

Western Scholasticism and the Eastern Orthodox Response



“As far as you are able, join faith to reason”
- Boethius, *On The Consolation of Philosophy*

- ❖ **Scholasticism does not represent a singular school of thought, rather it represents the assumption that faith and reason work together in knowing God.**
- ❖ **While it is associated with the “Schoolmen”, its roots pre-date the rise of Medieval cities and universities.**

The New Europe

- ❖ **While the Eastern Roman Empire or Byzantium remained Hellenistic/Greco-Roman. What had been the Western Roman Empire became dominated by “new peoples”, especially the Germanic tribes, and even as the Frankish Carolingian empire eventually arose and formed the Holy Roman Empire; Feudalism rather than centralized Imperialism, became the common form of governance.**

Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, c.477-524 AD

- ❖ **Boethius was a Roman patrician in the service of an Ostrogoth King, thus showing the change in Western society.**
- ❖ **Unlike many scholars of his time in the West, he had a command of not only Latin but also Greek.**
- ❖ **He felt that reason could like faith know God, and in his *On the Consolation of Philosophy*, argues for the immortality of the soul without any reference to Sacred Scripture.**

The Rise of Western Monasticism

- ❖ **With the closing of the Platonic Academy in Athens in 529 by the Emperor Justinian, and the founding of the first monastery in the West by St. Benedict of Nursia at Monte Cassino, two symbols emerged. In the East the total triumph of Christianity over pagan thought, in the West the need to evangelize and educate the pagans who had arrived.**

Monastic Libraries

- ❖ **Scholasticism, at least in its early stages had a great deal to do with cataloguing and preserving ancient thought.**
- ❖ **Monasteries in the early western Middle Ages became the oasis of language and learning in a sea of cultural upheaval and constant fighting.**

The Pseudo-Dionysius

- ❖ If Boethius represents the self-assured rationalism of the Scholastic period, then the Pseudo-Dionysius represents the voice of Eastern Patristic influence and the “via negativa.”
- ❖ Although his identity is unknown, many believe he was a Syrian Neoplatonist and contemporary of Boethius.
- ❖ He taught that whatever is said with positive assertion about God must be also explained with a negation.
- ❖ Through his thought the mystical theology of the Fathers was to some degree retained in the West.

Non-Christian Influences

- ❖ **The Islamic Philosophers: Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Al Ghazali, Al Farabi, Ibn Rushd (Averroës)**
- ❖ **Jewish Philosophers: Ibn Gabirol, Moses Maimonides**

St. Anselm of Canterbury, 1033-1109

- ❖ **Represents the extreme stance for the fitness of reason. In his Ontological Argument for the Existence of God, he demonstrates his belief in “fideus querans intellectual” and “credo ut intelligam”.**

Scholastic Battleground

But, also within the framework of medieval Scholasticism, a dispute was always brewing between the dialecticians, who overemphasized reason, and those who stressed the suprarational purity of faith. Berengar of Tours, an 11th-century logician, metaphysician, and theologian, maintained the preeminence of thinking over any authority, holding in particular that the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist was logically impossible. His contemporary the Italian hermit-monk and cardinal St. Peter Damian, however—who was apparently the first to use the characterization of philosophy as the “handmaid of theology”—replied that, if God’s omnipotence acts against the principle of contradiction (according to which it is impossible for a proposition to be both true and false), then so much the worse for the science of logic. Quite analogous to the foregoing controversy, though conducted on a much higher intellectual level, was the bitter fight that broke out almost one century later between a Cistercian reformer, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and a logician and theologian, Peter Abelard. Bernard, was in the first place a man of religious practice and mystical contemplation, who, at the end of his dramatic life, characterized his odyssey as that of *anima quaerens Verbum*, “a soul in search of the Word.” Although he by no means rejected philosophy on principle, he looked with deep suspicion upon the primarily logical approach to theology espoused by Abelard. “This man,” said Bernard, “presumes to be able to comprehend by human reason the entirety of God.”

