



A Study of Gregory Palamas

John Meyendorff

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Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica in the middle of the fourteenth century, is the outstanding figure of later Byzantine theology, a writer who may well be compared with the greatest theologians of the mediaeval West. This book is the first full study of his life and work to be available in English.

When this book was published in France in 1959, it was at once hailed as a major contribution to the understanding of Eastern Christianity; and not only of Eastern Christianity, for the thought of Palamas, with its vivid biblical quality, has a surprising relevance to the problems of our twentieth century. There has been a growing recognition of the importance of Palamas in the development of Eastern Christianity.

The relevance of Orthodoxy in the whole ecumenical movement is becoming ever more evident. Standing apart from the controversies which have embittered the history of Western Christendom, the Christian East has preserved a living continuity with the early Church. It is here that the significance of its witness, in itself disinterested, is to be found, now that the ecumenical movement is developing "ecumenism in time," and is searching for those churchly roots which are common to all Christians.

Orthodoxy, which unites a sacramental view of the Church with a sense of personal liberty in the Holy Spirit, can open unexpected perspectives in the Catholic-Protestant dialogue. May not its spirituality, which sees the victory of Christ over death and hell as avowing a real transfiguration of man and the universe, be of vital assistance at the moment when Western man is exploring the depths both of human anguish, and of the material world, and is being dangerously tempted by the psychic techniques of the non-Christian East?

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