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«We engaged a Master of Philosophy like other Teachers»
John and Theodosius Zygomalas and some Philosophical
Discussions in the Second Half of the 16th century

Greek philosophy after the fall of Constantinople, and predominantly during the 16th century, has not been systematically researched although distinct experts have worked in the field with abnegation. Lack of sources and systematic study are the main causes¹.

Philosophical inquiry, however, was active in the Byzantine Empire until 1453. Greek philosophers, including George Gemistos-Plethon Bessarion, George of Trebizond, Theodore Gaza and John Argyropoulos among others, had traveled to Western Europe in order to spread their knowledge². These scholars brought manuscripts, thus far unknown in the West at their most, providing the western intellectual circles with new, more accurate translations of the hitherto known ancient literature. It is well known, for instance, that George's Gemistos *Περὶ ὧν Ἀριστοτέλης πρὸς Πλάτωνα διαφέρεται* was greatly influenced the revival of Platonic philosophy. The presence of Gemistos in Florence and his teaching provoked the establishment of the Platonic Academy in the city by Cosimo de' Medici. Marsilio Ficino, a pupil of the Greek philosopher John Argyropoulos, became the first director of the Academy³. During the same period, an old student of

1. I would like to thank professor Stavros Perentidis, who encouraged and help me during this research, and Dr Marios Hatzopoulos for his useful comments.

2. D.J. GEANAKOPOLOS, *Greek Scholars in Venice. Studies in the Dissemination of Greek Learning from Byzantium to Western Europe*, Harvard 1962.

3. D. LACKNER, «The Camaldolese Academy: Ambrosio Traversari, Marsilio Ficino and the Christian Platonic Tradition», in M. ALLEN / V. REES (eds), *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, Leiden 2001, p. 24-29.

Gemistos, cardinal Bessarion, as well as George of Trebizond, Demetrius Chalcocondyles, Theodore Gaza and others, taught Greek and scholastic philosophy. In addition to teaching and translating, the contribution of Byzantine scholars was great in the debate over the merits and meaning of the Platonic texts, a debate of crucial importance for the intellectual progress of the Western civilisation. What all these show is that the Byzantine territories before 1453 witnessed significant activity in philosophical studies⁴.

After the fall of Constantinople, however, and especially during the first half of the 16th century, the situation deteriorated. Education, philosophical and scientific inquiry were oppressed by the new Ottoman regime. Theodosius Zygomalas described the situation, in a letter to Martinus Crucius:

Ἐορῶ δὲ νῦν [...] μετοικήσαντα πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐλληνικῶν τόπων καὶ οἰκήσαντα ἐν ὑμῖν, ἥτε σοφία καὶ αἱ τῶν μαθημάτων ἐπιστήμαι, αἱ τέχναι αἱ ἄρισται, ἡ εὐγένεια, τὰ ὄπλα, ὁ πλοῦτος, ἡ παιδεύσις καὶ ὁ λοιπὸς τῶν χαρίτων χορὸς. Ἐλληνικῶν δὲ χαρίτων τὸ κλέος βαρὺς ὤλεσεν αἰῶν⁵.

4. Some bibliography: R. BOLGAR, *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries*, Cambridge 1954, p. 283; N. BISAHA, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottomans Turks*, Pennsylvania 2004, p. 72, 117, 124; GEANAKOPOLOS, *Greek Scholars*, p.1-15; IDEM, *Byzantine East and Latin West. Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance*, Hamden Conn. 1966; E. CASSIRER, *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*, New York 1963, p. 16; F. COPLESTON, *A History of Philosophy*, III. *Late Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy*, New York 1993, p. 210-211; J. DAVIES, *Florence and its University During the Early Renaissance*, Leiden 1998, p. 121-135; D. ZAKYTHENOS, «Τὸ πρόβλημα τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς συμβολῆς εἰς τὴν Ἀναγέννησιν», *Ἐπετηρὶς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν*, 1954-55, p. 126-138; I. MAMALAKIS, *Γεώργιος Γεμιστὸς Πλήθων*, Athens 1939, p. 125-176; F. MASAI, «Le problème des influences byzantines sur le platonisme italien de la Renaissance», *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, Paris 1954, p. 82-90; IDEM, *Pléthon et le Platonisme de Mistra*, Paris 1956; J. MONFASANI, *George of Trebizond. A Biography and a Study of his Rhetoric and Logic*, Leiden 1976; C. LIVANOS, «The Conflict between Scholarios and Plethon: Religion and Communal Identity in Early Modern Greece», in G. NAGY / A. STAVRAKOPOULOU (eds), *Modern Greek Literature. Critical Essays*, New York 2003, p. 24-41; K. SETTON, *The Byzantine Background to the Italian renaissance*, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 1, 1956, p. 1-76.

5. *Turcogr.* p. 94. See also Chr. PATRINELIS, «Τὰ πρῶτα σχολεῖα καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι δάσκαλοι», *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους*, X, Athens 1980, p. 368.

Later Crusius referring to Gerlach' conclusions reaffirmed these remarks. Yet around 1550 some signs of progress surfaced. The crucial point is if these were enough as to set the stage for a great intellectual revival, which included philosophy. Henderson claimed that Greek thought was absent during the 16th century. There were no signs of intellectual activity, while Byzantine thought and philosophy were dying⁶.

In contrast, during the same period, the intellectual climate was thriving in Western Europe. The philosophical debate between the supporters of Aristotle and Plato was intense. Greek scholars and Ficino developed a new approach, similar to the Platonic worldview and the hermetic texts. Platonists considered human as the ontological bond between the material and the spiritual, in other words the microcosm⁷. In the second half of the 16th century the central figures of Renaissance Platonism were Francesco Patrizzi (1529-1597) and Jacopo Mazzoni (1548-1598). Although Patrizzi studied at the University of Padua, the centre of Aristotelian studies in the Renaissance Italy, he later turned to the philosophy of Plato as he realized how threatening the Aristotelian doctrines proved to Christian faith. He also accused his contemporaries of compromising their freedom of thought as they were committed to the texts of Aristotle and his commentators. Mazzoni, on the other hand, tried to combine the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. Patrizzi's and Mazzoni's works helped advance the study of the physical sciences because their work incorporated the mathematical analysis of nature, something very challenging for the faithful supporters of Aristotle⁸.

6. G. HENDERSON, *Η αναβίωση του ελληνικού στοχασμού 1620-1830. Η ελληνική φιλοσοφία στα χρόνια της Τουρκοκρατίας*, Athens 1994, Ακαδημία Αθηνών, p. 10-13.

