

DIAGRAM REASONING AND PARAconsistent THINKING: HIEROMONK HIEROTHEOS, HIS ANCESTRY, AND LEGACY

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ABSTRACT. The article is dedicated to the use of logical diagrams in Byzantine Trinitarian theology. Logical diagrams are a kind of logical computation that is often considered to originate with Euler and Leibniz, but they were, in fact, used by Byzantine theologians since at least the ninth century. Nevertheless, logical diagrams were never so widely accepted as they began to be from the late thirteenth century to the early fifteenth century. The diagrams seem to have been introduced into Trinitarian theology by Eustratius of Nicaea (an authoritative philosopher who did not fare as well as a theologian) in his anti-Latin polemics dating to *ca.* 1112. From there, the use of diagrams was reclaimed in about the 1140s by the Latinophrone Nicetas “of Maroneia” and rejected in 1256 by the anti-Latin theologian Emperor Theodore II Laskaris. Nevertheless, beginning in the 1270s, their popularity and variability exploded. Eventually, triadological diagrams were “canonized” as the legacy of St. Hierotheos of Athens, the teacher of Dionysius the Areopagite, by Joseph Bryennios in the early fifteenth century. Even the “internal” opponent of Palamite theology, Theophanes of Nicaea, resorted to diagrams in defending his own triadology. The figure who rendered diagrams critical for the “Hesychast” theologians was, in the 1270s, hieromonk Hierotheos. He was able to express with diagrams the inconsistency of the mainstream Byzantine understanding of the Trinity. Nevertheless, his own name would come, in the fourteenth century, under a kind of *damnatio memoriae*, so that his main ideas circulated rather under the name of Hierotheos of Athens. This article argues that hieromonk Hierotheos passed from the Church of Patriarch Joseph to the Church of Patriarch Arsenius

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(or the Arsenites). Some of the highly authoritative teachers of the Palamites were in disagreement with the Great Church on the Arsenite issue, refusing to accept the act of 1410, where the Great Church had declared the Arsenites to be on the right side of the conflict. This fact could have affected the memory of hieromonk Hierotheos in the milieu where his works were most in demand.

Keywords: Byzantine theology, Trinitarian theology, triadology, Eustratius of Nicaea, Nicetas “of Maroneia,” Nicephorus Blemmydes, Theodore II Laskaris, hieromonk Hierotheos, Theophanes of Nicaea, Joseph Bryennios, Arsenites, Arsenite movement, logical diagrams, *Filioque*

1. Introduction

It is now known that what we call Palamite theology was not uniform. Not all those who belonged to the “Palamite” camp in the controversies of the fourteenth century shared the same theology. It was John Meyendorff who was the first to notice this fact in relation to Theophanes of Nicaea (1315/20–1380/1).¹ And although Meyendorff’s particular observation was not quite correct,² his intuition has proven to be basically true.³

¹ *Introduction à l’étude de Grégoire Palamas* (Patristica Sorbonensia 3) (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959), 261, n. 21.

² In 1991, Meyendorff said to me, in a personal conversation, that this judgment of Theophanes was too hasty; cf. my commentary on the corrected and augmented Russian translation of his 1959 monograph, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы. Введение в изучение*, 2nd edn. corrected and supplemented, trans. Georgy Nachinkin, Igor Medvedev, and Basil Lourié (Subsidia byzantinorossica 2) (St. Petersburg: Византинороссика, 1997), 426–427 (endnote iii). *Pace* Meyendorff, the very notion of symbol applied to the Eucharist by Theophanes, who there follows Dionysius the Areopagite, did not contradict Byzantine Eucharistic realism; see esp. Ioannis D. Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea: His Life and Works* (Wiener Byzantinistische Studien 20) (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 110–112 (at 110: “Meyendorff’s conclusion that Theophanes was a Palamite only in name seems to be justified, at least to a certain extent, but not because of his theory of the Eucharist”); Andrew Louth, “The Eucharist and Hesychasm, with Special Reference to Theophanes III, Metropolitan of Nicaea,” in *The Eucharist in Theology and Philosophy. Issues of Doctrinal History in East and West from the Patristic Age to the Reformation*, eds. István Perczel, Réka Forrai, György Geréby (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 199–205; and Smilen Markov, “The Symbol as a Meeting Point of Energies and Categories – The Symbolical Status of the Eucharistic Gifts according to Theophanes of Nicaea,” *Philosophia. E-Journal for Philosophy & Culture* 1 (2012): 124–138.

³ See esp. Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, *passim*, and idem, *Θεοφάνους Νικαίας Απόδειξις ὅτι ἐδύνατο ἐξ αἰδίου γεγενῆσθαι τὰ ὄντα καὶ ἀνατροπὴ ταύτης*. *Editio princeps, εισαγωγή, κείμενο, μεταφράση, ευρετήρια* (Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi. Philosophi byzantini 10) (Athens: Ακαδημία Αθηνών, 2000), 71*–87*.

One line of demarcation running through the Palamite camp concerned the approach to logic. From a logical point of view (to use Quine's famous phrase), the adherents of Gregory Palamas (1296–1357) were divided on the question of logical consistency, that is, of the acceptability of contradictions within theology. Some authors, including Palamas himself, followed Dionysius the Areopagite literally, emphasizing contradictions in their theological statements. Eventually, in the fifteenth century, this approach would prevail.⁴ Nevertheless, at a longer distance, beginning *ca.* 1600, the situation would change, revalorizing authors initially rejected by the Hesychast mainstream.⁵ For some nominally Palamite authors had pursued the alternative ideal of achieving logical consistency. In the fourteenth century, the first among them was Theophanes of Nicaea; in the thirteenth century, his predecessor was Nicephorus Blemmydes. Indeed, in the fourteenth century, starting with Theophanes of Nicaea, this line of thought came into resonance with Latin Scholasticism, especially with the Greek translations of Thomas Aquinas;⁶ but its veritable founder was Eustratius of Nicaea (middle of the eleventh century—shortly after 1117), who himself influenced Latin scholastics through his commentaries on Aristotle.⁷

Two features of the relevant discussions of the long fourteenth century (which I would count from about the 1270s to about the 1420s) are peculiar: one is the wide use of logical computations with graphical diagrams, and the second is the increasing authority of two new authors, Pseudo-Maximus the Confessor and Pseudo-Hierotheos of Athens. I call the latter “Pseudo-” in relation to the Hierotheos quoted by Dionysius the Areopagite, because normally we use “Pseudo-” to designate the author of a work ascribed to another author known by his genuine works; the historical Hierotheos of Athens, if he existed, did not leave any written works. “Our” Hierotheos of Athens is the author of a work ascribed to the “divine Hierotheos” of Dionysius.

⁴ Cf., for the details, my previous studies, esp. “Nicephorus Blemmydes on the Holy Trinity and the Paraconsistent Notion of Numbers: A Logical Analysis of a Byzantine Approach to the *Filioque*,” *Studia Humana* 5 (2016): 40–54, and “A Logical Scheme and Paraconsistent Topological Separation in Byzantium: Inter-Trinitarian Relations according to Hieromonk Hierotheos and Joseph Bryennios,” in *Relations. Ontology and Philosophy of Religion*, eds. Daniele Bertini and Damiano Migliorini (Milan: Mimesis International, 2018), 283–299, and “What Means ‘Tri-’ in ‘Trinity’? An Eastern Patristic Approach to the ‘Quasi-Ordinals,’” *Journal of Applied Logic* 6 (2019): 1093–1107.

⁵ E.g., those who had opposed Gregory of Cyprus in the thirteenth century.

⁶ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 92: “In my view, however, the first Orthodox theologian to be heavily influenced by Aquinas, almost a century before Scholarios, was Theophanes of Nicaea.”

⁷ For argumentation, see Lourié, “Eustratius of Nicaea, a Theologian: About the Recent Publications of Alexei Barmin,” *Scrinium* 16 (2020): 344–358, with further bibliography.