Logic, Universals, Nominalism

- ❖ **Logic became one of the chief concerns of the Scholastic thinkers, leading to the public disputations.**
- ❖ **Often the questions centered around the existence of Universals and eventually took some to take the position of Nominalism (in many ways the forerunner of modern skepticism)**

The Schoolmen

- ❖ **The High Middle Ages brought about the rebirth of cities and the rise of Universities (where one learned Universals).**
- ❖ **Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna, Paris, Modena, Salamanca, Padua, Toulouse, Orleans, Siena, Pisa, et. al.**

the course of study

- ❖ **Trivium: grammar, logic, rhetoric**
- ❖ **Quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music**

Aristotelianism and Thomas Aquinas

- ❖ **While the philosophical world of the Fathers was influenced more by Stoicism, Platonism, and Neo-Platonism. The recovery of Aristotle's thought began to interest and command in many ways the Medieval Scholastic mind in the West, especially about the same time as the rise of Universities.**

- ❖ **St. Bonaventure the great Franciscan contemporary of the Dominican Thomas Aquinas: He admired Aristotle as a natural scientist, but he preferred Plato and Plotinus, and above all Augustine, as metaphysicians. His main criticism of Aristotle and his followers was that they denied the existence of divine ideas. As a result, Aristotle was ignorant of exemplarism (God's creation of the world according to ideas in his mind) and also of divine providence and government of the world. This involved Aristotle in a threefold blindness: he taught that the world is eternal, that all men share one agent intellect (the active principle of understanding), and that there are no rewards or punishments after death. Plato and Plotinus avoided these mistakes, but because they lacked Christian faith, they could not see the whole truth. For Bonaventure, faith alone enables one to avoid error in these important matters.**

For Bonaventure, every creature to some degree bears the mark of its Creator. The soul has been made in the very image of God. Thus, the universe is like a book in which the triune God is revealed. His *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (1259; [The Soul's Journey into God](#)) follows Augustine's path to God, from the external world to the interior world of the mind and then beyond the mind from the temporal to the eternal. Throughout this journey, human beings are aided by a [moral](#) and intellectual divine illumination. The mind has been created with an innate idea of God so that, as Anselm pointed out, humans cannot think that God does not exist. In a terse reformulation of the Anselmian argument for God's existence, Bonaventure states that if God is God, he exists.

The first theologian of the Middle Ages who boldly accepted the challenge of the new Aristotelianism was Albertus Magnus, an encyclopedic scholar. Although he knew no Greek, he conceived a plan of making accessible to the Latin West the complete works of Aristotle by way of commentaries and paraphrases. He also penetrated and commented upon the works of Aristotle; he was likewise acquainted with those of the Arabs, especially Avicenna; and he knew Augustine. Nevertheless, he was by no means primarily a person of bookish scholarship; his strongest point, in fact, was the direct observation of nature and experimentation. After having taught for some years at the University of Paris, he traveled, as a Dominican superior, through almost all of Europe. Not only was he continually asking questions of fishermen, hunters, beekeepers, and birdcatchers, but he himself also bent his sight to the things of the visible world. But amid the most palpable descriptions of bees, spiders, and apples, recorded in two voluminous books on plants and animals, Albertus formulated completely new, and even revolutionary, methodological principles—for instance, “There can be no philosophy about concrete things,” or, “in such matters only experience can provide certainty.”

With Albert the Great, the problem of the conjunction of faith and reason had suddenly become much more difficult, because reason itself had acquired a somewhat new meaning.

“Reason” implied, in his view, not only the capacity for formally correct thinking, for finding adequate creatural analogies to the truths of revelation, but also, above all, the capacity to grasp the reality that humans encounter.

Henceforth, the Boethian principle of “joining faith with reason” would entail the never-ending task of bringing belief into a meaningful coordination with the incessantly multiplying stock of natural knowledge, both of humans and of the universe. The business of integrating all of these new and naturally divergent elements into a somewhat consistent intellectual structure waited for another, his pupil Thomas Aquinas.

Thomas Aquinas shared his master's great esteem for the ancient philosophers, especially Aristotle, and also for the more recent Arabic and Jewish thinkers. He welcomed truth wherever he found it and used it for the enrichment of Christian thought. For him reason and faith cannot contradict each other, because they come from the same divine source.