7. COPLESTON, *History*, p. 212; Th. PELEGRINIS, *Οι Πέντε Εποχές της Φιλοσοφίας*, Athens 1998, p. 179-198.

8. B. COPENHAVER / C. SCHMITT, *A History of Western Philosophy, 3. Renaissance Philosophy*, Oxford 1992, p. 184-195; J. CRAYTON, *Francesco Patrizi's Philosophy of Love*, Xlibris Corporation 2003, p. 9-25; H. GATTI, *Giordano Bruno and Renaissance Science*, New York 1999, p. 105-106; C. LOHR, «Renaissance Latin Translations of the Greek Commentaries on Aristotle», in J. KRAYE / M. STONE (eds), *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy*, London 2000, p. 24-40; F. PURNELL, *Jacopo Mazzoni and his comparison of Plato and Aristotle*, N. York 1971 (PhD. Thesis, Columbia University); L. THORNDIKE, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*. VI. *The Sixteenth Century*, N. York 1941, p. 373-375.

According to the Platonists, «cosmos» was an immense living organism, a self-sufficient unity, which was animated by an omnipresent world-soul. Everything, including matter, was «en-souled» and alive. The philosopher's duty, therefore, was to decode nature in order to use and manipulate its forces to his own and humanity's benefit. Leading figure in that movement was Girolamo Cardano (1501-1576) who taught at Padua. His philosophy was a doctrine of hylozoism, similar to that of *Timaeus*. Cardano believed that space was filled by original matter, which under the operation of the world soul, gave birth to the universe. Cardano upheld the idea of immortality of the soul and reincarnation⁹.

The views of Bernardino Telesio (1509-1588), who taught in Naples, were similar. Telesio taught that senses were the only source of human knowledge, attempting to replace the Aristotelian world-view with a naturalistic system¹⁰. Leading figure in this new approach was Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), whose ideas were founded in Platonism and Neoplatonism. Bruno brought into prominence the idea of a universe tutto infinito, en-souled by the world-soul, which in turn produced the natural forms. According to Bruno, our solar system is one of many others, whose position is not one of privilege. Eventually, Bruno was burned at the stake in Rome, because he refused to retract his ideas¹¹.

9. M. BALDI / G. CANZIANI (eds), *Girolamo Cardano: Le opere, le fonti, la vita*, Milano 1999; A. INGEGNO, *Saggio sulla filosofia di Cardano*, Florence 1980; A. MAGGI, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology*, Chicago 2001; H. MORLEY, *Jerome Cardan, The Life of Girolamo Cardan of Milan, Physician*, London 1854; J. OCKMAN, «Les Horoscopes des religions établis par J. Cardano 1501-1576», *Revue de synthèse*, 96, 1975, p. 35-51; O. ORE, *Cardano the Gambling Scholar*, New York 1965; N. SIRAI, *The Clock and the Mirror, Girolamo Cardano and Renaissance Medicine*, Princeton 1997; V. VARADARAYAN, *Algebra in Ancient and Modern Times*, American Mathematical Society 1998, p. 55-90.

10. A. FUNKENSTEIN, «Homogeneity: Cusanus and Telesio», *Theology and the Scientific Imagination From the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century*, Princeton 1986, p. 63-68; M. MULSOW, *Frühneuzeitliche Selbsterhaltung. Telesio und die Naturphilosophie der Renaissance*, Tübingen 1998.

11. A. BESANT, *Giordano Bruno, Theosophy's Apostle in the Sixteenth Century*, Kessinger Publishing 1995; COPLESTON, *History*, p. 248-263; A. INGEGNO, *Cosmologia e filosofia nel pensiero di Giordano Bruno*, Florence 1978; H. GATTI, *Giordano Bruno and Renaissance Science*, New York 1999; IDEM, *Giordano Bruno's Soul Powered Atoms: From Ancient Sources towards Modern Science*, in C. LUTHY / J. MURDOCH/W. NEWMAN (eds), *Late medieval and early modern corpuscular matter*

Not before long, new approaches in philosophy of nature made their way beyond the Alps with scholars like Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1468-1535) and Paracelsus (1493-1541)¹².

During the 16th century, the works and ideas of Laurentius Valla, Marius Nizolius (1498-1576) and Petrus Ramus (1515-1572) created a new approach on Aristotelian Logic. Valla downplayed the importance of Logic in favor of Rhetoric, while Nizolius considered the latter as the core of all scientific and academic fields. Nizolius' main concern was to purify Logic from Metaphysics, while Ramus conceded that only natural Logic was true Logic¹³. Central to the new approach to Aristotle was the University of Padua. Padua was also the centre of the Averroist school of thought. Averroists rejected the views of Alexander of Aphrodisias and supported the idea that there is only one immortal intellect in all men. The doctrines of both Averroists and Alexandrists were condemned by the fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517)¹⁴. The role of the University of Padua and its Professors was crucial for the advancement of Philosophy in the Greek lands in the 16th century, because the vast majority of Greek scholars had studied there. The University of Padua was the first University in Europe to establish the teaching of Philosophy in Greek language¹⁵.

The most important figure of Aristotelianism in Padua was Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525), who worked to purify Aristotle's views from non-Aristotelian accretions. He argued that human soul is dependent on the body, and separation of the two was impossible. He also denied any possible sanction in the future life, seeing Divine justice within the

theories, Leiden 2001, pp.63-80; E. MARTIN, *Giordano Bruno: Mystic and Martyr*, Kessinger Publishing 2003.

12. P.O. GRELL, *Paracelsus: The man and his reputation, his ideas and their transformation*, Leiden 1998; R. STEINER, *Mystics after Modernism: Discovering the Seeds of a new Science in the Renaissance*, Great Barrington MA. 2000, p. 89-104.

13. Q. BREEN, «Marius Nizolius: Ciceronian Lexicographer and Philosopher», *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 46, 1955, p. 69-87; N. BRUYÈRE, *Méthode et dialectique dans l'œuvre de La Ramée*, Paris 1984; F. GRAVES PIERREPONT, *Peter Ramus and the educational Reformation of the sixteenth century*, Macmillan 1912.

14. COPLESTON, *History*, p. 221; D. IORIO, *The Aristotelians of Renaissance Italy: A Philosophical Exposition*, E. Mellen Press 1991, p. 105-289; J. MONFASANI, «Aristotelians, Platonists and the missing Ockhamists: Philosophical Liberty in Pre-Reformation Italy», *Renaissance Quarterly* 46, 1993, p. 247-276; A. POPPI, *Introduzione all' aristotelismo padovano*, Padua 1970.

15. COPENHAVER / SCHMITT, *History*, p. 65.

context of mundane life¹⁶. John Zygomalas (1498-1584) studied at the University of Padua when Pomponazzi's ideas were predominant¹⁷. One of his successors in Padua was Jacobus Zabarella (1533-1589), a devoted Aristotelian who kept distance of both Averroists and Alexandrists. Philosophy, for Zabarella, was not capable of resolving the dispute between these two schools. His main objective was to separate Aristotle's teachings from Theology¹⁸. Zabarella's successor was Caesar Cremoninus (1550-1631), whose doctrines greatly influenced Greek thought from the second half of the 16th century and onwards. Theophilus Corydalleus was his student. Cremoninus considered nature an autonomous system, while at the same time rejected the astronomy of Copernicus. The cornerstone of his thought was the cleansing of Philosophy from any theological significance¹⁹.