The present study is dedicated to the theological problems discussed during the long fourteenth century, with a recourse to logical diagrams and to Pseudo-Maximus and Pseudo-Hierotheos, who eventually became the main authorities sanctioning this method.

2. Logical Diagrams

There is a need to provide a short introduction to the very notion of a logical diagram. The graphic illustrations that accompany logical discourses can belong to one of two types, though the boundary between the two is somewhat fuzzy. The first type of diagram encompasses various kinds of relations between terms; examples are squares of oppositions, tree diagrams (e.g., the Porphyrian tree) or triangles and other figures illustrating relations between the terms of a syllogism. Such diagrams were quite common throughout the Middle Ages (theological manuscripts not being an exception) and go back to Greek antiquity. However, logical diagrams in a narrow sense belong to the second type. They are graphic expressions of logical statements, not of relations between terms but of logical propositions.⁸

A proposition is a statement that has a truth value. In the most “classical” and simple Boolean algebra, there are only two truth values, “true” and “false;” there are other logical algebras that allow for other truth values. Regardless of the logical algebra in question, only those statements that can have a truth value are considered to be propositions. Logical diagrams are therefore visual tools for logical computation. They facilitate our ability to determine whether our reasoning is or is not in accordance with a given logic (not necessarily classical) represented by the logical diagram. In this way, logical diagrams of the second type “carry out logical reasoning independently.”⁹

⁸ The standard and useful, albeit not exhaustive modern definition of such diagrams is provided by Martin Gardner, *Logic Machines and Diagrams* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1958), 28: “A logic diagram is a two-dimensional geometric figure with spatial relations that are isomorphic with the structure of a logical statement.” He remarks that “[l]ogical diagrams stand in the same relation to logical algebras as the graphs of curves stand in relation to their algebraic formulas; they are simply other ways of symbolizing the same basic structure.” A logical statement expressed with logical symbols is an alternative to the corresponding logical diagram in the same sense as a parabola relates to its mathematical formula. The main deficiency of this Gardner’s definition is a rigid equivalency between the visual and symbolic expressions of logical statements. In the general case, they are not equivalent, since the rules of graphical inference may work where a symbolic formulation of the inference is unknown or impossible; see esp. the seminal study in the field, Sun-Joo Shin, *The Logical Status of Diagrams* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁹ Amirouche Moktefi and Shin, “A History of Logic Diagrams,” in *Handbook of the History of Logic*, vol. 11: *Logic: A History of Its Central Concepts*, eds. Dov M. Gabbay, Francis J. Pelletier, and John Woods (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2012), 611–682, at 611, cf. 613.

The logical diagram, like symbolic logical expression, presumes a logical syntax and a logical semantics. The syntax presumes a definition of well-formed diagrams (in fact, it has been left implicit in all pre-twentieth-century authors) and a set of transformation (i.e., inference) rules that must be valid (each rule must lead to only logical consequences, in accordance with the chosen logic), and must be complete (allowing it to exhaust all logical consequences); and the semantics, in turn, singles out the objects under consideration. In the diagrams, the transformation rules are expressed using drawings.

In manuscripts, logical diagrams are normally drawn, but there are times when they are simply described in words (in such cases, in the absence of the author's autograph, we do not know (1) whether a drawing was initially presented but then subsequently dropped out by a scribe or (2) the author himself considered the drawing unnecessary).¹⁰ However, the absence of a drawing does not matter, providing that the verbal depiction of the diagram is sufficiently complete.

In the modern history of logic, the inventor of the logical diagram is considered to be Leonard Euler in 1763, who had Leibniz as his predecessor (and, to a lesser extent, some other seventeenth-century logicians).¹¹ Nevertheless, Byzantium knew a history of logical diagrams of its own. This history is still to be written. However, I am very fortunate to say that, quite recently, two scholars, Linda Safran¹² and Justin Willson,¹³ independently and from different viewpoints (though both of them are art historians) produced pioneering studies in Byzantine

¹⁰ Of all the authors whose works will come under consideration below, there is only one, Eustratius of Nicaea, whose original text does not contain drawings. However, this text is available in a unique manuscript, copied *ca.* 250 years later than the original. In other cases, the scribes of certain manuscripts and/or modern editors omitted the drawings that, fortunately, are preserved in other manuscripts.

¹¹ In addition to the previously mentioned studies by Gardner, Moktefi, and Shin, see esp. Gailand W. MacQueen, "The Logic Diagram" (MA thesis, McMaster University, 1967; this unpublished MA thesis remains an important and widely cited study); Jens Lemanski, "Means or End? On the Valuation of Logic Diagrams," *Logic-Philosophical Studies. Yearbook of the St. Petersburg Logical Association* 14 (2016): 98–121; Moktefi and Lemanski, "On the Origin of Venn Diagrams," *Axiomathes* 32 (2022): 887–900.

¹² Linda Safran, "Diagramming Byzantine Orthodoxy," in *The Diagram as Paradigm: Cross-Cultural Approaches*, eds. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, David J. Roxburgh, and Linda Safran (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2022), 489–518; cf. eadem, "Byzantine Diagrams," in *The Diagram as Paradigm*, 13–32; eadem, "Beyond Books: The Diagrammatic Mode in Byzantium," in *Illuminations. Studies Presented to Lioba Theis*, eds. Galina Fingarova, Fani Gargova, and Margaret Mullet (Vienna: Phoibos Verlag, 2022), 93–104.

¹³ Justin Willson, "On the Aesthetic of Diagrams in Byzantine Art," *Speculum* 98.3 (2023): forthcoming. I am especially grateful to the author for having provided me with the still unpublished text of this article.

diagrams of different kinds, not only logical diagrams *sensu stricto*. It is difficult to express my gratitude to them.

The earliest case of the use of a logical diagram *sensu stricto* in Byzantine theology took place, to my knowledge, in a short Christological treatise by Patriarch Photius.¹⁴ Photius' diagram expressed a set of propositions related to the incarnation of the Logos. As far as I am aware, nobody after him used logical diagrams for Christology. In triadology, on the contrary, diagrams became more and more popular beginning with Eustratius of Nicaea. The Latinophrone but nominally Orthodox theologian Nicetas "of Maroneia" (so named as nephew of a bishop of Maroneia), the metropolitan of Thessaloniki, though he is now often mentioned as a pioneer in the use of diagrams in theology,¹⁵ was in fact following Eustratius in this matter as in several others.¹⁶

3. Prehistory: From Eustratius of Nicaea to Nicetas "of Maroneia"

Before approaching the explosive rise in the popularity of triadological diagrams in the 1270s, we must consider the contribution of earlier authors, especially four: Eustratius of Nicaea, Nicetas "of Maroneia," Nicephorus Blemmydes, and the emperor Theodore II Laskaris.

3.1. Eustratius of Nicaea's Numerology as Symbolic Logic

Eustratius wrote a number of works on the Trinity, all of them against the Latin *Filioque*.¹⁷ However, his own triadological doctrine was rejected as less than

¹⁴ Photius, *Amphilochia*, 72, ed. Leendert G. Westerink, *Photii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani, Epistulae et Amphilochia*, vol. 5 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1986), 103. I am grateful to the late Dmitry Afinogenov who pointed this out to me. For a discussion of this diagram (from the viewpoint of an art historian) and a photo of its drawing in a tenth-century manuscript, see Safran, "Diagramming," 496–497. There is no room to do so here, but this treatise by Photius should be studied as an attempt to deal with the paraconsistent logic implied in Byzantine anti-Iconoclast Christology; cf. Lourié, "Theodore the Studite's Christology against Its Logical Background," *Studia Humana* 8 (2019): 99–113.

¹⁵ Since Bernhard Schultze, *Maksim Grek als Theologe* (OCA 167) (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1963), 180–181. Maksim the Greek's (1470–1556) disgust toward any kind of diagrams in theology is discussed by Willson, "Aesthetic."

¹⁶ Cf. Lourié, "Eustratius of Nicaea;" Alexei Barmin, "Une source méconnue des *Dialogues* de Nicéas de Maronée," *REB* 58 (2000): 231–243. Willson, "Aesthetic" (written mostly in 2018–2019, long before its publication), was the first who noticed the dependence of Nicetas' diagram on Eustratius of Nicaea.

