify the “all-holy name” of the Lord Jesus Christ, “together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.” The “name” of Jesus is given the same divine-adoration as the *person* of the Father and the *person* of the Holy Spirit. This long Theophany prayer addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ concludes with a doxology to the Divine Trinity:

“Ἴνα καὶ διὰ στοιχείων, καὶ διὰ Ἀγγέλων, καὶ διὰ ἀνθρώπων, καὶ διὰ ὄρωμένων, καὶ διὰ ἀοράτων, δοξάζηται σου τὸ πανάγιον ὄνομα, σὺν τῷ Πατρὶ, καὶ τῷ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν. (Μηνᾶϊον, *Ἰανουαρίου* 6)

That also by elements, and by Angels, and by men, and by things visible, and by things invisible, Thy all-holy name may be glorified, together with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. (Menaion, January 6)

Once again, the “name” of the Lord Christ is given the same divine-adoration in this prayer as the Father and the Spirit. How can this be? The answer lies in the fact that “name” can mean “glory” or “person” in Scriptural and liturgical language. When Orthodox priests worldwide pray that all of creation will give the same divine-adoration to the “name” of the Lord Jesus as to the person of the Father and the person of the Son, the “name” of the Lord Jesus refers either to the “glory/power/energy” of Jesus or the “person” of Jesus. The “name” of Jesus in this prayer means “person” or “uncreated glory/power/energy”—it does not refer to any created name. The Athonite name-glorifying Fathers were correct that the “name” of Jesus *can* mean “God Himself” and *can* be given divine-adoration in the sense that the “energy” of God is given divine-adoration and in the sense that the “person” of Jesus is given divine-adoration. The created names—the sounds and letters—are not, however, God, or divine energy, and are not given divine-adoration. It was agreed—on Athos, in Constantinople, and in Russia—that it would be heresy to deify created sounds or letters, and idolatry to give divine-adoration to created sounds or letters. If the syncretistic academic intellectuals Pavel Florenskii and Sergius Bulgakov were guilty of that, the name-glorifying monastics did not support them on that.

### THE G.O.C. TEACHES THAT “NAME” CAN MEAN “ENERGY” OR “GOD HIMSELF”

Today, the bishops of the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians (G.O.C.) of Greece approve of a book by one of its theologian-bishops that states (correctly) that “the ‘name’ [often] means the **energy of the person** .... the ‘name of God’ (=God himself).”<sup>98</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria, *Ἐξηγήσεις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην* [Commentary on John], 11.9 (on John 17:16–17), in Pusey, 2:714–715, Maxwell, 2:294–295.

<sup>98</sup> Cyprian (Gioules), Bishop of Oreoi, Ἡ πρόσφατος πληθωρική «Ἀντι-χριστολογία» καὶ οἱ επικίνδυνες παρενέργειές της: Προτάσεις θεραπείας τῆς ἐσχατολογικῆς χαραγματο-φοβίας καὶ ἀριθμο-φοβίας: Ὑπόμνημα τῆς Εἰδικῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς πρὸς τὴν Ἱερὰν Σύνοδον τῶν

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK ENDORSED BY THE G.O.C.

[Μητροπολίτης Ὠρωποῦ καὶ Φυλῆς Κυπριανὸς Β΄ γράφει<sup>99</sup>:]

■Τὸ «ὄνομα» στὴν Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Παράδοσί μας χρησιμοποιεῖται ἰδιωματικῶς ἀντὶ τοῦ **προσώπου** καὶ τῶν ἰδιοτήτων του, δηλαδὴ «ὄνομα» καὶ **πρόσωπο** ταυτίζονται· τοῦτο σημαίνει, ὅτι λέγοντες «ὄνομα», ἐννοοῦμε τὸ ὑπὸ τούτου σημαζόμενον **πρόσωπο**, δηλώνουμε τὴν **φύσιν τοῦ προσώπου**· ἐπίσης ὁμως, τὸ «ὄνομα» εἶναι ταυτόσημο μὲ τὴν **ἐνέργεια τοῦ προσώπου** (τοῦ Θεοῦ ἢ τοῦ σατανᾶ).

17. Παραθέτομε ἐνδεικτικὰ χωρία:

α. «Καὶ ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι ὑπὸ πάντων **διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου**»<sup>31</sup> (= δι' ἐμέ).

β. «Καὶ ὃς ἐὰν δέξηται παιδίον τοιοῦτον ἐν **ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου**»<sup>32</sup> (= δι' ἐμέ).

γ. «Φανεροῦν»<sup>33</sup>, «γνωρίζειν»<sup>34</sup>, «δοξάζειν»<sup>35</sup>, «ἀγαπᾶν»<sup>36</sup>, «φοβεῖσθαι»<sup>37</sup>, «ἐπικαλεῖσθαι»<sup>38</sup>, «εὐλογεῖν»<sup>39</sup> κ.ἄ. τὸ «ὄνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ» (= τὸν Θεὸν αὐτόν).

δ. «ἔχεις ὀλίγα **ὀνόματα** ἐν Σάρδεσιν»<sup>40</sup> (= πρόσωπα, πιστούς).

ε. «Ἦν τε **ἄχλος ὀνομάτων** ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὡς ἑκατὸν εἴκοσιν»<sup>41</sup> (= ἦσαν περίπου 120 πρόσωπα).

ς. «Τήρησον αὐτοὺς ἐν **τῷ ὀνόματί Σου**»<sup>42</sup> (= διατήρησέ τους σὲ κοινωνία μαζί Σου / εἰς τὸ φέρειν τὴν ἐνέργειάν Σου / εἰς τὸ ζῆν ἐν τῇ χάριτί Σου).

[Metropolitan Cyprian II of Oropos and Phyle writes<sup>100</sup>:]

■In our [Orthodox] Ecclesiastical Tradition, “**name**” is used idiomatically in place of the **person** and his attributes; that is, “**name**” and **person** are identical; this means that, when we [Orthodox Christians] say “**name**,” we mean the **person** signified thereby, and declare the **nature of the person**; likewise, however, the “**name**” means the **energy of the person** (God or Satan).

17. We will cite the following passages:

a. “And you will be hated by all **because of my name**”<sup>31</sup> (=because of me).

b. “And whoever will receive one such little child **in my name**”<sup>32</sup> (=because of me).

c. “To manifest,”<sup>33</sup> “to declare,”<sup>34</sup> “to glorify,”<sup>35</sup> “to love,”<sup>36</sup> “to fear,”<sup>37</sup> “to call upon,”<sup>38</sup> “to bless,”<sup>39</sup> etc. the “**name of God**” (= God himself.)

d. “You have a few **names** in Sardis”<sup>40</sup> (=persons, faithful).

e. “The **crowd of names** in the same place was about 120”<sup>41</sup> (=there were about 120 persons).

f. “Keep them **through Your name**”<sup>42</sup> (= keep them in communion with You; that they may bear Your energy; that they may live in Your grace).

<sup>99</sup> Ἐνισταμένων (Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία καὶ Ἐσχατολογικὴς Ἀνησυχίαις Α΄ Phyle, Greece: Ἰερὰ Σύνοδος τῶν Ἐνισταμένων, October 2010), 28–29, at Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece, Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle, accessed October 9, 2017, <http://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2011/08/24/20110824aYpomnemaEsxat2010/20110824aYpomnemaEsxat2010.pdf>, cf. Cyprian (Gioules), Bishop of Oreoi, The Orthodox Church and Eschatological Frenzy: The Recent Proliferation of “Antichristology” and Its Perilous Side-Effects: Proposals for Curing the Eschatological Fear of Marks (Seals) and Numbers: A Memorandum from the Special Commission to the Holy Synod in Resistance (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2012); cf. [Cyprian (Gioules), Bishop of Oreoi], The Recent Proliferation of “Antichristology” and Its Perilous Side-Effects: Proposals for Curing the Eschatological Fear of Marks (Seals) and Numbers: A Memorandum from the Special Commission to the Holy Synod in Resistance (The Orthodox Church and Eschatological Frenzy 1; Phyle, Greece: Holy Synod in Resistance, October 2010), at Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece, Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle, accessed October 9, 2017, <http://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2011/02/08/E20110208aYpomnemaEsxat2010A%20Folder/E20110208aYpomnemaEsxat2010A.pdf>.

<sup>99</sup> Κυπριανὸς [Γιούλης], Ἐπίσκοπος Ὠρεῶν, Ἡ πρόσφατος πληθωρικὴ «Ἀντι-χριστολογία».

<sup>100</sup> Words in bold here (in Greek and in English) follow the bold emphasis in the original Greek text. The highlighting of a few phrases for emphasis has been added here. Translated from: Cyprian (Gioules), Bishop of Oreoi, *Ἡ πρόσφατος πληθωρικὴ «Ἀντι-χριστολογία»*.