16. N. BRANN, *The Debate over the Origins of Genius during the Italian Renaissance, The Theories of Supernatural Frenzy and Natural Melancholy in Accord and in Conflict on the Threshold of the Scientific Revolution*, Leiden 2002, p. 137-176; COPLESTON, *History*, p. 222-226; H.A. DOUGLAS, *The Philosophy and Psychology of Pietro Pomponazzi*, Cambridge 1910; E. MICHAEL, «Renaissance Theories of Body, Soul and Mind, Psyche and Soma», in J. WRIGHT / P. POTTER (eds), *Physicians and Metaphysicians on the mind-body problem from Antiquity to Enlightenment*, Oxford 2000, p. 147-172; H.J. RANDALL, *The School of Padua and the Emergence of Modern Science*, Padua 1961; C. SCHABEL, «Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: Auriol, Pomponazzi and Luther on "Scholastic Subtleties"», in R. FRIEDMAN / L. NIELSEN (eds), *The Medieval Heritage in Early Modern Metaphysics and Moral Theory 1400-1700*, Dordrecht 2002, p. 165-190; J. TRELOAR, «Pomponazzi: Moral Virtue in a Deterministic Universe», in P. FRENCH / H. WETTSTEIN (eds), *Midwest Studies in Philosophy, XXVI, Renaissance and Early Modern Philosophy*, London 2002, p.44-54; W. VAN DOOREN, *The artes at Ferrara, Pomponazzi and Agricola*, in F. AKKERMAN / A.J. VANDERJAGT (eds), *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisus 1444-1485*, Leiden 1998, pp.248-256.

17. On John Zygomalas life and studies, see PERENTIDIS, *Zygomalas*, p. 18.

18. H. MIKKELI, *An Aristotelian Response to Renaissance Humanism, Jacopo Zabarella on the Nature of arts and Sciences*, Helsinki 1992; IDEM, «The Foundation of an autonomous natural philosophy: Zabarella on the Clasification of Arts and Sciences», in D. DI LISCIA / E. KEBLER / C. METHUEN (eds), *Method and Order in Renaissance Philosophy of Nature, The Aristotle Commentary Tradition*, Aldershot 1997, p. 211-228; T. MORRISSEY, «Ecce sacerdos magnus: On Welcoming a New Bishop, Three Addresses for Bishops of Padua by Fransiscus Zabarella, Nicholas Cusa on Christ and the Church», in G. CHRISTIANSON / T. IZBICKI (eds), *Essays in Memory of Chandler Mc Cuskey Brooks for the American Cusanus Society*, Leiden 1996, pp. 57-70.

19. COPLESTON, *History*, p. 22; A.M. DEL TORRE, *Studi su Cesare Cremonini*,

Zygomalas' family had relations with the Lutherans. A prominent member in the movement of Reformation was Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), who was also an associate and collaborator of Martin Luther. Melanchthon championed Aristotelian ideas, although Luther was enemy of scholastic Aristotelianism²⁰. Melanchthon attempted to harmonize Aristotelian philosophy with Lutheranism. Melanchthon opposed the Aristotelian idea of innate principles, such as the innate character of the idea of God and moral principles, which were intuited through *lumen naturale*. Melanchthon maintained also the freedom of will contrary to the teaching of Luther²¹. Finally, Melanchthon played a crucial role in the establishment of a dialogue between Lutherans and Orthodox Christians, in which John and Theodosius Zygomalas got involved for several years²².

At almost the same time, Philosophy followed divergent paths within what used to be the Byzantine Empire. We know that John Zygomalas (1498-1584), since his arrival in Constantinople, started to teach Ethics, Dialectic and Rhetoric. Before 1551 he accepted his appointment as director of the school of Adrianople from the city's metropolit, Ioasaph

Cosmologia e logica nel tardo aristotelismo padovano, Padua 1968; A. POPPI, *Cremonini e Galilei inquisiti a Padova nel 1604. Nuove documenti d'archivio*, Padua 1992; B.C. SCHMITT, *Cesare Cremonini, un aristotelico al tempo di Galilei*, Venice 1980.

20. *Luther's Works*, ed. J. PELICAN / H. T. LEHMANN, St. Louis 1958, XLVIII.42.

21. COPLESTON, *History*, p. 227-228; S. KUSUKAWA, *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy, The case of Philip Melanchthon*, Cambridge 1995; EADEM, «Uses of Philosophy in Reformation Thought: Melanchthon, Schegk and Crellius», in R. FRIEDMAN / L. NIELSEN (eds), *The Medieval Heritage in Early Modern Metaphysics and Modal Theory 1400-1700*, Dordrecht 2003, p. 143-164; P. MELANCHTHON, De philosophia, in *Philippi Melanthonis Epistolae, Praefationes, Consilia, Iudicia, Schedae Aacademicae-Volumen XI, III. Declamationes Philippi Melanthonis usque ad an. 1552* (= Corpus Reformatorum. 11), ed. C.G. BRETSCHNEIDER, Halle 1843, col. 278-284; H. SCHEIBLE, «Philip Melanchthon, The Reformation Theologians», in C. LINBERG (ed), *An Introduction to Theology in the Early Modern Period*, London 2002, p. 67-82; E. MEIJERING, *Melanchthon and Patristic Thought, the doctrines of Christ and Grace, the Trinity and the Creation*, Leiden 1983.

22. B. KORTE, «Early Lutheran Relations with the Eastern Orthodox», *The Lutheran Quarterly* 9.1, 1957, p. 53; J. PELIKAN, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*, Chicago and London 1974, p.281; W. J. JORGENSEN, *The Augustana Graeca and the Correspondence Between the Tübingen Lutherans and Patriarch Jeremias: Scripture and Tradition in Theological Methodology*, Boston 1979 (PhD. Thesis, Boston University), p. 13-68; PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p. 150-162.

II, who later became Patriarch of Constantinople. In the next years Zygomalas moved to Constantinople in the aim of assisting the educational plans of the Patriarchate. By the terms «We engaged a Master of philosophy like other teachers», Ioasaph II qualifies John Zygomalas as a philosopher, though neither the philosophical work of him is known to date, nor is the content of his teachings, which one could assume was linked to his theology. The extract of Ioasaph letter is quite illuminating:

Ἡμεῖς δὲ Θεοῦ συνάρσει οὐ μόνον ἐπιμελούμεθα τῶν νέων τούτων καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάτων ἀνακτίσεων καὶ βελτιώσεων, ἀλλ' ἔτι πρὸς τούτοις καὶ διδασκαλεῖα ἀνηγείραμεν καὶ παιδευτήρια καὶ ἀκαδημίας. Καὶ φιλόσοφον ἄνδρα ἐμισθώσαμεν καὶ ἄλλους διδασκάλους. Εἷς τε ῥητορικὰ δηλαδή, ποιητικὰ τε καὶ γραμματικὰ καὶ μουσικὰ μαθήματα [...]²³.