¹⁷ Cf. Eustratius of Nicaea, *Опровержительные слова (Λόγοι ἀντιρρητικοί)*, ed. and trans. Barmin (Moscow: Издательство Московской Патриархии Русской Православной Церкви, 2016), with the full bibliography of the theological works of Eustratius. Cf. Barmin, "The Refutation

orthodox by the consensus of Byzantine theologians.¹⁸ At that time, in 1112–1113, the most strict theological language within Byzantium was “numerological” (in modern terms, we can define this as a kind of symbolic logic). Eustratius made use of it in his most profound treatise on the topic, *Λόγος περὶ τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος* (*Sermon on the All-Holy Spirit*), written in 1112 or 1113 on the occasion of the visit to Constantinople of Pietro Grossolano (†1117, bishop of Milan deposed in 1112) and delivered before Alexios I Komnenos and his son and co-emperor John II Komnenos.¹⁹ The intended audience of this sermon was the Orthodox people represented in the persons of their emperors. Unlike a polemical treatise, this genre required a more in-depth approach.

Eustratius applied to the Trinity the theory of Pseudo-Iamblichus, wherein not only the one (monad) but also the two (dyad) were exempt from the number series, thus constituting its external beginning. Therefore, Eustratius argued, the Holy Trinity must have a structure of “one with two,” thus being exempt from the created entities corresponding to numbers. The *Filioque* would obviously break this structure, because it would be incompatible with preserving a dyad in the position following the monad.

Eustratius’ Byzantine opponents, starting with Nicholas Mouzalon²⁰ and continuing with the greatest Byzantine theologian of the period, Nicholas of Methone (ca. 1100s–1160/6) in his refutation of Proclus (1150s), rejected the very idea that, in the Holy Trinity, there exists any dyad:

Nowhere is a dyad applicable to the unique divinity.

Οὐδαμοῦ δυὰς τῇ μιᾷ θεότητι παραζεύγνυται.²¹

of Petrus Grossolanus: The *Λόγοι ἀντιρρήτικοί* by Eustratius of Nicaea,” in *Contra Latinos et Adversus Graecos: The Separation between Rome and Constantinople from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Century*, eds. Alessandra Bucossi and Anna Calia (OLA 286. Bibliothèque de Byzantion 22) (Leuven: Peeters, 2020), 199–215.

¹⁸ For details, see Lourié, “Eustratius of Nicaea.” Below I summarise Eustratius’ attitude and its criticisms from this article.

¹⁹ First published, together with a Russian translation, in Barmin, *Полемика и схизма. История греко-латинских споров IX–XII веков* [*Polemics and Schism: History of the Greek-Latin Discussions in the 9th–12th Centuries*] (Moscow: Институт философии, теологии и истории св. Фомы, 2006), 518/519–564/565 (text/translation). I follow Barmin in defining the *Sitz im Leben* of the sermon, *Полемика*, 334.

²⁰ Nicholas Mouzalon had, at the time, abdicated as archbishop of Cyprus and would later serve (in 1147) as Patriarch of Constantinople. He wrote during the same years as Eustratius.

²¹ Nicholas Mouzalon, *De processione Spiritus Sancti*, 47, ed. Theodoros N. Zisis, “Ο πατριάρχης Νικόλαος Δ’ Μουζάλων,” *Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης* 23 (1978): 233–330, at 325. For a larger context of this and the following citations, see Lourié, “Eustratius of Nicaea.”

Therefore, the Trinity/triad we are worshipping is not a multiplicity either, as it would be in the case if it were only a triad. But this triad is both triad and monad. Thus, neither is the dyad before it, nor is the monad before the dyad that is within it. But the paternal monad and the dyad that is from it show themselves simultaneously, and the whole is simultaneously monad and triad and not only monad but also triad, and not (only) triad but also monad.

Οὐκουν οὐδ' ἡ παρ' ἡμῶν σεβομένη τριάς πληθος· ἦν γὰρ ἂν μόνον τριάς, ἡ δέ ἐστι ἡ αὐτὴ καὶ μονάς· διὸ οὐδὲ δυὰς πρὸ ταύτης, οὔτε μὴν ἡ μονάς πρὸ τῆς ἐν αὐτῇ δυάδος ἀλλ' ἅμα τῇ πατρικῇ μονάδι καὶ ἡ ἐξ αὐτῆς δυὰς συνεκφαίνεται, καὶ ἅμα τὸ ὅλον μονάς ἐστι καὶ τριάς καὶ οὔτε μονάς μόνον, ὅτι καὶ τριάς, οὔτε τριάς, ὅτι καὶ μονάς.²²

These theologians had certainly not read the treatment of the same subject in Evagrius (345–399), whose Greek original was long lost. Yet they repeated its main idea: the Holy Trinity is such a singular kind of triad that it is not preceded by a dyad and is not followed by a tetrad.²³ These theologians thus excluded the Trinity from a dyad as an ordered pair. Thus, even if the Son and the Spirit could be considered as a pair of “caused” hypostases (αἰτιατά), this pair (dyad) remains unordered, without pretending to mark one hypostasis as the first and the other as the second in the pair.

In modern terms, this means that the “one” and “three” implied in the Byzantine understanding of the Holy Trinity are not natural numbers at all but, instead, inconsistent concepts (i.e., concepts implying contradiction).²⁴ The very notion of natural number implies ordered pairs, which are necessary for constructing the series of natural numbers.

Such a correspondance between theologians separated by the span of 800 years—a correspondance that reaches even to the wording—is revealing

²² Nicholas of Methone, *Refutation of Proclus' Elements of Theology*, ed. Athanasios D. Angelou (Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi, Philosophi Byzantini 1) (Athens: Academy of Sciences; Leiden: Brill, 1984), 135.

²³ Evagrius Ponticus, *Capita gnostica*, VI, 10-13, ed. Antoine Guillaumont, *Les six centuries des 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Évagre le Pontique. Édition critique de la version syriaque commune et édition d'une nouvelle version syriaque, intégrale, avec une double traduction française* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985; first published in 1958), 221, 223 (recension S₂, the genuine one; cf. rec. S₁ at 220, 222).

²⁴ For technical details, see Lourié, “What Means ‘Tri-’ in ‘Trinity?’” I deal in that article, among other things, with the famous dictum of Gregory of Nazianzus concerning the movement of the monad through the dyad up to the monad, which will become extremely popular in the discussions of the *Filioque*. For our present context, it is sufficient to take into account that, in Gregory, this dyad is a combination (unordered pair) and never a permutation (ordered pair, wherein is defined which element is the first and which is the second).

both with respect to theology and with respect to logic. In theology, it demonstrates the invariant intuition implied by different triadological theories of different epochs. In logic, it demonstrates the expressive power of symbolic logic (in its ancient “numerological” form) in explaining and channeling the core of theological ideas.

The resemblance between monads, dyads, and other numbers of antique and mediaeval philosophy, on the one hand, and quantified variables, on the other hand, is striking; and this is why, without pretending to be absolutely correct, I would call the respective method of logical thinking ‘symbolic logic.’²⁵ This notion will be useful for discerning between this symbolical method, on the one hand, and the parallel method of logical diagrams, on the other, which will be in the focus of our investigation.

3.2. Eustratius of Nicaea’s Logical Diagrams

We turn once again to Eustratius because of his secondary and additional line of argumentation in the same treatise, *Λόγος περὶ τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος*, where he has recourse to diagrams.²⁶ There are no pictures in the only preserved manuscript of the treatise (*Mosquensis gr.* 239, 14th c.), but Eustratius’ diagrams are simple and perfectly understandable from their verbal descriptions. Nevertheless, in order to make my account of Eustratius more readily intelligible, I will supply the relevant images drawn by me.