In his day, conservative theologians and philosophers regarded Aristotle with suspicion and leaned toward the more traditional Christian Neoplatonism. Aquinas realized that their suspicion was partly due to the fact that Aristotle's philosophy had been distorted by the Arabic commentators, so he wrote his own commentaries to show the essential soundness of Aristotle's system and to convince his contemporaries of its value for Christian theology.

Aquinas's own philosophical views are best expressed in his theological works, especially his [*Summa theologiae*](#) (1265/66–1273; Eng. trans., *Summa theologiae*) and [*Summa contra gentiles*](#) (1258–64; *Summa Against the Gentiles*). In these works he clearly distinguished between the domains and methods of philosophy and theology. The philosopher seeks the first causes of things, beginning with data furnished by the senses; the subject of the theologian's inquiry is God as revealed in [sacred scripture](#). In theology, appeal to authority carries the most weight; in philosophy, it carries the least. Aquinas found Aristotelianism and, to a lesser extent, Platonism useful instruments for Christian thought and communication; but he transformed and deepened everything he borrowed from them. For example, he adopted Aristotle's proof of the existence of a primary unmoved mover, but the [primary mover](#) at which Aquinas arrived is very different from that of Aristotle; it is in fact the God of Judaism and Christianity. He also adopted Aristotle's teaching that the soul is the human being's form and the body his matter, but for Aquinas this does not entail, as it did for the Aristotelians, the denial of the immortality of the soul or the ultimate value of the individual. Aquinas never compromised Christian doctrine by bringing it into line with the current Aristotelianism; rather, he modified and corrected the latter whenever it clashed with Christian belief. The harmony he established between Aristotelianism and Christianity was not forced but achieved by a new understanding of philosophical principles, especially the notion of being, which he conceived as the act of existing (*esse*). For him, God is pure being, or the act of existing. Creatures participate in being according to their essence; for example, human beings participate in being, or the act of existing, to the extent that their humanity, or essence, permits. The fundamental distinction between God and creatures is that creatures have a real [composition](#) of essence and existence, whereas God's essence is his existence.

- ❖ **Later Scholasticism:**

- ❖ **John Duns Scotus**

- ❖ **William of Ockham**

- ❖ **Meister Eckhart**

- ❖ **Nicholas of Cusa**

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A Contemporary Orthodox Understanding of Medieval Scholasticism

The Greeks never had any interest in Latin culture: This was true in the classical period and was inherited by the Church Fathers (the interest of the Greeks in St. Gregory the Great is the exception that proves the rule). It began to change at the end of the thirteenth century, when, in the wake of the Byzantines' outright rejection of the reunion negotiated at the Second Council of Lyon in 1274, the Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos commissioned a translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, to inform the Greeks about Latin theology. The translator also translated Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, as well as some Ovid, which suggests genuine interest among the Greeks in Latin culture.

The process initiated by the emperor continued and grew apace. The most striking example of this is the Byzantine interest in Thomas Aquinas, several of whose works were translated into Greek, beginning with his *Summa contra Gentiles*, translated in 1354, and continuing with much of the *Summa Theologiae*, several *quaestiones*, some of his *opuscula*, and commentaries on Aristotle—all this backed up by works expounding and commenting on Aquinas, as well as attacking him, a process that continued to the end of the Byzantine Empire in 1453.

Marcus Plested, in *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, begins the story rather differently, however; he wants to place Aquinas in the context of what he calls “Byzantine scholasticism.” By this he means a tradition of learned analysis of theological issues, using logic and argument, that he traces back to the eighth-century father John Damascene’s *Fount of Knowledge*, written by the former civil servant to the Muslim caliphate who had become a monk near Jerusalem, where he devoted his life to prayer and study. This tradition Plested traces further in great Byzantine scholars such as Photios, the great ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople, and the courtly Michael Psellos, “Consul of the Philosophers” in the eleventh century.

This was a very learned tradition of scholarship, but it was nothing like the scholasticism of the high Middle Ages, which is much more than a keenness to present theology systematically combined with the use of syllogistic reasoning. Medieval scholasticism was a product of the growth of the university, which spawned intense competition among the teachers, the schoolmen, for students: competition pursued through the *quaestio*, at which a schoolman invited challenges to his opinions (the “questions”), to which he responded with virtuosic displays of learning and argument. There is no parallel in the Byzantine East, where there was hardly one university, and no institutional competition. Nevertheless, Plested is right to underline Aquinas’s debt to Greek theology, found especially in his Christology, and his indebtedness to John Damascene and the writings ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite. This interest in Greek theology is more marked in him than in any of the other scholastics. Plested also draws attention to the championing of the use of reason in theological matters by Gregory Palamas.