That is to say, there is no mention of philosophical activity at the time. If there had been any, Ioasaph would have referred to it²⁴.

A few years later, in 1576, Patriarch Hieremias II, according to Martinus Crusius, was invited by John Zygomalas to attend lessons of Dialectic, Ethics and Rhetoric. At the time Hieremias was almost forty years old. According to Steven Runciman, Hieremias had studied at the Academy of the Patriarchate. Zygomalas, therefore, should have been Hieremias' teacher²⁵. In his reports to Gerlach, Crusius referred to Zygomalas' teaching as being of poor quality. Crusius informed his reader that Zygomalas' background was mediocre, although a few decades before he studied at Padua. Crusius and Gerlach were really shocked by the level of education in the Greek lands. They were disappointed by the poor content of lessons and the pitiable means the faculty had at their disposal. The lessons were generally focused on the Church scriptures. Only a few teachers, as a result of their studies in Italy, could boast of a thorough knowledge of ancient Greek Language,

23. In one of his letters to the tsar Ivan IV (1561), ed. W. REGEL, *Analecta Byzantino-russica*, Petropoli 1891 (= Athens 1988), p. 80.

24. Chr. PATRINELIS, «Ἀπὸ τὴν ἄλωση ὡς τις ἀπαρχὲς τῆς πρώτης Ἀναγεννήσεως τῆς παιδείας», *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους*, X, Αθήνα 1980, p. 372-373.

25. S. 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*, London 1968, p. 165, 168, 200.

Philosophy and Theology. Diligent students, moreover, were a rare exception. In this rule Zygomas was no exception²⁶.

With the exception of Zygomas, Hieremias and other officials of the Patriarchate attended lessons from Leonardos Mindonios or Mendones, a doctor and philosopher born on the island of Chios. Among other texts, Mindonios taught the comments of Ammonius, son of Hermias, in Aristotle's *Organum*:

medicus quidam Leonardus, e Chio [...] Ammonii commentaria in Organon Aristotelis, Rhetor Hermogenem, et Hesiodum, explicat²⁷.

There are some indications that Mindonios' lessons in Constantinople were taking place at the Patriarchal Academy. If true, this would indicate a broader audience and add credibility to his teachings. According to his relative and student Georgios Koressios (ca. 1570-1659/60), who was also an eminent scholar, his uncle Leonardos Mindonios taught him philosophy. Koressios also wrote that Theophilos Corydalleus was also Leonardos Mindonios' student²⁸.

By succeeding his father, Ammonius, son of Hermias, (435/445-517/526) became perhaps the most significant Philosophy teacher of Alexandria. His major contribution to Philosophy was his commentary on Aristotle. Ammonius was a student of the famous Neoplatonist Proclus and was influenced by him. Ammonius' students included, among others, Philoponus, Simplicius, Asclepius and Olympiodorus. His comments on Aristotle are available to us, of which *De Interpretatione* was composed by Ammonius himself. Other comments were published by his students, according to his lectures, though their accuracy is questionable. Ammonius' views were conditioned by the Neoplatonism of Proclus. Ammonius created a new tradition in commenting Aristotle, which is known as «Alexandrian».

Ammonius' approach presupposed through knowledge of Plato and Aristotle, although Ammonius ascribed credence to Aristotle's doctrines that deviated from the originals. Contrary to other Neo-platonists who defended Plato, Ammonius attempted to compromise Platonic and

26. Turcogr., p. 205.

27. Turcogr., *ibidem*.

28. M. GEDEON, *Χρονικά τῆς Πατριαρχικῆς Ἀκαδημίας*, Constantinopel 1883, p. 64; N. ΣΤΟΥΡΑΚΗΣ, *Γεώργιος Κορέσσιος*, (1570 ci-1659/60), *Ἡ Ζωή, τὸ Ἔργο του καὶ οἱ Πνευματικοὶ Αγῶνες τῆς Εποχῆς του*, Chios 2000, p. 39, 41, 571-572.

Aristotelian philosophy. The style of his texts makes a full reconstruction of his ideas an extremely difficult task. Ammonius saw in Aristotelian philosophy the basis for understanding the First Cause of beings, which he described in a neoplatonic way. His metaphysics were indebted to Proclus' visions about the *Enneads*, which Ammonius tried to simplify. Ammonius' God is the final and efficient Cause of the world, its motion and existence. Yet Ammonius was insistent to regard the Neoplatonic One as the highest principle and the demiurge Intellect secondary. Ammonius' philosophy was influential for Thomas Aquinas, who read Philoponus' works. In his books, Philoponus incorporated his notes from Ammonius' lectures he attended. Ammonius' and Philoponus' works proved helpful to Aquinas in confronting the ideas of Averroes²⁹.

The work of Ammonius was known to several Byzantine thinkers. In the 6th century Zacharias, bishop of Mytilene, in his work *Ἀμμώνιος ἢ περὶ δημιουργίας κόσμου*, attempted to refute Ammonius' doctrines on the eternity of the world. He also called Ammonius «ψευδοφιλόσοφον». As part of his effort to understand Aristotle, Photius, the famous scholar and Patriarch, studied also the works of Ammonius. In the 14th century Sophonias criticised the ancient commentators of Aristotle, including Ammonius³⁰.

29. *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, ed. H. DIELS, Berlin 1882-1909; J. BARNES, «Ammonius and Adverbs», in H. BLUMENTHAL / H. ROBINSON (eds), *Aristotle and the later tradition*, (Oxford studies in ancient philosophy, Suppl.), Oxford 1991, p. 145-63.; J. DILLON, «Philosophy», in F. WALLBANK / A. ASTIN / M. FREDERIKSEN / R. OQILVIE (eds), *Cambridge Ancient History XI*, Cambridge 1990, p. 922-965; I. HADOT, *Le problème du néoplatonisme alexandrin. Hiéroclès et Simplicius*. Paris 1978; P. MERLAN, «Ammonius Hermiae, Zacharias Scholasticus and Boethius», *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9, 1968, p. 143-203; L. ORTELLI, «Ammonius of Hermias, Zacharias Scholasticus and Boethius: Eternity of God and/or Time?», in A. GALONNIER, *Boèce ou la chaîne des savoirs*. (Fondation Singer-Polignac) Louvain - Paris 2003, pp. 465-479; R. SORABJI, *Aristotle Transformed. The Ancient Commentators and their Influence*. London and Ithaca 1990; IDEM, *The Philosophy of the Commentators 200-600 AD. A Sourcebook*. 1: *Psychology (with Ethics and Religion)*, 2: *Physics*, 3: *Logic and Metaphysics*, London - Ithaca, N. York 2005: Introduction, p. 5 ff; E. TEMPELIS, *The School of Ammonius, son of Hermias, on knowledge of the divine*. Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Παρνασσός, Athens 1998; C. WILDBERG, «Three Neoplatonic Introductions to Philosophy: Ammonius, David, Elias», *Hermathena* 149, 1990, p. 33-51.