31. Ματθ. ι´ 22.	31. Matt. 10:22.
32. Ματθ. ιη´ 5.	32. Matt. 18:5.
33. Ἰωάν. ιζ´ 6.	33. John 17:6.
34. Ἰωάν. ιζ´ 26.	34. John 17:26.
35. Ἰωάν. ιβ´ 28.	35. John 12:28.
36. Ψαλμ. ξη´ 37.	36. Psalm 68:37.
37. Ψαλμ. ξ´ 6.	37. Psalm 60:6.
38. Ψαλμ. οδ´ 2.	38. Psalm 74:2.
39. Ψαλμ. ρμδ´ 1.	39. Psalm 144:1.
40. Ἀποκαλ. γ´ 4.	40. Rev. 3:4
41. Πράξ. α´ 15.	41. Acts 1:15.
42. Ἰωάν. ιζ´ 11.	42. John 17:11

We would only add the theological clarification (to Metropolitan Cyprian’s words) that God is, of course, *Three* undivided Hypostases/Persons (not one Hypostasis/Person), and that, strictly speaking, names do not declare the *essence* of God but the powers (or attributes) that flow from God’s unnamable essence. We name the attributes or powers that flow without separation from God’s essence, but God’s essence itself is always above names.

#### **THE ORTHODOX CHURCH FOLLOWS THE SETTLED TEACHING UNDER SAINT TIKHON**

A tiny number of critics today are making a grotesque error about what was “settled doctrine” and “generally accepted opinion” in the Orthodox Church on the name-glorification controversy. The “settled doctrine” was Saint Tikhon’s Orthodox letter of February 1921, not Sergius Stragorodskii’s un-Orthodox letter of May 1913. Saint Tikhon’s letter was Orthodox in doctrine and brought reconciliation and peace to the Church. Sergius Stragorodskii’s letter was un-Orthodox in doctrine and brought extreme violence to the Church (including bloodshed and the expulsion of 800 to 1600 monastics from the Holy Mountain on the basis of unproved charges of heresy). Tsar Nicholas repented, in writing, of this atrocity.<sup>101</sup> From late 1920 until his martyrdom in 1925, Saint Tikhon accepted the Orthodoxy of the followers of Father Antonii Bulatovich and Father David Mukhranov and served liturgy with them.<sup>102</sup> This was at the very same time that Archimandrite David was openly preaching and organizing support for the name-glorifiers.<sup>103</sup> There was agreement on Orthodox dogma between Saint Tikhon and the name-glorifiers and there was an agreement, essentially, to disagree about the *historical* issue of what Father Antonii intended in certain controversial passages. Saint Tikhon stated in 1921 that the previous condemnations of the “error” in Bulatovich’s writings had not been withdrawn. The “error” (which everyone agreed was an error) was the deification of letters and sounds, which Bulatovich himself rejected in his letter to Florenskii. There was, essentially, an agreement to disagree about whether certain controversial passages written by Bulatovich were in error or simply misinterpreted by critics. The key point is that after a serious discussion of dogma final occurred, there was an agreement between Saint Tikhon and the name-glorifiers on dogma; and there was toleration for various opinions on whether Bulatovich went too far, or, rather, if he was wrongly interpreted in a heretical direction by his critics. It is this reconciliation that the “whole church” accepted. The Church did not reject Saint Tikhon’s achievement of unity and reconciliation. The Church never decided to resurrect Sergius’s dead and heretical letter of May 1913 and interpret it literally and as an infallible statement. The

<sup>101</sup> Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia, *Letter to Vladimir Karlovich Sabler, Chief-Procurator of the Holy Synod of Russia*, April 14, 1914, at *The Wonderful Name*, May 5, 2013, <http://www.thewonderfulname.info/2013/05/letter-of-holy-tsar-martyr-nicholas-to.html>.

<sup>102</sup> See the historically-authoritative online *Orthodox Encyclopedia* article in Russian: “Давид (Мухранов Дмитрий Иванович, 1847, с. Жданово Курмышского у. Симбирской губ.- 2.06.1931, Москва),” *Православная Энциклопедия*, accessed July 16, 2014, <http://www.pravenc.ru/text/168502.html>

<sup>103</sup> Loren Graham and Jean-Michel Kantor, *Naming Infinity: A True Story of Religious Mysticism and Mathematical Creativity* (print ed. and Kindle ed.; Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), chap. 1.

heresy in the letter was set aside and Saint Tikhon's reconciliation-in-Orthodoxy was accepted by the entire Church, including his view that only a larger council could give a final evaluation of Bulatovich. It is a fact, however, that Father Antonii Bulatovich wrote to Father Pavel Florenskii that he (Bulatovich) rejected the deification of letters and sounds, and he criticized Florenskii for going too far.<sup>104</sup> The Orthodox Church has not taken a final position on the controversial passages in Bulatovich and leaves a final evaluation to a future group of Russian theologians and bishops. That is what Saint Tikhon desired.

### **THE SAINTS ACCEPTED THE NAME-GLORIFIERS AS ORTHODOX**

Orthodox Christians today should follow the precedent of Saint Tikhon and the saints. Saint Tikhon did not repeat the anti-Palamite, false theology of Sergius's letter of May 1913 and the saint reconciled with the name-glorifiers in the last years of his life (1920–1925). He considered them Orthodox and he liturgized with their leader, Archimandrite David Mukhranov, even as David continued to defend, openly and vigorously, what he believed to be the Orthodox teaching of Father Antonii Bulatovich. Saint Tikhon's 1921 encyclical, which exonerated the name-glorifiers led by Archimandrite David, was in the spirit of the May 1914 decision of the Moscow Synodal Office, signed by Saint Macarius II (Nevskii), Metropolitan of Moscow, and Bishop Anastasii (Gribanovskii) of Serpukhov, the future metropolitan and chief-hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. That 1914 decision also exonerated the name-glorifiers. Saint Macarius II and Bishop Anastasii and later Saint Tikhon all concluded that the name-glorifiers did not deify sounds or letters and concluded that there was no reason for separation. That was the final decision of the Russian Orthodox hierarchy on the matter. Many martyrs and saints of the Orthodox Church defended the Orthodoxy of the name-glorifiers, including, Saint Macarius II of Moscow, Saint Tikhon of Moscow, the Holy Tsar Martyr Nicholas and the Tsarina Alexandra, Saint Elizabeth the Grand Duchess, Saint Joseph of Petrograd, and Saint Mark (Mikhail Novoselov), catacomb Bishop of Sergiev-Posad, the New Sacred Martyr.

### **THE NAME-GLORIFIERS CONDEMNED THE HERESY OF NAME-WORSHIP**

In 1913, during the name-glorification controversy on Mount Athos, some of the Slavic monks were accused of the heresy of deifying sounds and letters, because they claimed that the name of Jesus was "God Himself." Certainly, it would be heresy to deify sounds and letters. It would be heresy to stubbornly insist (against the teaching of the Church) that the name that a person pronounces is *itself* God or divine energy, that the pronounced name (the sound itself) is itself God or Deity or God's energy. This is indeed heresy. But the leaders of the monks called "name-glorifiers" (or called, by their accusers, "name-worshippers") officially rejected that heretical view in a very detailed confession of faith. The name-glorifiers confessed, "As from the very beginning of the dispute, we were unjustly accused of deifying 'the very' created name according to its outward appearance and even of 'equating' this 'very' name 'with the very essence' of the One Who Is and of 'merging' them. Therefore we feel obliged to declare that we never deified 'the very name' and nowhere in our confessions of faith can be found the expression 'the very Name of God is God.' But rather, in our confessions of faith starting from 1909, we said it very clearly, that by calling — together with Father John of Kronstadt — the Name of God 'God Himself,' we do it in the same sense as did Father John of Kronstadt, believing in the *inseparable presence* of God in His Name, but never in the sense of deification of the name in its material, outward appearance and separately from God."<sup>105</sup> The "name-glorifiers" did not teach the heresy that they were accused of teaching, but explicitly rejected it. It is therefore illogical to accuse these monastic "name-glorifiers" of the heresy of "name-worship," because they explicitly defined the heresy and rejected it.

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<sup>104</sup> Priest-schemamonk Antonii Bulatovich, *Письмо священнику Павлу Флоренскому* [*Letter to Priest Pavel Florenskii*] (Mount Athos, December 2, 1912), in "Письмо иеросхимонаха Антония (Булатовича) священнику Павлу Флоренскому от 2 декабря 1912 г.," at *Имяславие: Богословский спор об Имени Божиим: История и современность* (Данный сайт является личным сайтом монахини Кассии [Сениной]), [https://web.archive.org/web/20160822052352/http://pravoslav.de/imiaslavie/letter/letter\\_antony4.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20160822052352/http://pravoslav.de/imiaslavie/letter/letter_antony4.htm).