The interest in Aquinas in the Byzantine East in the last century of the Byzantine Empire was not paralleled in the West, where Thomas's star was already declining in the face of attacks by Duns Scotus and William of Ockham, the rise of nominalism in philosophy, and the dissolution of his rational metaphysics by the "two powers" doctrine in theology. It was only with Pope Leo XIII's bull *Aeterni Patris* (1879) that Thomas's role as *the* Catholic theologian, the *doctor communis*, became assured.

One wonders why there was this Byzantine interest. Plested does not speculate; he draws attention to the fact and gives a fine account of the engagement of Byzantine thinkers with Aquinas. This account upsets the commonly received wisdom. Enthusiasm for Thomas was felt throughout the intellectual world of late Byzantium, fractured as it was by the so-called Hesychast controversy over the claims by Athonite monks to have genuine experience of the uncreated light of the Godhead in prayer, not least through the use of the Jesus Prayer.

As Plested points out, the Hesychast controversy was already settled before the advent of Thomas on the Byzantine scene.

Despite the recent tendency in Orthodox circles to oppose Aquinas and Gregory Palamas, Hesychasm's main theological defender, there is little sense of this in the fourteenth century. Prominent supporters of Palamas, such as Nicholas Cabasilas and Theophanes of Nicaea, made enthusiastic use of elements of Aquinas's theology.

Orthodox interest in Aquinas did not end with the collapse of the Byzantine Empire. During the period of Turkish rule, some of the Byzantine engagement with Thomas was secondhand (much knowledge of Thomas in the West was also secondhand), but Plested points us to thinkers, virtually unknown nowadays, such as Koursoulas and Damodos, who display a genuine knowledge and appreciation for the Angelic Doctor.

The astonishing receptivity to Aquinas among Orthodox thinkers seemed to falter in the last century. Aquinas became a cipher for the alleged failures of the West: a narrow, juridical rationalism, an overweening confidence in human understanding of God. Plested closes his book by making a plea for the Orthodox to recover the confidence in their own tradition that enabled them to respond with understanding and enthusiasm to Aquinas, and to engage with his theological achievement.

The question of translating from one cultural matrix to another is complex. It is true, as Plested urges, that Aquinas had an exceptional interest in Greek theology and philosophy, but he read all this in Latin, not Greek, and it could be argued that both John Damascene and the Areopagite read rather differently in Latin translation (however accurate) than in the original Greek: They were read in a Latin cultural matrix profoundly influenced by Augustine.

That is only a symbol of a much larger problem. Plested does not do much towards addressing it, but he ably brings us to the threshold. If he manages to dislodge the stereotypes with which Western theology, not least St. Thomas, has been (with a few exceptions) approached by Orthodox theologians in the twentieth century, his achievement will be great.

Perhaps all that is needed, to begin with, is for Orthodox theologians actually to work their way through some of the *quaestiones* of the *Summa Theologiae*. They will discover much that is congenial, even if it is expressed in an unfamiliar idiom and with concerns that are unexpected. For example, Thomas devotes much time to the virtues, as does the Orthodox ascetic tradition; nonetheless, it *sounds* rather different (different lists, different arrangements).

It would be interesting to explore what such difference amounts to.

The "West" as the Archetypal Enemy in the Theological and Philosophical Discourse of Orthodox Christianity

by [Thomas Bremer](#) Original in German,

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In the modern period, for eastern Christianity "the west" has been a foil which served to differentiate and distance. The historical roots of this differentiation go back to the beginnings of the divergence between the Christian east and west. For centuries, there was almost no contact between Byzantium and Rome. In Russia, the "Slavophiles" and the "Westernizers" of the 19th century were a manifestation of the long-running debate about the direction of Russia. In the Balkans, nationally-oriented, anti-western theological positions emerged. The insight which emerged in the 20th century that the west also influences anti-western positions and the dissolution of the hard divide between the "east" and the "west" have led to a restructuring of Orthodox theology, which also holds the potential of an opening up.