As we now know, a large part of Eustratius’ argumentation was subsequently deployed against the Greek position on the *Filioque* by Nicetas “of Maroneia.”²⁷ The diagrams featured in these portions as well. Eustratius proposed for the Trinity a triangular diagram (σχῆμα τριγωνικόν, Barmin, 556, 559; Figure 1). This diagram differs from a quite common symbolization of the Trinity with an arbitrary tripartite object in that it represents the rules of inference in reasoning on the mutual relations between the hypostases (as understood, of course, by Eustratius). The Father is the top apex, with the Son and the Spirit as the two bottom apexes. Here it is important that the bottom vertex is absent.

²⁵ To justify this, I quote the definition given by one of the fathers of modern symbolic logic, Clarence Irving Lewis (1883–1964), *A Survey of Symbolic Logic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1918), 1, which I consider to be applicable in this case: “We are concerned only with that logic which uses symbols in certain specific ways—those ways which are exhibited generally in mathematical procedures. In particular, logic to be called ‘symbolic’ must make use of symbols for the logical *relations*, and must so connect various relations that they admit of ‘transformations’ and ‘operations’, according to principles which are capable of exact statement.”

²⁶ Chapters 25–27, ed. Barmin, *Πολεμικα*, 554/555–562/563; hereafter referred to by page and line numbers within the text.

²⁷ See Barmin, “Une source méconnue;” cf. Lourié, “Eustratius of Nicaea.”

According to Eustratius, this diagram expresses that the Father is the unique αἷτιον (the cause) and the two other hypostases are the two αἷτιατά (caused ones). One can immediately see how absurd the diagram would be in reverse (Figure 2), corresponding to the case wherein both Father and Son are causes of the Spirit; it would contradict the very notion of causality: “those that are divided from each other are never, together, the causes of the same thing” (οὐδὲ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἅμα τὰ ἀντιδιαίρουμένα αἷτια, Barmin, 556, 565). Let us recall that, with Eustratius, we are still in an early period when the *Filioque* did not necessarily imply *tanquam ex uno principio* (as will be officially proclaimed by the Council of Lyon in 1274); therefore, Eustratius has to deal with two variants of the *Filioque* including that of the “two principles” (first witnessed by the *Libri Carolini*).



Figure 1. The “triangular diagram” by Eustratius



Figure 2. The diagram showing absurdity of proceeding of the Holy Spirit from two different causes



Figure 3. The diagram showing the procession of the Holy Spirit *tanquam ex uno principio* (arrows added by the author)

The second and the main variant of the *Filioque* was, for Eustratius, *tanquam ex uno principio* (ἀπὸ μιᾶς ... ἀρχῆς, Barmin, 558, 579). The corresponding diagram resulted in a straight line (κατὰ μίαν εὐθεΐαν, Barmin, 558, 595) (Figure 3).²⁸ Such a linear diagram of the Trinity will become very popular in the Latin west from about the same period (twelfth century). It will be adopted by the Byzantine Latinophrones and will be often discussed by later Byzantine anti-Latin polemicists.²⁹

Eustratius then proceeds to explain why the bottom vertex in his own diagram (Figure 1) is absent. He acknowledges that, in this respect, the expressional power of his diagram is limited. It does not make explicit the temporal bestowing of the Spirit through the Son—that the Spirit is “bestowed through the Son from the Father to the faithful” (δι’ Υἱοῦ τοῖς πιστοῖς ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς χορηγούμενον, Barmin, 560, 608). If the triangle were “closed” (Figure 4), the Trinity would be separated from the creation: “If you close the triangle in this way, you separate the Trinity and divide it from the others, which are the things produced and creatures” (Εἰ μὲν οὖν οὕτω περικλείσεις τὸ τρίγωνον, ἀφορίσεις τε τὴν τριάδα καὶ διαιρήσεις ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἃ ἐστὶ ποιήματά τε καὶ κτίσματα, Barmin, 560, 610–613). This is why you have to grasp “the completed scheme” (τὸ σχῆμα ἀπαρτιζόμενον) in an indirect way (κατ’ ἐγκαρσίαν) (Barmin, 560, 610). For Eustratius, it was important to preserve the status of his diagram as expressing the relations *in divinis*; the created world is to be put outside the drawing.

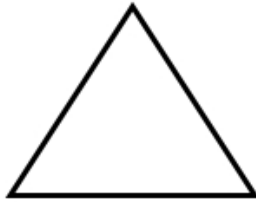


Figure 4. The “closed” triangle diagram

This argument, referring to the difference between the Creator and the creation, provided an occasion to reject the claim that the Son is a cause of the Spirit by using a combination of symbolic and diagrammatic reasoning:

²⁸ Cf.: in making the Son the cause of the Spirit as well, “you made everything as if in longitude” (ἐν ὥσπερ ἐν μήκῳ τὸ ἅπαν πεποίηκας) (Barmin, 558, 602).

²⁹ See, with reproductions of the diagrams, Willson, “Aesthetic,” and Safran, “Diagramming.” I will skip further discussion of the linear “Latin” diagram, though it is present in the majority of the Byzantine theologians discussed below.

If you call the Son a cause of the Spirit, you make the whole (triangle) (a) straight (line) and annul the space [between the vertices] and, therefore, you put the Trinity in the same rank as created things, countable together with them, even if you believe that they are different, the one being prior and the others being posterior. Because it (the Trinity) ought to be exempted as something different, being the creator of things that exist, not a thing among things that exist, but rather not-existing, as being above existence and something that is not ranked among existing things.

Εἰ δὲ τὸν Υἱὸν φῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος αἴτιον, ἀπηύθυνας τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ χωρίον ἀνέλεις· καὶ ὁμοταγῇ τοῖς ποιήμασι τὴν Τριάδα πεποιήκας· συναριθμουμένην αὐτοῖς· κἂν διαφέρειν δόξῃ κατὰ τὸ πρότερον καὶ τὸ ὕστερον· ὡς δεῖν ἕτερόν τι ἐξηρῆσθαι καὶ αὐτῆς, ὃ ποιητικὸν ὑπάρχον τῶν ὄντων, μηδὲν ἔσται τῶν ὄντων· ἀλλὰ μὴ ὄν, ὡς ὑπέρόν· καὶ τοῖς οὖσι μὴ συνταττόμενον (Barmin, 560, 614–619).³⁰

Here, Eustratius refers once again to the straight-line diagram (Figure 3) but adds that, without a separate region for the beginning of the series of numerals (which must encompass, in accordance with Pseudo-Iamblichus, the monad and the dyad), it turns out to be merely a graphical representation of the series of natural numbers (in modern terms, of quantified variables representing created things).

Finally, Eustratius approaches an objection formulated in such a manner that one can ask whether it was not previously put forward by some one of the Latins with whom Eustratius' "triangular diagram" would have been discussed:

But it is neither necessary nor reasonable to say that the triangle ought to be completed and, therefore, the Spirit is and from the Son too, in the way that, when introducing the proceeding³¹ of the Spirit from the Son as if the base (of the triangle), the space (within the triangle) would be drawn up as completed.

Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἀναγκαῖον οὐδ' εὐλογον τὸ λεγόμενον, ὡς ἐπειδὴ δέον ἐστὶν ἀπηρτίσθαι τὸ τρίγωνον, εἶναι διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα· ἵνα τῇ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ προόδῳ τοῦ Πνεύματος ὡς περ βάσις ὑπαγομένη, ἀπηρτισμένον τὸ χωρίον συστήσαιο. (Barmin, 560, 620–624).

³⁰ For ἀλλὰ μὴ ὄν, ὡς ὑπέρόν, cf. Dionysius the Areopagite, *De Divinis Nominibus*, I, 1, ed. Beate R. Suchla, *Corpus Dionysiacum I: Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita. De Divinis Nominibus* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 109.16: "[God] is the cause of being for all, and he is himself non-existent (μὴ ὄν) as being beyond every essence" (αἴτιον μὲν τοῦ εἶναι πᾶσιν, αὐτὸ δὲ μὴ ὄν ὡς πάσης οὐσίας ἐπέκεινα); cf. Dionysius the Areopagite, *De Divinis Nominibus*, I, 5, ed. Suchla, 117.4.