<sup>105</sup> "Address of the Confessors of the Name of God to the Court of the Holy Council of the Russian Orthodox Church" (August 1, 1918), at *The Wonderful Name*, <http://www.thewonderfulname.info/p/apology-of-confessors-of-name-of-god.html>; [http://www.pravoslav.de/imiaslavie/english/address\\_of\\_the\\_confessors\\_of\\_the\\_name\\_of\\_god.html](http://www.pravoslav.de/imiaslavie/english/address_of_the_confessors_of_the_name_of_god.html).

## GOD'S UNCREATED ENERGY "DWELLS IN" CREATED WORDS AND NAMES

In his writings, Saint Gregory Palamas refers both to the uncreated name of God (which is the energy of God and thus God Himself) and to the created words (which are not an energy of God) in which, however, God Himself dwells. In his *Homily 53*, on the Entry of the Mother of God into the Holy of Holies, Saint Gregory Palamas states that the Holy of Holies was "the place assigned to God alone, which was consecrated as His dwelling, and out of which He gave audience to Moses, Aaron, and those of their successors who were equally worthy."<sup>106</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas also states, one paragraph earlier in the same homily, that the Holy of Holies was "the dwelling-place, as David calls it, of the divine name [τοῦ θείου ὀνόματος]" (Psalm 74:7).<sup>107</sup> The uncreated glory and energy of God is called, by the Prophet David, the "name" of God. The Holy of Holies was the dwelling place of the uncreated "divine name" which is the same as "God alone," according to Saint Gregory Palamas.<sup>108</sup> In his *Confession of the Orthodox Faith*, Saint Gregory Palamas also refers to God dwelling in created words of the Holy Scriptures as He dwells in the saints, the icons, and the Cross: "we venerate the salutary form of the honorable cross, the glorious temples and places and the God-given Scriptures because of the God Who dwells in them."<sup>109</sup> Thus, according to Saint Gregory Palamas, God dwells in holy (created) words, but "the divine name" that dwelt in the temple (Psalm 73:7) is "God alone."<sup>110</sup>

Saint John of Kronstadt agrees with the foregoing Scriptural and Patristic texts: "His Name is [God] Himself" and "The Name of God is God Himself."<sup>111</sup> God's Name, therefore, must properly be understood in two senses: 1) in its Divine and eternal sense, when it is an energy of God; and 2) in its human and created sense, when it is certainly *not* an energy of God.<sup>112</sup>

## CREATED WORDS ARE FILLED WITH UNCREATED GRACE

Many Holy Fathers teach about the divine grace that dwells in created words. Saint Justin the Philosopher and Martyr summarizes what Orthodox Christians believe about God's grace and the (created) words of the Gospel:

οὐ κενοῖς ἐπιστεύσαμεν μύθοις οὐδὲ ἀναποδείκτοις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ [λόγοις] μεστοῖς πνεύματος θείου καὶ δυνάμει βρῦουσι καὶ τεθηλόσι χάριτι.

we have not believed empty myths, or words without any foundation, but [words] filled with divine spirit, and big with power, and flourishing with grace. (Saint Justin, *Dialogue 9*)<sup>113</sup>

The phrase translated "big with power [δυνάμει βρῦουσι]" could also be translated "full of power," "swelling with power," "abounding with power," "teeming with power," "bursting with power," or "overflowing with power." This is how the Orthodox Church understands the uncreated energy that dwells in created words.

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<sup>106</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 20, in Christopher Veniamin, ed. and tr., *Saint Gregory Palamas: The Homilies* (Waymart, PA: Mount Thabor Publishing, 2009), 423.

<sup>107</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19, in Veniamin, 422.

<sup>108</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19–20, in Veniamin, 422–423.

<sup>109</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Confession of the Orthodox Faith* 4, in Pelikan and Hotchkiss, 377.

<sup>110</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19–20, in Veniamin, 422–423. In this, Saint Gregory follows the teaching of Holy Scripture, which alternates between saying that "God" dwells in the temple, that God's "glory" dwells in the temple, and that God's "name" dwells in the temple.

<sup>111</sup> Saint John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ* (tr. E.E. Goulaeff; London: Cassell, 1897), 358, 477, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.fig:002575139>.

<sup>112</sup> Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, Bishop Gregory of Brookline, and Thomas Deretich, "The Boundless Name," March 16, 2014, at *Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston*, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzJKrDVZPwcvMFI4QIF3eFZvZzFUN2RMeDIgc2x6T1JjNGJN/>.

<sup>113</sup> Saint Justin the Philosopher and Martyr, *Διάλογος πρὸς Τρύφωνα Ἰουδαῖον* [*Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*], 9, at *Biblioteka Ruslana Khazarzar*, accessed September 2, 2016, <http://khazarzar.skeptik.net/books/justinus/tryphon.htm>.

## THE MAY 16, 1913, “SYNODAL” LETTER WAS NOT TRULY “SYNODAL”

The opinion-letter of then-Archbishop Sergius Stragorodskii of Finland on the name-glorification dispute has been wrongly identified as the unanimous decision of a “Holy Synod” of the Russian Orthodox Church, a decision that has supposedly been accepted by the world-wide Orthodox Church. The historical reality is completely different. In fact, defenders of the letter show great ignorance about the historical facts surrounding the letter and the fact that its dogmatic errors have never been accepted by the Orthodox Church, since these errors contradict Saint Gregory Palamas, the Palamite synods, and the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy*.

Defenders of the letter assert that Sergius’s opinion-letter was based on three other opinion-reports submitted to the synod (consisting of only seven bishops). There were, in fact, four opinions written. However, there were contradictions among and within the four reports. For these reasons, it is not accurate to speak about a synodal theological statement at all, even among the small number of individuals involved: one lay theologian and three bishops who wrote (contradictory) opinions, four other bishops who did not write an opinion, and the chief-procurator of the synod, who was a layman. The synodal chief-procurator, Vladimir Karlovich Sabler, had political motives for a condemnation of the monastics called name-glorifiers. Both Saint Nicholas the Tsar-Martyr and Saint Tikhon the Patriarch-Confessor reversed Sabler’s political decision to persecute the name-glorifiers. Saint Elizabeth the Grand Duchess was a staunch supporter of the name-glorifiers. Saint Nicholas the Tsar ordered that all proceedings against the name-glorifiers needed to be stopped immediately, because he feared the wrath of God upon the Russian homeland for the unjust persecutions that had occurred.<sup>114</sup> Saint Tikhon was in full communion with the name-glorifying monastics for the last five years of his life, 1920 to 1925.<sup>115</sup> This was not because the name-glorifying monastics “repented” (renounced their beliefs); rather, they continued to preach openly their Orthodox understanding of God’s energies and God’s name at the very same time that they were in full communion with Saint Tikhon and the bishops with him.<sup>116</sup> The verdict of Saint Tikhon was that the name-glorifying monastics were not heretics but were Orthodox Christians in full communion with him, with all the hierarchs, and with the entire Orthodox Church. He wanted a final verdict on controversially-worded passages in the theological writings of Father Antonii Bulatovich to await a thorough examination of the issues by a theological commission that was competent to conduct such an investigation. This process was stopped by Communist persecutions of the Church.

Unfortunately, it has been documented that Archbishop Antonii Khrapovitskii agreed in his opinion-report (at least in May 1913) with some (but not all) of Sergius’s theological errors. (This mistaken writing of Archbishop [later Metropolitan] Antonii was not included in his collected works. This is fortunate, because that essay was a mistake that misrepresents what Orthodoxy teaches.)

Because the three bishops who wrote written opinions contradicted each other, and because the theological opinions of the other four bishops are not known in great detail—other than opposition to the heresy of deifying letters and sounds (which the monastics also officially opposed)—it is more accurate to refer to the co-called “synodal letter” as what it actually was: the personal opinion and composition of Sergius, who sometimes directly contradicted the opinions of the bishops he was falsely claiming to represent.

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<sup>114</sup> Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia, *Letter to Vladimir K. Sabler, Chief-Procurator of the Holy Synod of Russia*, April 14, 1914, at *The Wonderful Name*, May 5, 2013, <http://www.thewonderfulname.info/2013/05/letter-of-holy-tsar-martyr-nicholas-to.html>.

<sup>115</sup> Saint Tikhon’s communion with the leader of the name glorifiers, Archimandrite David Mukhranov, is documented in “Давид (Мухранов Дмитрий Иванович, 1847, с. Жданово Курмышского у. Симбирской губ. - 2.06.1931, Москва), архим.,” in *Православная Энциклопедия*, accessed July 16, 2014, <http://www.pravenc.ru/text/168502.html>.

<sup>116</sup> The communion between the bishops and the leader of the name-glorifiers, Archimandrite David, was during the time that “David established a ‘Name [Glorifiers] Circle’ in Moscow at about the same time that other such circles were arising elsewhere in Russia. He tried to involve in his circle priests and high officials of the Church who had not previously affiliated themselves with” the Name Glorifiers. Loren Graham and Jean-Michel Kantor, *Naming Infinity: A True Story of Religious Mysticism and Mathematical Creativity* (print ed. and Kindle ed.; Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), chap. 1.