The East in the West

Russian theology experienced a rupture due to the Revolution of 1917 and the events which followed it, though it continued to develop thereafter outside Russia, albeit in a reduced form. Many thousands of Russians left the country in the years after the establishment of the Soviet regime, often accompanied by their priests and bishops, and many other religious intellectuals were expelled from the country by the new government. Centres of Russian Orthodox theology emerged abroad, initially in Belgrade and Paris (in addition to other places like Berlin and Sofia), and subsequently also in the United States after the Second World War. Additionally, an independent Orthodox clerical hierarchy formed, the so-called "Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia" (ROCOR). The Russian hierarchs organized in exile in this church proved to be particularly conservative. They propounded a monarchist view and lived in isolation from the host societies in western Europe and north America. The Church Outside of Russia did not re-join the Moscow patriarchate until 2007. The two academic institutions which should be named in this context (and which were not subordinate to the hierarchy of the ROCOR) were the Institut Saint-Serge in Paris and St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York. Through their contacts in and with the west, they contributed to a particular form of Orthodox theology.

The institute in Paris was founded in 1924. The Paris Orthodox metropolitan wished to establish an institution to train priests, which were in demand due to the large number of Russians living in Paris and France. From humble beginnings, the institute quickly developed into one of the most important Orthodox training centres, at which the most famous theologians of their time worked. Among these were Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944), Georges Florovsky, Nicolas Afanassieff (1893–1966), Alexander Schmemmann (1921–1983) and John Meyendorff (1926–1992) to name a few. On the one hand, the Orthodox theologians influenced Catholic theology in France (the Nouvelle Théologie deserves particular mention in this regard), while, on the other hand, it was forced to engage with the thinking of western theology. In the case of Bulgakov, this occurred through strong ecumenical engagement with Anglicans, which even brought him to the point of suggesting intercommunion at an ecumenical gathering which he attended. Georges Florovsky, who concentrated on church history, got involved primarily in multilateral ecumenism and for many decades he was the most prominent and most active Orthodox theologian in the ecumenical movement.

However, of central importance to Orthodox theology were Florovsky's efforts to overcome "school theology", Orthodox theology which had been influenced by western models of thought and which could be found in the theological schools and textbooks throughout the Orthodox world. Florovsky suggested a return to the theology of the (Church) Fathers, a view which he expressed clearly for the first time and to a very enthusiastic response at the Congress of Orthodox Theologians in Athens in 1936.¹⁸ He sharply criticized the adoption of models of western theological thought because – he argued – they no longer related to the church, but had developed their own autonomy. This concept of the "pseudomorphosis"¹⁹ or the "Babylonian captivity" of Orthodox theology met with great approval and strongly influenced modern theological thought in the eastern churches. It is noteworthy that, through his call for the creation of a living tradition which does not restrict itself to the repetition of sentences and phrases which have been handed down, an ecumenical perspective emerged within Orthodox theology. Florovsky was able to develop his ecumenical activities precisely because of his theological position, as it was based on a hermeneutics which created the conditions for theological discussion about the theological differences between the Orthodox and other traditions.

One of the most important students of Florovsky is the Greek theologian Ioannis Zizioulas (*1931), who taught for many years in Glasgow and who was appointed metropolitan in 1986. Zizioulas is one of the foremost proponents of "Eucharistic ecclesiology", as developed before him by Nicolas Afanassieff.²⁰ In this perspective, the church is always understood as the church in a concrete place, as a community celebrating the Eucharist under a bishop. In a perspective such as this, the church as a whole and the question regarding the primacy of the pope – which is always a bone of contention between the Orthodox religion and the Catholic church – no longer play a central role. Another emphasis in his theology – but one which is also connected with ecclesiology – relates to anthropology. It is through community with others that the human becomes a person, as the latter only exists in the context of contact and dialogue. Zizioulas sees precisely this as a shortcoming in the west. The aspect of community is neglected, and the person is replaced by a human (as described above). While it is based on a stereotype, this point of view is nonetheless fundamentally capable of being combined with a positive attitude towards western Christianity, which as it were has the chance of returning to the original form of the church, the Eucharist, and community.