³¹ Throughout this article, "proceeding" translates the term *πρόοδος*, which is applicable to both the Son and the Spirit, and I reserve the term "procession" for the term *ἐκπόρευσις*, which is applied to the Spirit exclusively.

This passage is both witness to an earlier discussion of the diagram with the Latins and, from a historical perspective, a hint for Nicetas “of Maroneias” in how to deploy Eustratius’ argumentation in favor of the *Filioque*.

Eustratius answered with two objections, of which the second is a repetition of his previous argument wherein respective change in the diagram would result in a confusion between the Creator and creatures. The first of the two arguments is, however, new:

Thus, firstly, it (the triangle) will not in this way be made to stand better, namely when the proceeding (of the two hypostases) will be made straight and advances as if perpendicular, but rather the space (within it) will be removed. The oblique motion is, however, unacceptable for the proceeding of that which is primarily and properly Simplicity, because even those things that are simple among bodies never move in an oblique manner in their own natural motion, but (they move in an oblique manner) only under some force. As to circular motion, it is called complex by some, but even if it is simple, the movement of these (things that are simple among bodies) is not oblique along a straight line but rather along a circumference.

Πρῶτον μὲν γάρ, οὐ στήσεται μᾶλλον οὕτως· ἀλλ’ ἀναιρεθήσεται τὸ χωρίον· τῆς προόδου ἀπηυθυσμένης καὶ προβαινούσης ὡσπερὶ κατὰ κάθετον. Οὐ γὰρ ἐγκάρσιως ἐνδέχεται τὴν πρόοδον γίνεσθαι τῆς πρώτης καὶ κυρίως ἀπλότητος· ὅπου γε μὴ δὲ τῶν σωμάτων τὰ ἐν τούτοις ἀπλᾶ φέρεται ποτε κατ’ ἐγκάρσιον τὴν ἑαυτῶν καὶ κατὰ φύσιν φοράν· ἀλλ’ ἡ ἄρα βίβητινί. Τὸ δὲ κύκλῳ φερόμενον, σύνθετόν τινες ἔφασκαν. Εἰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ἀπλοῦν, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ τούτων κίνησις καθ’ εὐθείαν ἐγκάρσιον· ἀλλὰ δὴ κατὰ περιφέρειαν (Barmin, 560, 624–631).

This analogy, borrowed from mechanics, is indeed unusual but not as far-fetched as the modern reader might imagine. Ancient and medieval authors did not discuss purely imaginary logic (in modern terms, logic without any existential import). Therefore, ancient and medieval logic related to mechanics just as modern mathematics relates to mathematical logic. Following his brilliant predecessor in his commentaries on Aristotle, John Philoponos (ca. 490–ca. 575), Eustratius believed that logic is the same everywhere, in the created world as in the Trinity, so that what differs is only its semantics. In this conviction, Eustratius remained alone in his epoch, for even the Byzantine Latinophrones did not follow him. The majority view was that the Holy Trinity is either beyond logic or has a logic of its own. In either case, the result is the same: the rules of inference applied to the ‘proceedings’ within the Trinity were formulated *ad hoc*, that is, without *binding* parallels in the created world.

Let us return, then, to the logical argument of Eustratius. His thought is quite clear. The ‘proceedings’ within the Holy Trinity, which are a kind (or kinds) of motion (not only in the eyes of Eustratius but according to common Byzantine understanding), must be simple. There is only one kind of motion that is absolutely simple, that which is rectilinear. The oblique motion implied in the procession of the Holy Spirit through two vertices of the triangle does not meet this requirement: indeed, oblique motion is a superposition of motions that are rectilinear. After establishing this, Eustratius reaches the most interesting point. In anticipating a different triadological diagram, one which is circular, he states that circular motion is likely (according to “some”) not simple and is, therefore, unacceptable for the divine proceedings. With this step, Eustratius is on shaky ground, for circular motion was considered simple by Aristotle in his authentic and highly authoritative works, the *Physics* and *On the Heaven*, even though, in some pseudo-Aristotelean works, circular motion was considered to be composed of two rectilinear movements.³² Therefore, Eustratius takes a step backwards and acknowledges that circular motion is perhaps simple, nevertheless. However, the oblique straight line, i.e., a broken line, which must represent, in the triangle of Eustratius, the trajectory of the Spirit if his procession goes through the Son, is not along the circumference, either. With this mention of the circumference, Eustratius paved the way for future diagrams that will combine circles and triangles.

3.3. Nicetas “of Maroneia:” Τάξις (Order) and the Theological Analysis Situs

There were perhaps only two persons to whom Byzantine theology was indebted for making logical diagrams so popular, the Latinophrone Nicetas “of Maroneia” and the anti-Latin polemicist hieromonk Hierotheos. The work of the latter, however, would have been impossible without the former.

Nicetas “of Maroneia” was the archbishop of Thessaloniki already in 1132/3 and died no later than the middle of the 1150s. He wrote six dialogues on the procession of the Holy Spirit between “a Latin” and “a Greek,” where “the Latin” manages to convince “the Greek” of the procession from the Son *tanquam ex uno principio*. After the death of the author, this work became extremely famous among both Latinophrone and the anti-Latin Byzantines. However, we

³² Jean De Groot, *Aristotle’s Empiricism: Experience and Mechanics in the Fourth Century BC* (Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2014), 44–45. For the general attitude of Eustratius toward Aristotle, cf. Antony C. Lloyd, “The Aristotelianism of Eustratios of Nicaea,” in *Aristoteles – Werk und Wirkung*, vol. 2: *Kommentierung, Überlieferung, Nachleben*, ed. Jürgen Wiesner (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987), 341–351.

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know almost nothing about the circumstances when it was written.³³ In its recent critical edition, the drawing of Nicetas' triadological diagram (Figure 5a), which is preserved in two manuscripts (Figures 5b, 5c), is omitted, though it was included in the previous edition by Nicola Festa.³⁴

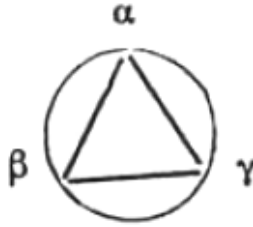


Figure 5a. The triadological diagram by Nicetas "of Maroneia." The drawing from the *Vaticanus gr.* 1115 as restored by Nicola Festa (*Bessarione* 16 (1912): 271)

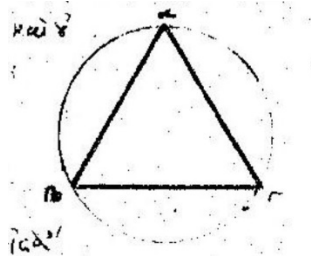


Figure 5b. The triadological diagram by Nicetas "of Maroneia" in the *Vaticanus gr.* 1115, f. 20^r (second half of the 14th c.)



Figure 5c. The triadological diagram by Nicetas "of Maroneia" in the *Laur. Plut.* 31.37, f. 49^r (first half of 14th c.)

³³ For a recent discussion of the chronology of the life and works of Nicetas, see Alessandra Bucossi's introduction to *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi sex de processione Spiritus Sancti*, eds. Bucossi and Luigi D'Amelia (CCSG 92) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), xxiii–xxxvi.

³⁴ Nicola Festa, "Niceta di Maronea e i suoi dialoghi sulla processione delle Spirito Santo," *Bessarione* 16 (1912): 80–107, 126–132, 266–286, here at 271; 17 (1913): 104–113, 295–315; 18 (1914): 55–75, 243–259; 19 (1915): 239–246. Cf. *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi* II, 21, eds. Bucossi and D'Amelia, 94.

In Nicetas' triadological diagram, it is striking that he develops an idea discussed but rejected by Eustratius of Nicaea: the procession of the Spirit through the Son via circular motion. This is why a circle appears, in his diagram, together with the triangle. The three apexes of the triangle are placed on the circumference of a circle (this composition is, however, distorted in one of the later manuscripts, Figure 5c; it is important to notice that, in the manuscript tradition, the diagrams, just like texts, were not exempt from unhelpful editing, deliberate or not). It is worth noting that the triangle became equilateral, whereas, in Eustratius, it was sufficient for it to be isosceles.