## MONASTIC NAME-GLORIFIERS AND SPECULATIVE INTELLECTUALS

What about some of the “name-glorifiers” who were speculative intellectuals? Did they teach heresy? There is strong evidence that two did teach heresy (Father Pavel Florenskii and Father Sergius Bulgakov), by confusing or equating Creator with creation. However, it is a historical absurdity to equate the monastic name-glorifiers with the syncretistic intellectuals (such as Florenskii and Bulgakov) who defended these monastics. If Florenskii and Bulgakov fell into heresy by confusing the Creator with His creation, one cannot simply assume that Father Antonii Bulatovich, Father David Mukhranov, and the monastic name-glorifiers also fell into that same heresy. We know from their official confession of faith that they rejected the deification of sounds and letters. If a person seeks to pass a final judgment on Father Antonii Bulatovich’s most polemical or controversial statements, one would need to take into account not only the name-glorifiers’ official confession of faith, but also Father Antonii’s letter in which he criticizes Florenskii for deifying created names.<sup>117</sup> More importantly, we need to be faithful to Saint Tikhon’s opinion that Father Antonii’s writings need to be judged by a competent group of theologians and bishops in order to make a final judgment.

## POLITICAL PERSECUTION OF THE NAME-GLORIFIERS

One of the more ridiculous myths about the name-glorification controversy is the false claim that secular politics played no role in the hasty condemnation of the name-glorifiers in 1912–1913. A tiny number of people today, against all the historical evidence, are content to assume that the “synodal” opinions were published for purely theological reasons and that secular politics did not play a distorting role in what occurred. No informed person could believe such an anti-historical myth.

The hasty decisions of 1912 and 1913 occurred in the era of the First and Second Balkan Wars, which determined how Montenegrins, Serbs, Bulgarians, and Greeks would carve up the Balkans in general and Macedonia in particular. The nationalist competition was so fierce that Greek troops took Thessalonica from the Turks only a few hours before Bulgarian troops were set to take the city. The Greeks found a multi-ethnic city (with Turks, Slavs, Albanians, Vlachs, and a large Sephardic Jewish community) where Greeks were a minority. Greeks were also a minority on Mount Athos. Ethnic rivalries on Mount Athos and rival views about how Athos would be governed were in the air. In such a situation, it would have been very difficult for Russian and Greek secular and religious authorities to make decisions about the Athonite theological dispute on the name of God without the distorting influence of secular politics. The historical record indicates that secular politics played a decisive role in how the name-glorifiers were hastily condemned (along with the teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas being condemned) in May 1913. Secular politics clearly played a decisive role in the June 1913 atrocity that was committed on Athos.

It is important that we understand some of the details of the politics that distorted the theological discussion and also to understand the gravity of the atrocity that was committed against the name-glorifying fathers. Two serious scholars, Loren Graham and Jean-Michel Kantor,<sup>118</sup> give a useful summary:

In early June, 1913, several ships from the Imperial Russian Navy ... steamed into the azure waters surrounding the holy site of Mt. Athos in Greece, a center of Orthodox Christianity for a thousand years. The ships, the gunboat *Donets* and the transport ships *Tsar* and *Kherson*, anchored near the Pant[e]leimon Monastery, a sacred bedrock of Russian Orthodoxy and residence of hundreds of Russian monks. On board the *Tsar* were 118 marines under the command of Z. A. Shipulinsky and four other officers.

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<sup>117</sup> Priest-schemamonk Antonii Bulatovich, *Письмо священнику Павлу Флоренскому* [*Letter to Priest Pavel Florenskii*] (Mount Athos, December 2, 1912), in “Письмо иеросхимонаха Антония (Булатовича) священнику Павлу Флоренскому от 2 декабря 1912 г.,” at *Имяславие: Богословский спор об Имени Божиим: История и современность* (Данный сайт является личным сайтом монахини Кассии [Сениной]), [https://web.archive.org/web/20160822052352/http://pravoslav.de/imiaslavie/letter/letter\\_antony4.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20160822052352/http://pravoslav.de/imiaslavie/letter/letter_antony4.htm).

<sup>118</sup> Loren Graham and Jean-Michel Kantor, *Naming Infinity: A True Story of Religious Mysticism and Mathematical Creativity* (print ed. and Kindle ed.; Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), chap. 1.

On June 13, Shipulinsky ordered that the monastery be stormed. The heavily armed marines made their way in small boats to the monastery dock .... [In the Pokrovsky Church] Shipulinsky met with several of the religious ascetics and told them that they were to inform all their brethren to leave their cells and assemble in the [main church]. When the monks learned of the order, they refused, barricading the doors of their cells with furniture and boards. Inside they fell on their knees and began saying, “Lord, Have Mercy!” (*Gospodi pomilui*), and many of them launched into ... “The Jesus Prayer.”

... The practice of this prayer, [was] called heretical by some leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church .... Russians were among the most numerous of the monks [on Mount Athos], with several thousand usually present. For centuries the Ottoman Turks had occupied most of the Balkans, including Athos, but they granted the monks there near-autonomy, allowing them to do what they wanted so long as they did not directly challenge the Turks. The Russian monks on Athos usually looked to their homeland government in St. Petersburg for support and protection, but the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the retreat of the Turks from Athos in 1912 led to a delicate situation. Would the autonomy of the Holy Mountain and the Russian influence continue under Greek rule? The Greeks, who shared the Orthodox faith of the Russians, seemed ready to grant the monasteries considerable freedom and withdraw their soldiers. The Russian monks then began to call for the creation of an independent republic of Athos that would amount to a protectorate of the tsarist government—a challenge to the Greeks.

In the middle of this diplomatic problem, a theological dispute erupted which unnerved the Russian government and clerical leaders. The last thing the Church and government in St. Petersburg needed was a bunch of monks fighting one another over a prayer, giving the Greeks a pretext for intervention and elimination of the traditional autonomy of Mt. Athos.

A dramatic fight was indeed going on among the monks between those who supported the practice of the Jesus prayer (known as Name [Glorifiers]) and those who did not (the Anti-Name Worshippers). The struggle often took its sharpest form when administrative leaders of the monasteries were being chosen: each side wanted its own people to lead. The acrimony increased rapidly, with actual physical conflicts; each side tried to eject the members of the other camp from the monasteries .... Each side appealed to higher authorities for support—to the Russian consul in Salonika, to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, to the Holy Synod in St. Petersburg, and, eventually, to the tsar himself. Word spread throughout the Balkans and the Russian Empire that “disorders” were rife in the monasteries at the Holy Mountain of Athos.

.... In February 1913 a blockade was imposed on the Name [Glorifying] monks on Mt. Athos, whose stronghold was the Pant[e]leimon Monastery. That monastery was deprived of food supplies, financial support, and postal service for five months.... The stories of “revolts” and “mutinies” among the monks continued, and eventually the Greek government responded by saying to the leaders of the monasteries, in effect, “bring order to the monasteries yourselves or we will do it for you.” Greek troops assembled nearby in preparation for occupying the monasteries if necessary.

This international difficulty goes a long way toward explaining why the tsarist government yielded to the plea of the top leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church to suppress the Name [Glorifiers] at Mt. Athos with military force. Tsar Nicholas II was not particularly interested in the theological dispute, and his wife Alexandra was even sympathetic to the Name [Glorifiers], but his advisers, especially V. K. Sabler, the head of

the Holy Synod, told him that if the disorder at Mt. Athos continued not only would the Russian Orthodox faith be hopelessly split by schism, but the Russian government would lose much of its influence in a crucial area of Greece and the Balkans. Faced with this opinion, Nicholas reluctantly agreed to the invasion of the monastery.

... Officer Shipulinsky led his marines into the monastery[’s main church] and demanded that the monks come out of their cells and assemble before him. When he was ignored, he ordered his men to prepare for conflict. The marines unrolled high-pressure water cannons and also set up several machine guns. They then tore down the barricades at the entrances to the monastic cells and aimed the water cannons at the men inside.... Sources sympathetic to the monks say that the marines opened fire, killing four of the recluses and wounding forty-eight others. The official Russian accounts say that the marines were met with “criminal resistance” requiring force to overcome, but maintain that no one was killed even though some “fanatics” were wounded. Certainly it was a bloody affair; the marines beat the monks with their bayonets and rifle butts and bashed many heads.