30. C. NIARCHOS, *Ἡ ἐλληνικὴ φιλοσοφία κατὰ τὴν βυζαντινὴν τῆς περιόδου*, Athens 1996, p. 74; V.N. TATAKIS, *Byzantine Philosophy*, transl. N. J. MOUTAFAKIS, Indianapolis 2003, p. 23, 102-108, 203.

Since the days of Thomas Aquinas, Ammonius' views were core to the official doctrine of the Christian Church in Western Europe. During the Renaissance, interest in Ammonius' work enjoyed a revival, particularly after the publication of his works in Venice between 1500-1504³¹. This tendency may have its causes in the conflict between the followers of Averroes and those of Alexander of Aphrodisias. It must be noted that Mindonios taught Ammonius' commentary in the Patriarchate, a fact that demonstrates the interest of the circle around Patriarch Hieremias' II to keep up with the intellectual trends of Europe.

But who was Mindonios? In an interesting letter in which he introduced Gerlach, requesting Mindonios to assist him, Crusius referred to the man as «τῷ σοφωτάτῳ παρὰ τῷ Κωνσταντινουπόλιτῇ Πατριάρχῃ ἱατρῷ κυρίῳ Λεονάρδῳ Μενδώνῃ Χίῳ ἀνδρὶ βελτίστῳ καὶ τιμίῳ»³². According to Sathas, the year 1576 found Mindonios in Anchialos, the birthplace of Hieremias II, whence he sent a letter to Theodosius Zygomalas. Letters addressing Zygomalas have also been sent by Maximos Margounios and Crusius (1578), while in 1580 Mindonios signed a testament as Λεονάρδος Μεντώνης³³. He used the same signature in a letter to the Patriarch Hieremias II, in which he complained about Hippolitus, bishop of Mytilene.³⁴ According to Stephan Gerlach, the residents of Constantinople paid Mindonios 300 ducats per year for his services as doctor³⁵. Th. Rentis, a scholar from Chios, wrote about Mindonios (1579):

τοῦτου τοῦ ἀνδρὸς καὶ τὴν ἀγχίνοιαν ἐθαύμαζον καὶ θαυμάζων διατελῶ, τὴν τε φιλομαθίαν καὶ τὴν περὶ φιλοσοφίαν ἀκρίβειαν, προσέτι δὲ καὶ τὴν ἔμφυτον ἀρετὴν καὶ πραότητα³⁶.

Mindonios, together with other eminent citizens of Chios, exchanged letters in 1591 and 1599 with the Patriarch of Alexandria Meletios

31. LOHR, «Renaissance...», p. 27.

32. *Turcogr.*, p. 479-481.

33. *Turcogr.*, p. 309, 313, 479; C. SATHAS, *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία, Βιογραφίαι τῶν ἐν τοῖς γράμμασι διαλαμψάντων Ἑλλήνων ἀπὸ τῆς καταλύσεως τῆς βυζαντινῆς αὐτοκρατορίας μέχρι τῆς ἐλληνικῆς ἐθνεγεροῦσας (1453-1821)*, Athens 1868, p. 201.

34. *Turcogr.*, p. 285.

35. *Tage-Buch*, p. 397.

36. Bibliotheca Vallicelliana, cod. 163, cf. K. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα εἰς τὴν Χίον κατὰ τὴν Τουρκοκρατίαν 1566-1822*, Piraeus 1946, p. 55-57.

Pigas, who called Mindonios «λογιώτατον σοφόν». In those letters the latter is referred to as Leonardos Mindonios³⁷.

He also played a role in the dialogue between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Lutherans. Noticeably, he participated in the process of drafting and writing the letters in which the views of the Eastern Church were propounded. Theodosius Zygomalas mentioned that Hieremias II invited among others «τινὰ σοφὸν Χίον, ὄντα παρ' ἡμῖν», in order to assist the composition as above of the letters to the Lutherans:

Γίνωσκε δὲ κατ' ἀκρίβειαν, ὧν εἵνεκα ἀξιώσατε: ὅτι ὁ ἀγιώτατος πατριάρχης ἔκτοτε σπουδάζει καὶ μελετᾷ, ὅτε ἀδείας τύχη –ἔχει δὲ πράγματα πολλά–, τὸ βιβλιάριον ἡμῶν τὸ πεμφθὲν [...] ὅτε δὲ ἠβούλετο μετεκαλεῖτο με, τὸν ἐμὸν πατέρα καὶ τινα σοφὸν Χίον ὄντα παρ' ἡμῖν καὶ τινας ἐγκρίτους τῆς συνόδου ἐφάπαξ, καὶ συμβουλευόμενος τὰ δόξαντα αὐτῷ ἀπόκρισις ἐν ἐκάστῳ κεφαλαίῳ συνεγράφετο παρ' ἐμοῦ.

These statements were in reference to a letter from Theodosius Zygomalas to Crusius on November 15, 1575³⁸. According to Podskalsky³⁹, Mindonios was a Catholic, while K. Amantos underlined Mindonios' role in the confrontation of the Jesuit propaganda on the island of Chios, which took place after 1592 under the personal guidance of the Pope Clement VIII⁴⁰. Podskalsky is not referring to his sources and is thus very difficult to draw any conclusions. The opposition of Mindonios to Jesuits and his close relation to Hieremias II indicate that he was an Orthodox Christian and was thus permitted to participate in the dialogue with the Lutherans. The correspondence of Meletios Pigas supports this inference. Meletios Pigas, who studied in Padua under the supervision of the famous Aristotelian philosopher Zabarella and later rose to the throne of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, did maintain correspondence with prominent citizens of Chios including

37. K. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 55-57.

38. *Turcogr.*, p.432.

39. PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p.154.

40. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 55, 57ff; A. PACHNOS, «Μελέτιος ὁ Πηγᾶς καὶ οἱ ἐν Χίῳ Ἰησοῦῖται», *Χιακὰ Χρονικά*, 2, 1914, p. 156-158; PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p. 15.; STOUPAKES, *Γεώργιος Κορέσσιος*, p. 87, 144; Z. TSIRPANLIS, «Σχέσεις τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας μετὰ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν τῆς Δύσεως», *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους*, X, Athens 1980, p. 119.