In addition to these models which are open to ecumenical dialogue, there continues to be theological and philosophical approaches in the east which strongly reject the west and its models. Another figure in the area of Greek theology who crosses the divide between east and west deserves mention: Ioannis (John) S. Romanidis (1927–2001). He grew up in the USA, but as a professor has mainly worked in Greece.

Romanidis was also strongly involved in ecumenism. For him, the fundamental cultural differences between the Christian east and the west played a central role, and he traced the theological differences back to them. Like many other Orthodox theologians, he also viewed the mystical theology of Gregorios Palamas (1296–1359) as realizing the Orthodox religion in its ideal form. In the case of Romanidis, this was based on a strong rejection of the theology of St Augustine (354–430), who for him almost personifies the defect in the development of the west. Through hesychia, contemplative peace, one can come to a view (theoria) of God, he argued. This does not involve intellectual ability, but is instead the result of mystical effort.

Christos Yannaras (*1935) is a Greek theologian and philosopher who is also well known in the west as a result of English and German translations of his writings. Yannaras has always attempted to emphasize the differences between western European and Greek philosophy. He does this on the basis of an intensive study and good knowledge of western philosophy (like many famous Greek philosophers and theologians, Yannaras studied in Bonn, completing his PhD on Martin Heidegger (1889–1976)). According to Yannaras, these differences form culture, to the extent that they also give rise to different approaches to life. Similar to Zizioulas, he proceeds from an understanding of the human as a person, which he views as being in sharp contrast to western individualism, which is closely connected with rationalism. The differences are thus not so much metaphysical or theoretical in nature, he argues, but they lead to two very different practices. This also implies a sharp critique of western values and values which are viewed as western, such as human rights – this criticism is also shared by other Orthodox critics of the west. For Yannaras, many negative phenomena in the world can be attributed to the fundamental principles of the west, particularly phenomena such as the decline of the churches, atheism and the careless treatment of creation, which are a threat not only to religion but to the existence of humanity. Like many other critics of the west, he also views Orthodox churchliness as a bastion for the preservation of true humanity, as it was intended by God.

It is conspicuous that many of the accusations that have been levelled against the west have reappeared over the course of history, sometimes with only slight modifications. They have in common that they identify a fundamental difference between the two church and theological traditions. The eastern mystical, true, sincere and in a sense emotional approach is contrasted with a western rational, objective and cold approach. Many phenomena occurring within society are attributed to, and explained in the context of, this difference. This also includes the topos that western theologians have lost contact with the object of their investigation, with God, because they do not approach him with love and awe, but with scientific detachment. The fundamental error of the west, it is asserted, is therefore not to be found in individual contentious statements, but in this fundamentally false and unsuitable type of theology.

However, many of these examples also demonstrate that the concepts of "east" and "west" can now only be understood in relative terms. Orthodox institutions in France and the USA belong to the eastern church but also to the west. The idea of Eucharistic ecclesiology has had considerable influence within the Catholic church, as evidenced by the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Afanassieff is the only Orthodox theologian who is referred to by name in the Council files. Just as western models once influenced the east, the reverse is now occurring, or more accurately, it is no longer so easy to differentiate between east and west.

It must also be noted that the Palamite tradition (Gregory Palamas) has gained greater importance in modern Orthodox theology, having been of no particular significance for centuries. It clearly contains an element that plays an identity-forming role in Orthodox theology. Palamism is a theological teaching in the Greek tradition which had no effect on the west, mainly because scholasticism triumphed in the west. It thus differs from all of the principles of western theological thought and is specific to the Christian east. It comes closer to an understanding of theology which states that theology should be based on experience. It remains to be seen if this, which can be viewed as another aspect of the Orthodox church which differentiates it from the west, is capable of being received in the west.

Finally, it should be pointed out that there is also a relationship between the images that the west and the east have of each other and the historical events from which these images are constructed. These are constructs, as the historical reality is no longer accessible. However, they are not arbitrary, but must be created out of the available materials. Over the course of history, the attitudes and actions of the west towards the east were such that it was not difficult to paint this picture of menace and hunger for power. It is not the only image which it is possible to draw, but it is not completely without basis in history. The churches and theologies should investigate their mutual relationships to determine whether it is possible to find material for other constructs.