The marines flushed the recluses from their cells and herded them into the [main church]. There the officer announced to the soaked, terrified, and injured monks that they must either renounce their heretical beliefs or be arrested. Archbishop Nikon of Vologda accompanied the marines; a representative of the highest authorities in the Russian Orthodox Church, he lectured the assembled monks on the details of their “Name Worshipping heresy” in a voice trembling with fear and emotion: “You mistakenly believe that names are the same as God. But I tell you that names, even of divine beings, are not God themselves. The name of Jesus is not God. And the Son is less than the Father. Even Jesus said, ‘the Father is greater than me.’ But you believe you possess both Christ and God.” Some of the monks responded by crying out that the archbishop and the marines represented the “Anti-Christ.” .... Nikon angrily pounded his [pastoral staff] on the floor and demanded that the assembled monks be polled individually, stating whether they renounced their heresy or remained obstinate.

According to the official count, 661 monks stated that they did not support the doctrine of “Name Worshipping,” but 517 were adamant and declared that they were, and would remain, “Name [Glorifiers].” Another 350 refused to participate in the poll and were considered by the archbishop to be on the side of the heretics. Several dozen others were so badly injured that they were taken away for medical care and not polled. In the nearby Andreevsky Monastery and elsewhere on Mt. Athos the archbishop found other Russian monks whom he considered to be unrepentant Name Worshipers. Sobered by the violence in the Pant[e]leimon Monastery, they did not resist arrest. Eventually approximately a thousand monks were taken back to Russia under detention, most of them on a ship converted into a prison, the *Kherson*, but others on the steamship *Chikhachev*.

When on July 13 and 14 the *Kherson* and the *Chikhachev* arrived in Odessa, a major Ukrainian/Russian port on the Black Sea, the tsarist police there interrogated the imprisoned monks and then divided them into groups. Some were so old and feeble that they were permitted to go to local monasteries that might care for them; eight were returned to Athos; and forty were accused of criminal activity and sent to prisons. The rest—eight hundred or so—were defrocked and told that they could not return to Mt. Athos or reside in the cities of St. Petersburg or Moscow. Instead, according to the Russian government system of assigned residence (*propiska*), they were exiled to provincial and rural locations

all over Russia.

Tsar Nicholas II, due in part to the intervention of Saint Elizabeth the Grand Duchess, came to regret deeply and to repent of what had been done to the name-glorifying monastics. He regretted both the way his government had persecuted them and also Sergius's un-Orthodox theological condemnation of the name-glorifiers. He feared that the atrocity might push away God's grace and protection from the Russian homeland. He directed the secular chief-procurator (the *ober-prokuror*) of the "synod" to cancel all of the decisions against and investigations of the name-glorifiers and directed that the name-glorifiers should be reinstated. (*Ober-prokuror* was a German title, which was absorbed into the Russian language, for the secular "chief-procurator" of the "synod." The "synodal" system was introduced by Tsar Peter I and was modelled on the government-controlled synods of the Protestant [Lutheran and Calvinist] churches in northern Europe.) The May 1913 decision, which was theologically false since it condemned Saint Gregory Palamas's teaching and which was tied to secular politics from the beginning, was now to be cancelled at the direction of the secular ruler. Tsar Nicholas II, the future passion-bearer and martyr, was humble enough to repent of the evil that his government and the government-controlled "synod" of bishops had done to the monks known as "name-glorifiers."

During the final years of the tsar's life, the name-glorifying priest-monks served in good standing and served honorably during the Russia war effort in the First World War. It was only after the fall of the tsar that some bishops in the church tried to synodally condemn, once again, the name-glorifiers. The All-Russia Church Council appointed a commission of theological experts to investigate the issue, including experts who knew that the May 1913 decision was wrong. But Communist violence did not allow the commission to complete its task.

In late 1920, Patriarch Tikhon reconciled with Archimandrite David Mukhranov, the leader of the name-glorifiers and a staunch and vocal defender of his belief that Father Antonii Bulatovich was completely Orthodox in his writings. Differences of opinion about the writings of Father Antonii Bulatovich were permitted and there was a reconciliation in the Russian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Tikhon did not repeat the doctrinal errors of Sergius's May 1913 opinion letter that ignorantly condemned Saint Gregory Palamas. Archimandrite David continued vocally to support the name-glorification teachings—which also condemned the idea that a created name could be God. Patriarch Tikhon presided at the Divine Liturgy and communed with the leader of the name-glorifiers, Archimandrite David, who continued to preach the views of the name-glorifiers. Just as there had been a reconciliation by the time that the tsar was martyred, there had also been a reconciliation by the time that the patriarch reposed.

Some of the political issues that had led to the hasty and false 1913 condemnation of the name-glorifiers had been overtaken by a completely new historical situation. The theological debate, which had been greatly exacerbated by politics, no longer divided the Church.

Saint Elizabeth the Grand Duchess was a staunch supporter of the name-glorifiers. In the final years of his life, Saint Nicholas the Tsar-Martyr supported the name-glorifiers and directed that all condemnations against them be reversed and all trials (or investigations) of them be ended (see the saint's letter to the ober-prokuror of the synod, Vladimir Karlovich Sabler). In the final years of his life (1920–1925), the Patriarch saw no heresy in the name-glorifiers and he communicated this judgment to other bishops (see, Bishop Iuvenalii of Tula and Odoevo, *Letter to Patriarch Tikhon*). Saint Tikhon and the bishops were in full communion with the name-glorifiers, including Archimandrite David Mukhranov (see the historically-authoritative online *Orthodox Encyclopedia* article in Russian: "Давид (Мухранов Дмитрий Иванович, 1847, с. Жданово Курмышского у. Симбирской губ.- 2.06.1931, Москва)," *Православная Энциклопедия*, accessed July 16, 2014, <http://www.pravenc.ru/text/168502.html>). This was at the very same time that Archimandrite David was openly preaching and organizing support for the name-glorifiers.

The speculation that Archimandrite David and the name-glorifiers repented between 1920 and 1925 is disproven by the historical record. Both Russian and Western scholars agree on this. For example, "David established a 'Name [Glorifiers]' Circle' in Moscow at about the same time that other such circles were arising elsewhere in

Russia. He tried to involve in his circle priests and high officials of the Church who had not previously affiliated themselves with” the name-glorifiers (Graham and Kantor, *Name Infinity*, chap. 1). So, Archimandrite David was openly preaching the name-glorifying understanding and Saint Tikhon received Holy Communion with him. It was Saint Nicholas the Tsar and Saint Tikhon the Patriarch who repented—not the name-glorifiers.

If anyone today rejects Saint Elizabeth’s, Saint Nicholas’s, and Saint Tikhon’s communion with the name-glorifying, they are free to do so. But they should not claim that the Orthodox Church agrees with that rejection of these saints’ policy.

### **ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH GERMANOS V’S PERSECUTION OF THE NAME-GLORIFIERS**

The letter of Patriarch Germanos V to Athos (April 5, 1913) has little theological content. It accuses the monks of confusing that which cannot be confused because they allegedly said the name Jesus was hypostatically united with Him and that the monks claimed that the name Jesus is the self-same Jesus and God and this leads to pantheism. No quotations, no analysis, no exposition of the Orthodox teaching. Just accusations with no evidence whatsoever! The gist of the letter was that Athos should “expel” the monks. This was done quite brutally with bayonets and water cannons, a short while later. It is well known that during the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, Greeks and Slavs were fighting over who would control Macedonia and Athos. Some Greeks wanted to expel all Slavs, and some Russians thought that if the Russian authorities removed the “rebels” from the Holy Mountain, then that would prevent a total expulsion of all Slavs. There were thus military and ethnic conflicts that contributed to the immoral way the monks were condemned and persecuted. No wonder the Tsar-Martyr feared the wrath of God because of what the Russian state had done to these monastic fathers. The decision by the Halki theologians was written by academicians who had studied in Protestant faculties of theology in Germany and who believed that biblical miracles were myths, Saint Symeon the New Theologian was a monophysite heretic because he believed in deification, the hesychasts were “navel-gazers,” and Saint Gregory Palamas himself was a pantheist. They replicated what their Protestant professors taught them. They might have been able to read Saint Gregory Palamas, but they did not want to; they were hostile the Orthodox hesychast tradition. They were also the ones who wrote the heretical encyclical of 1920 and changed the calendar in 1924. They were a very un-Orthodox lot.

Patriarch Germanos V’s letter to Russia (December 11, 1913) uses epithets (“evil” and “name-theists”) and says that the Russians should use even *harsher* methods on those expelled to Russia (even after the previous bloodshed by the Russian Navy against the Athonites). The main point of the letter was that even repentant monks were banished from the Holy Mountain, *forever*. The Slavic monks were reduced by about half. The Greek state consolidated control over Athos for the first time in centuries. (Greek troops had just barely entered Thessalonica in 1912 ahead of Bulgarian troops; and the Sephardic Jewish community together with other ethnic groups outnumbered the Greeks in Salonica at that time. But the Greek state took firm control of Athos; and Thessalonica became a thoroughly Greek city only after the Sephardim were sent to Auschwitz and gassed.) Severe restrictions were placed on new Slavic monks coming to Athos. These restrictions exist in various forms to this day. The above historical fact just scratches the surface of the anti-hesychast, ethnic, and political prejudices and rivalries that played significant roles in the hasty and immoral way the Slavic monks were condemned, expelled, and brutalized, with the complicity of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Christians cannot in good conscience endorse the uncanonical and un-Christian way Patriarch Germanos V contributed to the persecution of the Slavic monastics based on unproven accusations of heresy and an unwillingness to forgive those who genuinely repented.