I would suppose that Nicetas made this radical choice to opt for central symmetry within a circular diagram instead of the axial symmetry of Eustratius' isosceles triangle, for "geometrical" reasons, namely, the same reasons mentioned by Eustratius: the motion of the Spirit must be simple but cannot be rectilinear; therefore, it must be circumferential. This is a kind of logical reasoning—logical computation—in terms of topology, that is, in a manner that is able to be expressed with diagrams. The entire *Dialogue II* of Nicetas is dedicated to this geometrical ("topological") logical reasoning. He discusses, in spatial terms, various concepts in their mutual relations within a mental space. This is the same mode of thinking that resulted in Leibniz's and Euler's *analysis situs*, that is, topology and graph theory.³⁵ It is often (but not always) equivalent to, and always different from, its alternative, namely the purely "algebraic" mode of thinking used in symbolic logic. In *Dialogue II*, Nicetas discusses the matters for which he has had no "algebraic" (symbolic) logical language. It is in this situation that the problem of τάξις (order) between the divine hypostases appears, in Byzantine theology, for the first time and immediately advanced to the front line of the polemic. Indeed, it is always the order—instead of the quantities which are to be dealt with by algebra—that the *analysis situs* is interested in.

The perfect central symmetry of Nicetas' diagram not only resolved some problems but also created new ones. Such a diagram would permit the *Filioque* (in the sense of *tanquam ex uno principio*) but it would also permit all other similar combinations, such as a *Spirituque* (the begetting of the Son through

³⁵ See Vincenzo De Risi, *Geometry and Monadology. Leibniz's "Analysis Situs" and Philosophy of Space* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2007); cf. also Peter Gärdenfors, *Conceptual Spaces: The Geometry of Thought* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000). For an example of earlier topological reasoning in Byzantine theology, see Lourié, "Leontius of Byzantium and His 'Theory of Graphs' against John Philoponus," in *The Ways of Byzantine Philosophy*, ed. Mikonja Knežević (Alhambra, CA: Sebastian Press, 2015), 143–170.

the Spirit)³⁶ and even the proceeding of the Father from the other two hypostases (an absurd idea that, to my knowledge, has never been put forth in the history of Christianity). Nicetas acknowledges that his diagram has limitations: “However, taking from the diagram/paradigm what is useful, leave the rest” (Σὺ γοῦν ἐκ τοῦ παραδείγματος λαβὼν ὅσον χρήσιμον, ἀπόλιπε τὸ λοιπόν).³⁷

To get rid of the problems resulting from the overwhelming symmetry, Nicetas had recourse to the notion of order (τάξις) between the hypostases. This term occurred in ancient Fathers, but, beginning with Nicetas in the middle of the twelfth century, it becomes crucial to answer a more specific question: whether this order takes place both in the temporal manifestations of God as well as *in divinis* or in the temporal manifestations only. Of course, Nicetas opted for the first alternative, as all later Latinophrones will do, whereas anti-Latin authors will become divided on this matter, a division that will create a major threat to sustainability of the Byzantine anti-Latin position(s) in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Gregory Palamas and Joseph Bryennios will limit this hypostatic order to the temporal manifestations, whereas Theophanes of Nicaea will continue Nicetas’ line of thinking.

In commenting on his diagram, Nicetas says that each of the three hypostases is “the middle/midpoint” (ἡ μεσότης, τὸ μέσον) between the two remaining ones, which are thus the *extrema* (αἱ ἀκρότητες, τὰ ἄκρα) in respect to the middle. In this way, the Trinity is perfectly symmetrical. Nevertheless, there is a τάξις (order) *in divinis* that singles out the unique sequence of the hypostases that correspond to the triune reality: the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. *Therefore*—this logical conjunction is implied but, oddly enough, never made explicit—it is uniquely the procession of the Spirit through the Son that takes place in reality, whereas all other combinations do not. I would emphasize that the need to introduce such a notion of order is, in Nicetas, quite understandable, but he himself never discusses the necessity to block the possibility of a *Spirituque* and other unacceptable ‘proceedings.’ It thus remains unclear in what sense he considered each hypostasis to be both the midpoint and an extremum, because his description of the diagram does not allow one to think that he described a purely intellectual game without any connection to the divine reality.³⁸

Nevertheless, even before he resorts to the diagram, Nicetas states that it is order (τάξις) that makes something either *extremum* or the middle: “And it is not that which is so from us or by our affirmation or negation (something)

³⁶ On this idea in the modern and mediaeval theology, see Lourié, “Blemmydes.” The perfectly mirror symmetric in respect to the *Filioque* is the Ethiopic 17th-19th-century doctrine called *Qəbat* (“Unction:” the Son is born through the unction of the Spirit).

³⁷ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 21.94-95, eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 95.

³⁸ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 21, eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 94-95.

which is the midpoint or the *extremum*; it is that which is midpoint or *extremum* of itself and according to its own order” (οὐδ’ ὅτι ὅπερ ἀφ’ ἡμῶν ἢ ἀπὸ τῆς παρ’ ἡμῶν θέσεως, ἡγουν ἀναιρέσεως, ἔχει τὸ μέσον ἢ ἄκρον εἶναι, τοῦτο καὶ καθ’ ἑαυτὸ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ τάξιν, ἡγουν κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ὕπαρξιν, «μέσον» ἢ «ἄκρον» ἐστίν).³⁹ In the light of this statement, we have to conclude that the *Filioque* is true, because only the Son is the middle “by himself” and according to Holy Trinity’s own order. However, the question remains: why this is not said explicitly? And in what sense is Nicetas’ diagram, which allows other midpoints and *extrema*, true?

I think that the text of *Dialogue II*, which comes down to us in relatively late manuscripts (the earliest is dated to the first half of the fourteenth century, that is, after the theological collisions of the late thirteenth century), is a later edited version. A hallmark of such editing is recognizable in the distinction of the midpoints and the extrema “in the proper sense of the word” (κυρίως) and not (οὐ κυρίως).⁴⁰ In my opinion, in his original text, Nicetas argued that the Father and the Spirit, while also being “the middle,” are not the middle “in the proper sense of the word,” though, in some way, they are. This conclusion is corroborated by an earlier, indeed the first, mention of the same distinction: “The midpoint is sometimes so called in the proper sense and sometimes not in the proper sense; and the *extrema* as well” (Λέγεται δὲ τὸ μέσον καὶ ποτὲ μὲν κυρίως, ποτὲ δὲ οὐ κυρίως· καὶ τὰ ἄκρα ὡσαύτως). What may be the midpoint for one thing can turn out to be an *extremum* in respect of something else; something is right from one point of view but left from another.⁴¹ This reasoning tends to the conclusion that only order (τάξις) is able to put an end to such relativism, though this conclusion is never made explicit. In the present text of Nicetas, the notion of things that are midpoints and *extrema* “not in the proper sense” is never applied to the Holy Trinity and is, therefore, completely useless for the author. Such a superfluous detail could be best explained as evidence of a not very careful editing.

Finally, the explanation provided only within the description of the diagram for what “not in the proper sense” means is absurd. The text begins with the definition of *extrema* and middle in the proper sense (a part of the text that I believe is genuine):

³⁹ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 21.7-11, eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 91.

⁴⁰ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 21.83-84, eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 94: Καὶ ἔστιν ἡ μεσότης αὕτη καὶ ἡ ἀκρότης κυρίως καὶ οὐ κυρίως.

⁴¹ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 19.397-406 (quoted lines 397-398), eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 87.

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When the distance or the movement from each (of the *extrema*) to another through the midpoint is greater than the distance between it and the midpoint, such extrema must be comprised to be so in the proper sense, because the distance between the extrema is greater than that to the midpoint.