Leonardos Mindonios⁴¹. As mentioned above, Pigas sent several letters to the island of Chios, calling the locals to confront the propaganda of Jesuits. It is known that at least two letters were addressed Leonardos Mindonios, George Sevastopoulos and John Koressios, the leading Orthodox figures on the island. We must notice that Mindonios and Koressios were relatives. In the first letter of 1591 Pigas wrote:

Τοῖς εὐγενεστάτοις καὶ σοφωτάτοις Ἰωάννη Κορέση, Λεονάρδῳ Μινδονίῳ καὶ Γεωργίῳ Σεβαστοπούλῳ, σὺν πᾶσι τοῖς κατὰ Χίον παροικοῦσιν ὀρθοδόξοις χριστιανοῖς υἱοῖς [...] ὑμῖν δέ, ἱεραὶ ψυχαὶ καὶ θεῶ φίλοι, ἀγάμεθα καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἡμᾶς φίλτρον, καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας εἰλικρινές –πῶς γὰρ ἂν ἄλλως ποιήσειεν ἄνδρες καὶ σοφίας φίλοι καὶ εὐσεβείας ἐρασταί;⁴².

In the same year Koressios, Mindonios and Sevastopoulos replied to Pigas congratulating him on becoming a Patriarch:

αὐτόσε ἔρχεται ὁ ἐκ τῆς τάξεως τῶν Λατίνων θεολόγος, χάριν ἱστορίας καὶ προσκυνήσεως τῶν ἀγίων καὶ σεβασμίων τόπων, ὀνόματι Ἄνδρέας, ὅστις ἠξίωσεν ἡμᾶς, ἵνα συστήσωμεν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν σὴν μακαριότητα, διδακτικὸν καὶ εἰρηνικὸν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα, καὶ οὕτως ἀξιούμεν αὐτὴν ὅπως χρήσῃται καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν τῇ συνήθει αὐτῆς εὐνοίᾳ τε καὶ ἐπιεικείᾳ⁴³.

More significant is the following extract from a letter to John Koressios (1599):

Ἰωάννη τῷ Κορέση τῷ σοφωτάτῳ καὶ λογιωτάτῳ ἐν ἰατροῖς καὶ θεοφιλεστάτῳ υἱῷ τῆς ἡμῶν μετριότητος ἐν κυρίῳ περιποθήτῳ, μετὰ καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν λογιωτάτων σοφῶν, τοῦτε κυρίου Λεονάρδου Μινδονίου, τοῦτε κυρίου Γεωργίου, καὶ κυρίου Μαξίμου, παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [...] καὶ προσκαλεσάμεν σὺν οἷς ἂν δοκιμάσειε τῶν εὐλαβεστάτων κληρικῶν τοὺς νέους ἐκείνους καὶ ἀδελφοὺς τοὺς ἐμοὺς παῖδας, οὓς ἐγὼ τὴν πορείαν δι' ὑμῶν ἔναγχος ποιούμενος ἀνεδεξάμεν εἰς μαθητείαν ἐν Χριστῷ τῆς πλάνης ἐκείνης ἀποσπασθέντας, ἦν οἱ φρεναπάται διενοήσαντο σεμνῶ ὀνόματι ἐπιχρώσαντες ἀδελφότητος, τούτους μετὰ

41. AGATHANGELOS, *Μελέτιος ὁ Πηγᾶς: Ὁ Κοῆς πατριάρχης Ἀλεξανδρείας καὶ ἐπιτηρητὴς τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ θρόνου 1545-1602*, Chanea 1903, p. 19-20.

42. Cod. 524, Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem, p. 23-25, cf. PACHNOS, *Μελέτιος*, p. 182-183.

43. Cod. 524, Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem, p. 25-26, cf. PACHNOS, *Μελέτιος*, p. 184-185.

τοῦ ἁγίου λογοθέτου προσκαλεσάμην (φημι δὴ) νεῖμαί τε αὐτοῖς τὴν ἐν Κυρίῳ εὐχὴν τε καὶ εὐλογία, καὶ ἀναμνήσαι τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐκείνων πόνων, ὧν εἰς σύστασιν καὶ νίκην τῆς ἀληθείας κατὰ τοῦ ψεύδους, καὶ τῆς πλάνης καὶ παρ' ὑμῖν ἠντλήσαμεν ἀνατρέψαντες –σὺν Θεῷ– τοὺς καταφλυαρήσαντας τῆς ἀνατολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἐν ἧ μόνῃ καὶ τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως σύμβολον ἀπαράτρωτον, καὶ αἱ τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας παραδόσεις, σῶαί τε καὶ ἀβλαβεῖς [...] εἰ δέ καὶ τινες –οὗς αὐτοὶ ὀνομάζουσιν οὐκ οἶδα πῶς– συμφωνοῦσιν ἡμῖν κατὰ τὸ δόγμα τοῦτο, εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ Θεῷ καὶ δεόμεθα ἵνα καὶ κατὰ τὰ λοιπὰ συμφωνήσωσι⁴⁴.

The content of these letters oblige us to accept that Mindonios was an Orthodox.

During the same period John Mindonios, or Mendones, who is thought to be a close relative of Leonardos, was also contributing active. He lived part of his life in Vienna, correcting the *Μηναῖα* of the Patriarchate. He was also an editor and an able author of epigrams in praise of Patriarch Dionysius II (1546-1556). Dionysius II favored John Mindonios, who in turn offered significant help to his younger relative, Leonardos⁴⁵. At the end of the 16th century, a certain John Mendones or Sgoutas was a student in the College of Saint Athanasius in Rome (1586-1599). Later he taught in the school of the Jesuits in Chios, before he became bishop of Trebizond under the name Ignatius⁴⁶.

Therefore we attempt to explain how Leonardos Mindonios was educated. Michael Hermodoros Listarchos was a famous teacher who periodically taught on the island of Chios between the years 1533-1564⁴⁷. In 1577 Theodosius Zygomalas referred to Listarchos' students in Chios as «ἄνδρες σοφοί, ἱατροὶ καὶ διδάσκαλοι»⁴⁸. Having been born

44. Cod. 524, Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem, p. 415-417, cf. PACHNOS, *Μελέτιος*, p. 190-192.

45. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 45; PACHNOS, *Μελέτιος*, p. 170-171; SATHAS, *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία*, p. 201.

46. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 51, 60-61; PATRINELLIS, «Ἀπαρχές...», p. 372.

47. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 43-44; STOUPAKES, *Γεώργιος Κορέσσιος*, p. 136-144; on Listarchos see Ph. BOUBOULIDES, *Ἑλληνες λόγιοι μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν. Ἀ' Μιχαὴλ-Ἐρμόδωρος Λήσταρχος*, Athens 1959, p. 11-23.

48. Theodosius ZYGOMALAS, *A Voyage in the Aegean in the year 1576*, §7; ed. A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, *Ὅκτὼ περιγραφαὶ τῶν Ἁγίων Τόπων ἐκ τοῦ ιδ', ιε' καὶ ις' αἰῶνος [...]* μετὰ ρωσικῆς μεταφράσεως τοῦ Π. Β. ΜΠΕΖΟΜΠΡΑΖΩΦ, *Pravoslavni palestinskij sbornik*, XIX, S. Peterburg 1903, p. 45ff.; AMANTOS, *Χίοι λόγοι*, p. 6.

in Zakynthos, Listarchos attended the Greek School of Rome (1514-1521) before going on to study Medicine in Ferrara.⁴⁹ After his graduation, he spent most of his time between Greece and Italy. He soon became a follower of new intellectual trends, which he subsequently carried eastwards. Patriarch Dionysius II offered him an opportunity to teach in Constantinople, a place which, in contrast to Italy, was short of high-level scholars. Listarchos declined the offer, but a few years later he came to accept the request of another Patriarch, Ioasaph II, to serve as Patriarchal doctor and advisor⁵⁰.