### **COMMUNIST PERSECUTION OF TRUE-ORTHODOX NAME-GLORIFIERS**

Metropolitan John LoBue has asserted that “to claim that name-worshipping was persecuted by the Soviets is not true.” Such an assertion is outrageous, because it (1) includes an un-Orthodox dogmatic confusion between Orthodox name-veneration and heretical created-name-adoration, (2) it is factually incorrect and is an ignorant denial

of common knowledge, and (3) it denigrates the memory of True-Orthodox (non-Sergianist) Christians who glorified God's name in an Orthodox manner and who were martyred for their true Orthodox faith.

The Soviet Communists murdered numerous groups of people. They especially hated True-Orthodox name-glorifiers who refused any accommodation to Communism. For example, in 1930, a group of catacomb name-glorifying Christians were rounded up. They refused to work as slave laborers for the murderous regime or even to give their names to their persecutors. According to Pierre Pascal, "All [of these name-glorifiers] were shot, with their hands tied behind their backs, so that they could not make the sign of the cross" before their execution.<sup>119</sup> The murderous hatred of the Communists for True-Orthodox, Catacomb Christians, and name-glorifiers (who were often the same people) is well known, and documented, for example, by Mikhail Zakharovich Nikonov-Smorodin (also known as S. V. Smorodin)<sup>120</sup> and numerous other sources.<sup>121</sup>

### ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS FOLLOW THE BALANCED TEACHING OF THE SAINTS ON GOD'S NAME

The teachings of the Orthodox Church have always been balanced and faithful to the saints. Years ago, Metropolitan Ephraim and Metropolitan Gregory wrote the following words:

σχετικά μέ τό πανάγιο Όνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ (δηλαδή γιά ὅλα τά Θεῖα Όνόματα), μαζί μέ τούς Ἁγίους ὁμολογοῦμε ὅτι αὐτό εἶναι μεγάλη ἀποκάλυψη, καί ὅπως κάθε ἀποκάλυψη τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκφρασμένη μέ λόγια, ἔχει κτιστές καί ἄκτιστες ὄψεις. Σάν μέρος τῆς ἀνθρώπινης γλώσσας, τουτέστιν, μέ ὄρους ἀνθρωπίνων λέξεων πού χρησιμοποιοῦμε γιά νά τό ἐκφράσουμε, τό Όνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι, ἀσφαλῶς, κτιστό. Τό ἔχουμε δηλώσει αὐτό ἐπανειλημμένα. Όμως, ἡ ἀλήθεια τήν ὁποία τά Όνόματα μᾶς λένε περί Θεοῦ, αὐτή ἡ ἀλήθεια εἶναι ἡ ἀποκάλυψη τοῦ Θεοῦ περί τοῦ Ἐαυτοῦ Του καί γιά τοῦτο, εἶναι συγχρόνως αἰώνια καί ἄκτιστη. Ἐπομένως, δέν δεχόμαστε νά παλινδρομοῦμε μεταξύ δύο ἀντιτιθέμενων καί ἐσφαλμένων ἄκρων σ' αὐτό τό ζήτημα. Συγκεκριμένα, ἀπορρίπτουμε τή διδασκαλία αὐτῶν (εἴτε ὀνομάζονται ὀνοματο-λάτρεις ἢ ὅπως ἀλλιῶς) πού θεοποιοῦν καί ἀποδίδουν θεῖα λατρεία στίς κτιστές λέξεις πού ἐκφράζουν τό Όνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ταυτόχρονα ἀπορρίπτουμε τό λάθος ἐκείνων (εἴτε ὀνομάζονται ὀνοματο-πολέμοι, ἀντι-ησυχαστές ἢ ὅ,τι ἄλλο) πού βλέπουν στό Όνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπλές λέξεις, καί ἀρνοῦνται νά ἀναγνωρίσουν ὅτι ἡ ἀλήθεια πού λάμπει ἀπό τά Θεῖα Όνόματα δέν εἶναι κάποια ἀνθρώπινη ἐπινόηση περί Θεοῦ, ἀλλά ἡ αἰώνια καί ἄκτιστη ἀλήθεια περί Αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ καθώς ἀποκαλύφθηκε ἀπό τόν ἴδιο σ' ἐμᾶς· καί ὅτι στά Θεῖα Όνόματα, εἶναι αὐτή ἡ ἄκτιστη ἀλήθεια περί Θεοῦ ἡ ὁποία ἐκφράζεται μέ κτιστές λέξεις. Αὐτή ἡ αἰώνια ἀλήθεια περί Θεοῦ εἶναι πού οἱ Γραφές καί οἱ Πατέρες ὀνομάζουν αἰώνιο, μεγαλειῶδες, ἔνδοξο, θαυμαστό καί φοβερό Όνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ, πού ἡ Ἐκκλησία κατέχει, καί θά ὑμνεῖται καί θά αἰνεῖται καί θά δοξάζεται στους αἰῶνες, διότι εἶναι ἡ ἰσχὺς Του καί ἡ δόξα Του

concerning the all-holy Name of our God (that is, all the Divine Names), together with the Saints we confess it to be a great revelation, and like every revelation of God in words, it has both created and uncreated aspects. As part of the human language, that is, in terms of

<sup>119</sup> Pierre Pascal, *The Religion of the Russian People* (translated by Rowan Williams; London: Mowbrays, 1976), 108.

<sup>120</sup> Mikhail Zakharovich Nikonov-Smorodin (S. V. Smorodin), *Красная каторга: записки соловчаннина* (edited by Aleksandr V. Amfiteatrov; Sofia: Изд-во Н.Т.С.Н.П., 1938), <http://coollib.net/b/332225/>, see also <https://books.google.com/books?id=X2FGqiDKFysC> and <http://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/nikonov-smorodin-red-katorga-gulag-477527848>.

<sup>121</sup> See the references in William C. Fletcher, *The Russian Orthodox Church Underground, 1917–1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

the human words that we use to express it, the Name of God is, of course, created. We have stated this repeatedly. However, the truth that the Names tell us about God, this truth is the revelation of God about Himself and thus, it is both eternal and uncreated. Therefore, we refuse to be swayed by the two opposing erroneous extremes on this matter. Namely, we reject the teaching of those (be they called name-worshippers or whoever they may be) who deify and give divine worship to the very created words that express the Name of God. At the same time we reject the error of those (be they called name-fighters, anti-hesychasts or anything else) who see in the Name of our God merely human words, who refuse to acknowledge that the truth that shines from the Divine Names is not a human invention about God, but the eternal and uncreated truth that God Himself revealed to us about Himself, and that in the Divine Names, it is this uncreated truth about God that is expressed through created words. This eternal truth about God is what the Scriptures and the Fathers call the eternal, majestic, glorious, wondrous and fearful Name of God, which the Church has, and will hymn and praise and glorify unto the ages, for it is His power and His glory.

The teachings of the Orthodox Church on Orthodox name-veneration, on the heresy of created-name-adoration (*onomatolatreía*), the heresy of name-fighting (*onomatomachía*), and the heresy of Barlaamism (denying the Deity [Godhood] of God's energies) are clear: All Orthodox Christians give glory, honor, and relative-veneration to the created names for God in Holy Scripture and in Orthodox prayer. To dishonor God's name is to go against the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer and numerous other injunctions to honor God's name. All Orthodox Christians give divine-worship (*latreía*) to God alone and to "everything that is God": the divine essence, the divine energies, and the deified human nature of Christ, which is "God" but not the divine nature. When, in Orthodox prayer, divine-adoration is given to God's "name," this means that we are giving divine-worship to "God Himself" including God's power or energy. These prayers are not giving adoration to created names consisting of letters and sounds. It is heresy to give divine-adoration to any created name. It is heresy to equate a created name with God's energy. It is heresy to deny that God's energy is God Himself. It is heresy to deny that God dwells in the holy oracles (*lógia*) given to us by God and recorded in Holy Scripture. It is heresy (condemned by Saint Tikhon and the entire Church) to separate God and His name.

### **HOCNA STATEMENTS ON THE NAME OF GOD**

In 2012, HOCNA bishops stated that God's "name" has an inner meaning and an outer meaning: in other words, God's "name" can refer to two different things. Also in 2012, HOCNA bishops stated that if Father Antonii Bulatovich is guilty of deifying human letters and sounds, then he would certainly be guilty of heresy. (Claiming that letters and sounds are divine energy would be a heretical deification of letters and sounds.) HOCNA bishops also indicated that if Father Antonii Bulatovich is not guilty of deifying letters and sounds then he is not guilty of teaching the heresy of *onomatolatreía*.