Καθὸ μὲν γὰρ ἡ ἀφ' ἐνὸς ἐκάστου διὰ μέσου τοῦ μέσου ἐνὸς πρὸς τὸ λοιπὸν εἴτε διάστασας εἴτε κίνησις πλείστη ἐστίν, κυρίως ἀκρότητες ἂν νοηθεῖεν· τοῖς γὰρ ἄκροις πλεῖδόν ἐστίν ἡ ἀπ' ἀλλήλων διάστασις ἢ πρὸς τὸ μέσον.⁴²

So far, so good. But the text continues:

But when, in moving from the midpoint to each of the *extrema*, the nearer they (the moving objects or points) are to the *extrema*, the closer they become to each other [S omits 'closer to each other;' A omits 'to each other'], they are not *extrema* in the proper sense, because, when (some objects) progress from the midpoint to the *extrema*, the further they go forward, the more distant they become from each other.

Καθὸ δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τοῦ μέσου πρὸς ἐκάτερον τῶν ἄκρων κινούμενα, ὅσον πλησιάζει τοῖς ἄκροις, τοσοῦτον ἀλλήλων ἐγγύτερα [S omits ἀλλήλων ἐγγύτερα, A omits ἀλλήλων] γίνεται, οὐ κυρίως ἀκρότητες· τὰ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ μέσου πρὸς ἄκρα προβαίνοντα, καθόσον πρόεισιν, κατὰ τοσοῦτον καὶ ἀλλήλων διέστηκεν.⁴³

The text claims that two objects (points) which move from the same starting position in different directions could become progressively closer to each another. Unless we suppose that Nicetas described an “impossible world” (the kind of possible worlds where the laws of its own logic are broken), we have to recognize that the text is distorted. The scribes of A (14th/15th c.) and S (second half of the 14th–early 15th c.) might have had similar feelings.

I conclude that the original thought by Nicetas was the following. The circular symmetry in the Trinity is real, but it presents each of the hypostases as the middle and as an *extremum* not always in the proper sense. Properly speaking, it is only the order (τάξις) that produces the midpoint and the *extrema sensu proprio*. In the case of the Holy Trinity, this is the order “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” The original text of Nicetas must have contained an explanation of the meaning of the midpoint and the *extrema* “not in the proper sense” in the Holy Trinity, but it is precisely this explanation that the editor aimed to erase. And while he left traces behind, he succeeded in doing so.

⁴² Nicetas Thessalonicensis. *Dialogi*, II, 21.84–88, eds. Bucossi and D'Amelia, 94.

⁴³ Nicetas Thessalonicensis. *Dialogi*, II, 21.88–93, eds. Bucossi and D'Amelia, 94.

It is most natural to think that this later editor belonged to the camp of Latinophrones, because, for any in the anti-Latin camp, the *Dialogues* were *a priori* unacceptable from their main idea, even if interesting in other respects. Therefore, the anti-Latins would have been more tolerant of the text as it stood. In sharp contrast with the further success of the notions of *order* and *middle*, which were introduced into the triadological discussions by Nicetas, his notion of middle (and *extrema*) “not in the proper sense” was not accepted by anybody.

4. The Hidden Crossroad: (In)consistency

Both Eustratius of Nicaea and Nicetas “of Maroneia” agreed that the closed triangle and the circle would mean the *Filioque*. Why? — Because both of them understood, in the Holy Trinity, such notions as φύσις, ἐνέργεια, ὑπόστασις, and other notions closely related to them, in a consistent way, that is, as exempt from any contradictions. If such is the case, there is only one category whose number in the Trinity is three and not one, the hypostases, or, more precisely, the hypostatic *idiomata*, rather than the hypostases themselves. At least, this is the conclusion that follows from the standard definition of hypostasis as ‘οὐσία (essence) with the hypostatic *idiomata*’—the properties that distinguish a given hypostasis. In the Trinity, such *idiomata* are “unbegotten,” “begotten,” and “processed:” only one *idioma* for each hypostasis. The essence is unitary and therefore not eligible to be represented by three points; the same is true about the energy, power, or glory that is common to the three hypostases. Therefore, Nicetas formulated the following reasoning about the order:

But if (the order is) neither according to the nature nor according to the (hypostatic) characteristics, there is no order at all, or, if there is (an order), it is according to something else. However, if it is according to something else, what is this if not the nature and the hypostatic characteristics? **Because there is nothing besides these.** And if the order is not in them, there is no order at all.

Ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν οὔτε κατὰ τὴν φύσιν, οὔτε κατὰ τὰς ιδιότητας, οὐδὲ τάξις ὅλως ἔσται· ἢ εἰ ἔσται, κατὰ τι ἕτερον. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἔσται κατ’ ἄλλο τι, τί τοῦτο παρὰ τὴν φύσιν καὶ τὰς ὑποστατικὰς ιδιότητας; **Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἕτερον παρὰ ταῦτα.** Καὶ εἰ μὴ ἐν τούτοις ἡ τάξις, οὐδὲ τάξις ὅλως.⁴⁴

I place in bold the cornerstone of this reasoning, where the patristic notion of hypostasis is lost. Instead, Nicetas acknowledges only the common essence (nature) and the three hypostatic characteristics.

⁴⁴ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 21.149-154, eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 97.

As one would expect, Nicetas treats the proceedings of hypostases as the proceedings of their hypostatic characteristics. The Arians and other heretics were not right when they introduced an order within the divine nature. However, the order takes place not within the nature but between the hypostases, which means that it takes place between the hypostatic characteristics, “according to the hypostases, that is, the hypostatic characteristics” (κατὰ τὰς ὑποστάσεις, ἥτοι τὰς ὑποστατικὰς ιδιότητας).⁴⁵ Here we see that, speaking about the procession of the Holy Spirit through the Son, Nicetas means the procession of the *idioma* of the Spirit through the *idioma* of the Son. For him, this means the same thing.

This theology prepared the way for the Byzantine Latinophrones to adopt the Latin Scholastic doctrine of hypostases as *relationes* within the Trinity. But in order to understand the properly Byzantine Orthodox theological thought, it is more important to notice that, with Nicetas, Byzantine theologians return to the discussions of the sixth century, when Chalcedonians were forced to adopt a response to the inter-“Monophysite” polemics about the so-called “Tritheism” of John Philoponus. This discussion demonstrated that the problem has no consistent resolution, though it has an inconsistent one.

Using the above-mentioned understanding of the notion of hypostasis, Philoponus argued that the three divine hypostases are divided in the same way as three men. This view was rejected by the majority of his co-religionists (Severan “Monophysites”) but provoked, in 586, one of the greatest schisms between the “Monophysites” themselves. The Severan Patriarch of Alexandria Damian put forward a doctrine mirroring that of Philoponus: in the Holy Trinity, the hypostatic characteristic are the hypostases themselves. It is worth noting that Damian was, in some way, albeit without the *Filioque*, a predecessor of Nicetas “of Maroneia” and Latin Scholasticism.

Damian’s main opponent, the Severan Patriarch of Antioch Peter of Callinicum was only able to demonstrate, in voluminous treatises, how far his opponent deviated from the patristic path. Peter, however, was unable to propose any positive doctrine answering both Philoponus and Damian.⁴⁶ The Chalcedonian Patriarch of Alexandria Eulogius (580–607) commented on the affair and explained why none out of the three protagonists was right, not even Peter of Callinicum. Eulogius’ work is preserved only as an abstract made by Photius in

⁴⁵ *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, II, 21.154–161 (quoted lines 160–161), eds. Bucossi and D’Amelia, 97.