Around the same time two other teachers were present on Chios, Pachomios Roussanos and Theophanes Eleavoukos. Although Roussanos applied the Christian doctrines on every field of knowledge, he had compassion for the illiterate priests of the time: «τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων συγγράμματα, ἕν' ἐξ αὐτῶν τι κερδήσωσι»⁵¹. St. Basil also insisted on ancient literature's moral and spiritual utility to Christians who were able to discriminate⁵². Roussanos accepted the Platonic theory about the soul. 1550 found Roussanos teaching both clerics and laics in a Chios monastery. His lessons focused on Logic («λογική ἐπιστήμη»), most likely relying on the Aristotelian texts. Although his lectures were not really innovative or of outstanding quality, the local church expressed opposition and pressured him to render faithfully the spirit of the Holy Scriptures⁵³.

Eleavoukos came from Peloponnese and became Μέγας ῥήτωρ of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. He was critical of the teaching of Listarchos, against which he wrote the work *Ἐλεγχος κατὰ τῶν ἀπαιδευτώως χρωμένων τοῖς λόγοις ἢ κατ' Ἐρμοδώρου* criticising generally

49. TSIRPANLIS, *Σχέσεις*, p. 122; N. PSIMENOS, *Ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ φιλοσοφία ἀπὸ τὸ 1453 ἕως τὸ 1821*, I, Athens 1988, p. 65.

50. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 5-7; PATRINELLIS, «Ἀπὸ τὴν Ἄλωση...», p. 372-373.

51. P. ROUSSANOS, *Αἱ τοῦ καταράτου Καρτάνου αἰρέσεις καὶ φληναφίαι καὶ ἡ τούτων ἀνατροπή*, in I. VASSILIKOS, *Κανέλλου Σπανοῦ Γραμματικὴ τῆς κοινῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων γλώσσης, Παχωμίου Ρουσσάνου κατὰ χυδαῖζόντων καὶ αἰρετικῶν καὶ ἄλλα τοῦ αὐτοῦ*, Trieste 1908, p. 90.

52. St. BASIL, *De legendis gentilium libris*, trans. Leonardo Bruni, in H. BARON (ed), *Leonardo Bruni Aretino Humanistisch-Philosophische Schriften mit einer Chronologie seiner Werke und Briefe, Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, I, Leipzig 1928, pp. 99-100, 160-61.

53. M. SERGIS, *Ὁ Ζακύνθιος Μοναχὸς Παχώμιος Ρουσσάνος καὶ ὁ λαϊκὸς πολιτισμὸς τοῦ 16ου αἰῶνα*, Athens 2000, p. 65-66, 163-164.

the state of Philosophy in the Greek lands. Eleavoukos was often arrogant and offensive to his colleagues. In his work argued that in his era the majority of Philosophers lacked original thought for they relied too much on a few words of Plato and Aristotle. He also accused them of threatening the Christian faith and pretending to be experts in Aristotle while ignoring his thought. Most likely, Eleavoukos spoke about Listarchos, who taught the new approaches in Aristotelian philosophy, which he learned in Europe. Neoaristotelianism was condemned in the V Lateran Council. Listarchos' response to Eleavoukos was that he did not pretend to be a real philosopher before somebody who was more capable in philosophical enquiry than he was. Indeed, Eleavoukos preferred to describe himself as mathematician or physician, areas where he displayed little competence⁵⁴.

These prominent teachers contributed significantly to the blossoming of letters on Chios. They did not cease to encourage Greeks to carry on with higher studies in Europe. Before leaving for Padua, Michael Sofianos, a student of Listarchos, wrote in Chios, in his early 20s, the *Μιχαήλ Βυζαντίου τοῦ Σοφιανοῦ, περὶ τῆς ἐκπορεύσεως τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος*⁵⁵.

Let us now reconstruct the course of life of Leonardos Mindonios. He was educated in Chios and is believed to have been a student of Listarhos. Later Mindonios travelled to Italy, where he studied Medicine and Philosophy, with an emphasis in the Aristotelian philosophy, which explains his affinity for the work of Ammonius. He was involved in the dialogue between the Orthodox and the Lutheran Church, being possibly responsible for the scholastic overtone of the Patriarchal theses therein.

For a more complete understanding of the period we must also examine the role of the Patriarch Hieremias II. Manuel Malaxos wrote about him, after he was raised to the Patriarchal throne of Constantinople:

Ὁ χριστομίμητος πατριάρχης, ἔπεσεν ὁ πόθος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη

54. Edited by V. BOBOU-STAMATE, «Ἀνέκδοτα κείμενα Θεοφάνους Ἐλεαβούλκου καὶ Ἑρμοδώρου Ληστάρχου», *Πρακτικὰ Β' Διεθνoῦς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακῶν Σπουδῶν*, III, Athens 1981-1982, p. 24-43. See also *Ἐπιστολὴ ἣν ἐπέστειλε πρὸς Θεοφάνην τὸν Ἐλεαβούλκον τὸν Βερροιώτην*, ed. F. M. PONTANI, *Byzantion*, 33, 1963, p. 427-447.

55. AMANTOS, *Τὰ Γράμματα*, p. 45-47.

εἰς τὴν μελέτην τῆς Θείας Γραφῆς, καὶ νύκτα καὶ ἡμέρα ἐσπούδαζε καὶ σπουδάζει θεολογικά, φιλοσοφικά, καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ μαθήματα, καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικά⁵⁶.

The precise philosophical orientation of Hieremias is not sure, but as far as we know there existed a circle of scholars around him for assistance and advice⁵⁷. Mindonios' teachings are perhaps indicative of Hieremias' interests. Hieremias' desire for education was possibly due to the fact that he was aware of the poor quality of education in the Greek lands. Therefore, Hieremias, with the aid of Maximos Margounios and Gabriel Seviros, tried to improve the state of education, which «εἰς οἷον βάραθρον ἀγνοίας κατεπεπτώκει τὰ ἡμέτερα, ὡς πάντοτε θρήνων δεῖσθαι καὶ τεκμαιρόμενον οἷαν ἐξ οἷας τὴν μεταβολὴν ἔξει τοιούτου θεοῦ ἀρχιερέως εὐπορήσαντα»⁵⁸. Margounios, Seviros and Glytzounios dedicated an epigram to Hieremias, which is useful for our purposes:

Εἰ καὶ πολλοὶ παναγιώτατε δέσποτα, πολλὴν κατέβαλον φροντίδα, βίβλους ὡς τὰ πολλὰ τῆς μέγα λυσιτελοῦσης ἡμῖν πρὸς τὴν τῶν ὄντων γνῶσιν φιλοσοφίας, καὶ τῆς ἀκραιφνοῦς ἡμῶν πίστεως τῆς ὄντως φημὶ φιλοσοφίας, τῆς πρὸς τὸ ἄκρον ἐκεῖνον ἀγαθόν, οὗ ἕνεκα πάντα γίγνεται καὶ πράττεται, παρασκευαζούσης ἀνελθεῖν, ἐκτυπῶσαι, ἀλλ' ὀλίγοι τῶν ῥηθέντων μεθ' ὅσης ἔδει σπουδῆς καὶ προθυμίας ταῖς βίβλοις προσέσχον⁵⁹.