Only a future examination can definitively answer the *historical* question of what Father Antonii Bulatovich intended in controversial passages. However, on the *dogmatic* questions, all Orthodox Christians agree that: It is heresy to equate a created name with uncreated energy; it is heresy to deny that God's power/energy is Deity; it is heresy to deny that God dwells in the holy oracles (*lógia*). All Orthodox agree that we give divine-worship (*latreía*) to God's uncreated power/energy (which is sometimes called God's "name"); and we give glory, honor, and relative-veneration to the created names for God in Holy Scripture and Orthodox prayer.

The Holy Orthodox Church in North America (HOCNA) has published several statements and articles that show beyond any doubt that HOCNA never taught the heresy of created-name-deification or created-name-adoration that HOCNA was falsely accused of teaching

**Metropolitan Ephraim, June 6/19, 2012:** “if anybody (including Father Anthony Bulatovich) is guilty of ... Deifying letters, sounds and random/accidental thoughts about God, ... then he is certainly guilty of heresy. If he does not actually advocate such teachings [the four errors listed by Saint Tikhon], then it only seems fair to say that he is not guilty of heresy.”<sup>122</sup> [Please note that claiming that “a created name consisting of letters and sounds is an uncreated energy of God” would be a form of deifying letters and sounds. Therefore, Metropolitan Ephraim is clearly rejecting the false notion that a created name can be an uncreated energy.]

**HOCNA Synod of Bishops, August 29/September 11, 2012:** “Our Holy Synod endorses and espouses the theological solution to the controversy surrounding the Name of God found in the following Encyclical of Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow “... *not to deify letters, sounds and random/accidental thoughts about God.*”<sup>123</sup>

**Metropolitan Ephraim, September 2/15, 2013:** “The following selection of passages is intended to show that the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Fathers and the Divine Services of the Church teach us that the Name of God (**its inner significance and meaning and not its outward letters and sounds**) is the divinely-revealed Truth about God Himself; just like all revelation of God about Himself, it is His uncreated operation, His power, His energy, His grace. According to the teaching of the Church, the Grace of God is God Himself (not His Essence, but His Energy). Hence, it is in this sense that Saint John of Kronstadt’s famous saying “**The Name of God is God Himself**” should be understood, for it is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Church.”<sup>124</sup>

**HOCNA Synod of Bishops, September 5/18, 2012:** “We do not believe ... That letters, sounds and random/accidental thoughts about God are to be deified.”<sup>125</sup>

**HOCNA Synod of Bishops, September 27/October 10, 2012:** “Orthodox Christians believe: ... That created letters, sounds, and random or accidental thoughts about God must *not* be deified. Further, they believe that these letters or sounds must *not* be used for occult or magical purposes.”<sup>126</sup>

**Bishop Gregory, October 7/20, 2012:** “When this Name is articulated in human words, it, of course, is not the Energy of God, but rather, it has the same holiness as an icon, and we may say that God’s Energy is present in this created (sacred) word.”<sup>127</sup>

Excerpts from Serge Verhovskoy, distributed by Metropolitan Ephraim, November 28, 2012: “A particular form of the revelation of God in a word is the revelation of God in the Divine Names. A Name of God, as a human word, is, of course, created. (It is, therefore, possible to use it senselessly or “in vain.” The identification of a Name of God, as a [created] word, with God Himself is a heresy which was condemned by the Russian Holy Synod in the twentieth century.) But God Himself can dwell and act in it.¶ The Divine

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<sup>122</sup> Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston, *Answer to an Enquiry* (June 6/19, 2012), <https://www.scribd.com/document/120845894/Answer-to-an-Enquiry>.

<sup>123</sup> Holy Orthodox Church in North America, Synod of Bishops, *Statement of the Holy Synod of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America (HOCNA)* (Protocol no. 3244; signed by Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston; Makarios, Metropolitan of Toronto; and Gregory, Auxiliary Bishop of Concord; August 29/September 11, 2012), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=english&id=448>.

<sup>124</sup> Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston, “The Orthodox Veneration of the Name of God” (PDF document, attached to the email “2 Attached Articles”; September 2/15, 2012).

<sup>125</sup> Holy Orthodox Church in North America, Synod of Bishops, *Statement*, September 5/18, 2012.

<sup>126</sup> Holy Orthodox Church in North America, Synod of Bishops, *Divergent Teachings*, September 27/October 10, 2012, <http://www.homb.org/2012/11/divergent-teachings.html>.

<sup>127</sup> Bishop Gregory of Brookline, Letter, October 7/20, 2012, <http://www.thewonderfulname.info/2012/11/>.

aspect of a Divine Name is, as it were, a Divine “self-definition” or a thought of God about Himself. The presence of a divine principle in the Divine Names follows from the whole attitude of the Old Testament toward Them. The Name of God is Holy, and God sanctifies Himself in His Name (Lev. 22:32). Men can offend the Name of God by their sins (Am. 2:7). God acts for the sake of His Name (Ez. 39:7, 25). The [uncreated] Name of God is one, great and eternal, as is God Himself (Ps. 9:2, 135:13, Zech. 14:9). God acts through His Name (Ps. 54:1). If there were nothing Divine in the Name of God, how would it be possible for us to bless, praise and love it, worship and serve it, rejoice in it and be persecuted for its sake? Finally it is striking that God reveals His Names (e.g. Ex. 3:13–14, 6:3). It follows that They express the genuine Divine reality. ¶ God is near to a man in His Names (Ps. 76:1). The presence of God is equivalent to the presence of the Name of God. The Name of God dwells in the whole earth and especially in the Holy Land, in Israel, in Jerusalem, in the temple and in individuals. The Jews loved to give their children names in which there was a Divine Name (Ishmael, John, Joachim, Jesus, etc.). ¶ There are about one hundred Divine Names in the Old Testament. Each of them has its own meaning. It is possible to include into Them the entire theology of the Old Testament. The Divine Name is “wonderful” (Jg. 13:17–18); it is “remembrance of God” (Ex. 3:15). God reveals His Name in order for men to know Him (Ex. 6:3, 33:19; Jer. 23:6).”<sup>128</sup>

**Metropolitan Ephraim’s comments of November 28, 2012, on excerpts from Serge Verhovskoy:** “As the Holy Scriptures and the interpretations of the Holy Fathers demonstrate, in such texts as ‘From before the sun doth His Name continue’ (Ps. 71) and ‘[he] heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter’ (II Cor. 12:4), we are not speaking about ordinary, created ‘words’ or names, but about Divine Revelation, about the uncreated and everlasting Grace of God, which is God Himself. These uncreated words are: ‘words which cannot be uttered.’ God is the only Entity that is uncreated, and anything that is uncreated is God, either in His essence or His energies.”<sup>129</sup>

**Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, Bishop Gregory of Brookline, and Thomas Deretich, March 16, 2014**<sup>130</sup>: “By the term “Name of God,” Orthodox Christians mean two things: 1) We mean the revealed Truth about God, and, 2) in another sense, we mean also the human, created words by which this revealed Truth is articulated. The eternal, revealed Truth about God exists and will always exist, whether we articulate it in our human language or not..... the Truth that the Holy Spirit shall speak and guide Christ’s disciples in, is an ineffable and divine Truth, which He received from the Son. Yet this is the same Truth that the Spirit showed to the Apostles and which they preached with human words in all the known world! ¶ These examples illustrate clearly the two aspects of God’s revelation and the distinction that lies between them: the uncreated and eternal Truth of God’s revelation, and created, human concepts and words with which this revelation is articulated in order to become accessible to the human mind. And this is the very same distinction that exists between the uncreated Name of God, that is, the eternal Truth about God, and the created names of God, that is, human words and concepts, which the Church

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<sup>128</sup> Serge Verhovskoy, *Бог и человек* (New York: Chekhov, 1956), 95–96, English in Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston, “A Teacher of Orthodox Christian Theology Speaks,” excerpts from Serge Verhovskoy, article in PDF, emailed, November 15/28, 2012.

<sup>129</sup> English in Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston, “A Teacher of Orthodox Christian Theology Speaks,” excerpts from Serge Verhovskoy, article in PDF, emailed, November 15/28, 2012.

<sup>130</sup> Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, Bishop Gregory of Brookline, and Thomas Deretich, “The Boundless Name,” March 16, 2014, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzJKrDVZPwcvMFI4QIF3eFZvZzFUN2RMEDIGc2x6T1JjNGJN/>.

has taught us to use in order to articulate the eternal Truth about God. ¶It is exclusively in the former sense, that is, in the sense of the uncreated Truth about God, that we say that the Name of God is an Energy of God, because every revelation of God about Himself, every Truth about God, is His Energy. In the latter sense, that is, in terms of human speech, the names of God are both created and temporal, being part of this world, and they are certainly not an Energy of God.... ¶In his writings, St. Gregory Palamas refers both to the uncreated Name of God (which is the Energy of God and thus God Himself) and to the created words (which are not an Energy of God) in which, however, God Himself dwells. In his *Homily 53*, on the Entry of the Mother of God into the Holy of Holies, St. Gregory Palamas states that the Holy of Holies was “the place assigned to God alone, which was consecrated as His dwelling, and out of which He gave audience to Moses, Aaron, and those of their successors who were equally worthy.”<sup>131</sup> St. Gregory Palamas also states, one paragraph earlier in the same homily, that the Holy of Holies was “the dwelling-place, as David calls it, of the Holy Name” (Psalm 74:7).<sup>132</sup> The uncreated Glory and Energy of God is called, by the Prophet David, the “Name” of God. The Holy of Holies was the dwelling place of the uncreated “Holy Name” which is the same as “God alone,” according to St. Gregory Palamas.<sup>133</sup> In his *Confession of the Orthodox Faith*, St. Gregory Palamas also refers to God dwelling in created words of the Holy Scriptures as He dwells in the saints, the icons, and the Cross: “we venerate the salutary form of the honorable cross, the glorious temples and places and the God-given Scriptures because of the God who dwells in them.”<sup>134</sup> Thus, according to St. Gregory Palamas, God dwells in holy (created) words, but God’s (uncreated) “Name” (Psalm 73:7) is “God alone.”<sup>135</sup> ¶St. John of Kronstadt agrees with the foregoing Scriptural and Patristic texts: “His Name is [God] Himself” and “The Name of God is God Himself.”<sup>136</sup> ¶God’s Name, therefore, must properly be understood in two senses: 1) in its Divine and eternal sense, when it is an Energy of God; and 2) in its human and created sense, when it is certainly *not* an Energy of God.

**HOCNA Synod of Bishops, 2017:** “because human language is created and temporal, being a part of this world, the created names of God (that is, the words and concepts we use to express His uncreated Name) are not His Energy and therefore must not be deified. Rather, the created names of God are verbal icons in which Divine Grace dwells, without however being God Himself. By venerating (but by no means rendering absolute worship to) these names, we reverence them because of the eternal Truth about God contained in them.”<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 20, English in Christopher Veniamin, ed. and tr., *Saint Gregory Palamas: The Homilies* (Waymart, PA: Mount Thabor Publishing, 2009), 423.

<sup>132</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19, in Veniamin, 422.

<sup>133</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19–20, in Veniamin, 422–423.

<sup>134</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Confession of the Orthodox Faith*, 4, English in Jaroslav J. Pelikan and Valerie R. Hotchkiss, eds., *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition* (4 vols. and 1 CD; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 1:377.

<sup>135</sup> Saint Gregory Palamas, *Homily 53*, 19–20, in Veniamin, 422–423. In this, Saint Gregory follows the teaching of Holy Scripture, which alternates between saying that “God” dwells in the temple, that God’s “glory” dwells in the temple, and that God’s “name” dwells in the temple.

<sup>136</sup> Saint John of Kronstadt, *Моя жизнь во Христѣ, или, Минуты духовнаго трезвенія и созерцанія, благоговѣйнаго чувства, душевнаго исправленія и покоя въ Богѣ: извлеченіе изъ дневника* (2 vols.; vol. 1, 4th ed.; vol. 2, 5th ed.; Moscow: Stupina, 1894), 1:310, <http://books.google.com/books?id=pS5RAQAIAAJ>, cf. English in Saint John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ* (tr. E. E. Goulaeff; London: Cassell, 1897), 358, 477, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.fig:002575139>.

<sup>137</sup> Holy Orthodox Church in North America, Synod of Bishops, *Divergent Teachings: A Synopsis of the Patristic Teaching on the Name of God*, expanded 2017 ed., Sunday of Orthodoxy, 2017, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzJKrDVZPwcveFJYdkxpeG11X1k/>; Spanish, *Enseñanzas divergentes: Una sinopsis de la enseñanza patristica sobre el Nombre de Dios*,

**Metropolitan Gregory of Boston, November 7/20, 2017:** “Not only letters and sounds, but also human ideas and thoughts, that is, everything which created words consist of, are not God. To deify them is to fall into pantheism. We have always condemned this false teaching and will continue to condemn it, both in writing and verbally. This is what ‘Name-worshipping’ is. Of course this is a heresy, and we have never had anything to do with this teaching.... As regards the historical Athonite controversy concerning the Name of God, we as the local Church in North America (and not at all the local Russian Church), have no intention of meddling in this or resolving it, adhering in this to the position of the Most Holy Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow,..., which at this time canonically represents the last word expressed by the Russian Church on this question, until its careful and unbiased future examination by a legitimate Council. All our current theological views proceed from theses set forth in this document [by Saint Tikhon in 1921].... The prerogative of finally resolving the ‘Athonite affair,’ in our opinion, belongs to a future legitimate Council of the Russian Church, the successor of the All-Russian Council of 1917–18, which was to have taken up this matter, but was not able to because of the civil war and troubles which began in Russia. But to confess and adhere to the teaching of the Holy Fathers on this or on any other theological question—that is not only our business, but simply our duty! I will personally add, that if anyone intentionally or even due to ignorance and lack of education, during the events of the beginning of the last century on Athos, fell into the error of ‘Name-worshipping,’ that is, pantheism, then of course we condemn this.”<sup>138</sup>

**Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston website, 2019:** “... HOCNA has always taught the Orthodox consensus on the glorification of God’s name, from the ancient writers of Holy Scripture all the way to Saint Tikhon of Moscow’s final policy of peace and reconciliation within an Orthodox confession of faith on the name of God (1920 to 1925)—a policy of reconciliation-in-Orthodoxy that was followed by the saints of the twentieth century....¶THE HERESY OF NAME-WORSHIP ¶The Holy Orthodox Church in North America (HOCNA) has always considered ‘name-worshipping’ (giving divine-worship to a created name or claiming that a created name is God or divine energy) to be heresy. HOCNA has always taught that it would be heresy to deify created letters and sounds, to claim that a created name can be God or divine energy. Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston stated this in his first widely-distributed statement on this topic, in June 2012: ‘if anybody (including Father Anthony Bulatovich) is guilty of ... Deifying letters, sounds and random/accidental thoughts about God, ... then he is certainly guilty of heresy.’ ¶HOCNA has remained consistent to this very day....¶HOCNA has always followed the final doctrinal decision of the Orthodox Church on this matter (Saint Tikhon of Moscow’s February 1921 letter): ‘not to consider His Name to be God’s essence, not to separate it from God, not to consider it another Deity, not to deify [or give divine-worship to] letters and sounds and random thoughts about God’ (Имя Его не считать за сущность Божию, не отделять от Бога, не почитать за особое Божество, не обожать букв и звуков и случайных мыслей о Боге).<sup>139</sup> To claim that a created name is divine energy would be to

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzJKrDVZPwcvNVZScVBKaUxSY2c/>.

<sup>138</sup> “The Rejection of Heresy Is Not Done by Ignoring It, But by Condemning It,” Interview with the First Hierarch of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America (HOCNA), Metropolitan Gregory of Boston, by Alexander Soldatov, *Portal-Credo.ru*, November 20, 2017, [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1srK-ufqIQTwTXGyQzw\\_RJotHhFbmMriZ/](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1srK-ufqIQTwTXGyQzw_RJotHhFbmMriZ/).

<sup>139</sup> Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, *Рождественское послание [Nativity Epistle]* (no. 3244; February 19, 1921), in Evgenii Semenovich Polishchuk, ed., *Имяславие: Антология [Name-Glorification: An Anthology]* (Moscow: Факториал Пресс, 2002), 512.

deify letters and sounds—that would be heresy, the heresy of name-worship. To claim that God’s energy is not present in His name when it is pronounced in authentic Orthodox prayer would be to separate God and His name—this would be heresy, the heresy of name-fighting. It is a dogma of the Orthodox Church that God’s uncreated power or energy (God Himself) ‘dwells in’ holy created words as He dwells in holy created persons (the angels and saints) and holy created icons. So, it is heresy to equate created names with divine energy, but it is also heresy to deny that divine energy dwells in the created names for God that are pronounced in true Orthodox prayer.”<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Thomas S. Deretich, “The Consensus of the Orthodox Church on Glorifying God’s Name: A Short Response to Critics” (March 15, 2019), *Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston*, 2019, <http://www.homb.org/p/orthodox-teaching-on-name-of-god.html>, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzJKrDVZPwcvYk5nMTNmVHRxVEZieGk5YmwmtamfSzdMd1hN/view?pli=1&resourcekey=0-N13XidKm98ro4w9ivo3kSA>.

For HOCNA documents on this topic see:

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