Philosophy, according to the epigram's authors, is oriented towards ontology, although faith is considered as the only true Philosophy. The above lines seem also to underpin some essence of Aristotelian thought. From the author's perspective, Philosophy is not an independent study. The majority of Orthodox clergy, however, did not approve the efforts of Hieremias and did not share his interest in Philosophy. Quite indicative in this direction is the case of Maximos Margounios (1549-

56. *Turcogr.*, p. 180; see also C.N. SATHAS, *Βιογραφικὸν Σχεδιάσμα*, p. ιβ'.

57. J. TRAVIS, «Orthodox-Lutheran Relations: Their Historical Beginnings», *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 29, 1984, p. 305; C. TSIRPANLIS, «Jeremias II and the Lutherans», *The Historical and Ecumenical Significance of Jeremias II's Correspondence With the Lutherans (1573-1581)*, I, Kingston - New York, 1982, p. 14; IDEM, «A Prosopography of Jeremias Tranos (1536-1595) and His Place in the History of the Eastern Church», *The Patristic and Byzantine Review*, 4.3, 1985, p. 156-157.

58. SATHAS, *Βιογραφικὸν Σχεδιάσμα*, p. μβ'.

59. SATHAS, *Βιογραφικὸν Σχεδιάσμα*, p. μγ'.

1562), bishop of Kythera, who for most of his life resided in Venice. He studied in Padua under the teaching of supporters of Neoplatonism. It was not rare for Venice's Orthodox subjects to continue their studies in the University of Padua, which from 1463 created colleges for Greek students⁶⁰. Margounios' later works did not show any intention to follow the path of the Padua's Aristotelians. Although he condemned the Platonists for harming the Christian doctrines, Margounios' works were influenced by the scholastic Philosophy, especially the works:

- *Διάλογος περὶ ἀθλιότητος ἀνθρώπινης*,
- *Περὶ τοῦ τίνα τρόπον ἐν τοῖς οὐσι παρακεχώρηται τὰ κακά. De malorum permissione divina*,
- *Περὶ τῶν πέντε φωνῶν ὡς πρὸς μαθητὴν* [about the voces/φωναί of Porphyry⁶¹].
- *Περὶ τῆς τῶν δέκα κατηγοριῶν διδασκαλίας ὡς πρὸς μαθητὴν*,
- *Encomion philosophiae*.

In those works he heavily criticized Plato, Pythagoras and Aristotle for their sins and to indicate the inefficiency of the ancient philosophy. His views were expressed in a letter to the Patriarch Hieremias II:

Τὴν τῆς ἱερᾶς καὶ Χριστιανικῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀπόκτησιν, διὰ πρακτικοῦ τε καὶ θεωρητικοῦ νοῦς ἡμῖν παραγίνεσθαι, ἢ δι' ἔργων καὶ ἀγάπης ἐνεργεῖσθαι ὀφείλουσα πίστις, κατὰ τὸν μακάριον Παῦλον, τρανῶς ἡμᾶς ἐκδιδάσκει, παναγιώτατε δέσποτα. Τὴν γὰρ ἡμετέραν ψυχὴν ἀγαθοειδῆ οὐσαν, καὶ μέσῃ τινὰ τάξιν εἰληφούσαν, ῥέψασαν ποτέ, τῇ τοῦ αὐτεξουσίου παρατροπῇ, εἰς τὸ χεῖρον, ὁ πρακτικὸς νοῦς διὰ τῶν πολιτικῶν, καὶ τελεστικῶν ἀρετῶν, καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν ἐπὶ ταύταις μεθόδων, ἀναδεχόμενος, τῆς ἐνσκηψάσης ὀπωσθήποτε ἀλογίας ἀποκαθαίρειν, καὶ τῶν κηλίδων ἀπολούειν, καὶ τέλος αὐτὴν πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἐπανάγειν μεμυσταγώγηται⁶².

Philosophy and Theology for Margounios were inextricable. The Greek students of the College of St Athanasius in Rome were taught only traditional scholastic and Aristotelian philosophy⁶³.

The insistence of the vast majority of the Greek scholars to remain

60. PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p. 35.

61. PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p. 204, n. 126.

62. SATHAS, *Βιογραφικὸν Σχεδιάσμα*, p. 115

63. Z. TSIRPANLIS, *Οἱ Μακεδόνες σπουδαστὲς τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Κολλεγίου τῆς Ρώμης καὶ ἡ δράση τους στὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ τὴν Ἰταλία (16ος αἰ. -1650)*, Thessalonike 1971.

faithful to the traditional approaches in philosophy is understandable. After the fall of Constantinople, in what used to be the Byzantine Empire the Ottomans became staunch supporters of the anti-Western party. In the Patristic tradition the predominance of Theology over Philosophy and Science had deep roots and this concept was now renewed by the followers of Gregory Palamas. Pachomios Roussanos, for instance, referred to Theology as the master and Philosophy as the servant, a view held also by Philo of Alexandria. The Greek Church in the 16th century showed no unnecessary hostility to Aristotle, though it did not integrate Aristotelian philosophy in its doctrines, after the example of western scholasticism. It should be underlined in this vein that the first professors and directors of the Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople were hostile to Platonic philosophy and the Neo-Aristotelianism. Manuel Korinthios, a director of the Academy around the mid 16th century, encouraged his students to read the works of Nicholas of Methone and Gregory Palamas, so that doctrinal purity would be best preserved⁶⁴. It should also be reminded that Maximos the Greek (1470-1566), even though student of the most innovative Renaissance Philosophers, Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, had rejected ancient Philosophy as a threat to faith⁶⁵.

In sum, it could be argued that Philosophy followed a different course in the East of Europe than that taken in the West. Orthodox were fully aware of the new approaches and theories, but the renewal of Greek thought evolved in a unique way. In the beginning of the 17th century Theophilos Corydalleus marked the transition to a new era. The rejection of Platonism and Neoplatonism was not a fortuitous incident, but a choice marking the direction of the Greek culture towards the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution.

64. GEDEON, *Χρονικά*, p. 87; PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p. 131.

65. PODSKALSKY / METALLINOS, p. 134-144.