⁴⁶ For an introduction to this discussion, see *Peter of Callinicum. Anti-Tritheist Dossier*, eds. Rifaat Y. Ebied, Albert van Roey, and Lionel R. Wickham (OLA 10) (Leuven: Departement Oriëntalistik, 1981). I tried to provide an exhaustive bibliography in Lourié, “Damian of Alexandria,” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. 2, ed. Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 77–78.

his *Myriobiblion*, codex 230. Eulogius' main point against the three disputants is the following: all of them take literally St. Basil the Great's definition of hypostasis as "the conjunction of the essence and the characteristic/*idioma*" (συμπλοκή ούσίας καὶ ιδιώματος). Taken literally, such a definition would obviously introduce complexity into the Trinity (ὁ περιφανῶς συνεισάγειν οἶδε τὴν σύνθεσιν). However, Basil used it as an auxiliary for our mind to grasp what is impossible to grasp: "This is why he [St. Basil] made a reservation that it is impossible to grasp the proper notion of Father or Son without having articulated one's mind with an addition of the proper characteristics/*idiomata*" (Διὸ καὶ ἐπήγαγεν ὡς ἀμήχανον ἰδιάζουσαν ἔννοιαν Πατρὸς λαβεῖν ἢ Υἱοῦ, μὴ τῇ τῶν ιδιωμάτων προσθήκῃ τῆς διανοίας διαρθρουμένης);⁴⁷ the choice of the verb διαρθρώ "divide by joints, articulate; describe distinctly" points to complexity.

The core of this explanation consists in the statement that the notion of hypostasis is not simple (it is indeed complex), but its complexity must remain within our mind and be used as a directional sign to something beyond it. In other words, Eulogius stated that the very notion of hypostasis *in divinis* is inconsistent and, therefore, is to be defined through a contradiction: we define a complex notion but, at the same time, deny that we mean anything complex, though without forgetting the complexity of our notion.⁴⁸

Let us notice that Damian's triadology is also inconsistent, albeit in a way that is dual (in the logical sense⁴⁹) to the logic implied by Eulogius and the mainstream Byzantine tradition. The latter is paraconsistent (breaking the principle of non-contradiction, that is, identifying those logical objects that continue to be non-identical), whereas the former is paracomplete (breaking the principle of the excluded middle, which is equivalent to the statement that a given logical object is not identical to itself).⁵⁰ The three hypostases of the divinity in the Byzantine tradition are identical to one other without being identical, whereas the three hypostases of the divinity for Damian are different and numerable without being distinguishable, like dollars in a bank account (to

⁴⁷ Photius, *Bibliothèque*, vol. 5: 'Codices' 230–241, ed. and trans. René Henry (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1967), 44, 46.

⁴⁸ For the logic implied by Eulogius, cf. Lourie, "Theodore."

⁴⁹ More precisely, in the sense of Boolean algebra, where the truth values "true" and "false" and the connectives "and" (conjunction) and "or" (exclusive disjunction) are *dual* to each other. If we simultaneously replace, in a true formula, each value and connective with their duals, we obtain another, but similarly true formula; therefore, a formula and its dual formula are equivalent: if one of them is true, then, another is also true too.

⁵⁰ For a philosophical introduction to inconsistent logic in general, see Graham Priest, *Beyond the Limits of Thought*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002; repr. in 2006). For a more technical introduction, see Walter Carnielli and Marcelo Esteban Coniglio, *Paraconsistent Logic: Consistency, Contradiction and Negation* (New York: Springer, 2016).

use an example of Erwin Schrödinger from his 1953 popular lecture, where he thus explained in what manner quantum objects such as electrons are different from each other). I have dealt with these logical matters elsewhere⁵¹ and will return to them at the end of this article.

In order to think in the same vein as Eulogius, there is no need to read his texts, because he articulated a fundamental intuition of Byzantine theology. Therefore, those who in the late thirteenth century were able to think like Eulogius would have obtained arguments for rejecting Nicetas “of Maroneia”’s phrase “there is nothing besides these.” Beside the common essence, energy, etc., and beside the hypostatic idioms, there are, in the Trinity, the three hypostases themselves—in the sense that the notion of hypostasis is not reducible to a conjunction of the essence with an idiom.

Without Nicetas’ original limitation of applying his diagram to the hypostatic idioms, his triadological *analysis situs* became appealing for anti-Latin polemicists. Let us recall that, in the epoch of Eustratius of Nicaea and beyond, theologians such as Nicholas Mouzalon and Nicholas of Methone expressed the inconsistency of the Trinity using “numerology” (or, as I would prefer to say, symbolic logic). This was enough to block both the *Filioque* and Eustratius’ triadological model but not enough to explain a positive meaning of “through the Son” (other than the temporal bestowing). After Nicetas “of Maroneia,” the way for such an explanation was opened.

Here I omit the circumstances of the Synod of Blachernae of 1285 that proclaimed the “Greek” alternative to the *Filioque* in rather vague terms such as “eternal appearance” (ἀΐδιος ἔκφανσις) of the Spirit through the Son by their common energy.⁵² Instead, I will focus on the most “precise” theological thinkers of the epoch. Since the rediscovery (after Eustratius of Nicaea) of the theological *analysis situs* by Nicetas “of Maroneia,” it is no wonder that these theologians will explore the expressive power of logical diagrams.

⁵¹ Lourié, “What Means ‘Tri-’ in ‘Trinity’?” However, in discussing paracomplete logic in this aforementioned article, I make no reference to the Damianite conception of the Trinity.

⁵² For an outline of both the historical events and the theology, see Aristeides Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium: The Filioque Controversy in the Patriarchate of Gregory II of Cyprus (1283–1289)*, revised edn (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1996), and Jean-Claude Larchet (ed.), *La vie et l’œuvre théologique de Georges/Grégoire II de Chypre (1241–1290) patriarche de Constantinople* (Paris: Cerf, 2012). The latter contains, among other things, the first complete, although still not critical, edition of Gregory of Cyprus’ work against Bekkos, by Théophile Kislas. The history surrounding the theology of Gregory of Cyprus, its admission by some and rejection by others, is still understudied and little understood, which, in turn, makes it difficult to understand the theology of the early fourteenth century leading up to Gregory Palamas. For an outline of thirteenth-century theology, both Latinophrone and anti-Latin, cf. Georgios P. Theodoroudis, *Η εκπόρευσις του Αγίου Πνεύματος κατά τους συγγραφείς του ΙΓ’ αιώνας* (Thessaloniki: Κυρομάνος, 1990).

5. Hesitations: Nicephorus Blemmydes and Emperor Theodore Laskaris

Nicephorus Blemmydes and his disciple who became his opponent, Emperor Theodore II Laskaris, were two Byzantine theologians who faced but did not resolve the problem of inconsistency in triadology. Nevertheless, they both contributed to its further discussion in different theological camps.

5.1. Nicephorus Blemmydes: Inability to Protect the Trinity from an Ordered Pair

Nicephorus Blemmydes (1197–*ca.* 1269) was the most authoritative theologian of his time.⁵³ Almost all other thirteenth-century remarkable theologians were his disciples or heavily influenced by him, either directly (as in the case of Theodore Laskaris) or indirectly (as in the case of Gregory of Cyprus, who was a disciple of Blemmydes' disciple, George Akropolites; or hieromonk Hierotheos, who always referred to Blemmydes' works as if they conformed to his own thought; or even John Bekkos, who read his works in prison and became convinced of the *Filioque*). Nevertheless, as has become clear in the light of recent research, no Byzantine theologians, either Latinophrone or anti-Latin, followed his theological thought as it was. I must confess that my previous evaluations of Blemmydes' theology were, in this respect, inadequate, and now I consider Larchet's criticism in my address justified.⁵⁴ Blemmydes inspired many but convinced nobody. Probably, it is Larchet who put forward (elaborating on an idea by Aristeidēs Papadakis) the most balanced interpretation of his theology as "fondamentalement inachevée" and, therefore, ready for being "précisée, complétée et prolongée," as John Bekkos and Gregory of Cyprus did, each of them in his own direction.⁵⁵

Blemmydes was the first to acknowledge some meaning of "through the Son" *in divinis*, and even coined the formula later adopted (without changing its key words) though reinterpreted by Gregory of Cyprus and his Synod of 1285: "As the energy of the Son and God's Logos, the Holy Spirit eternally shines forth from him, which is the same as saying 'through him,' from the Father, whereas,

⁵³ For a general introduction to Blemmydes' life and activity, cf. *Nicephori Blemmydae Autobiographia, sive, Curriculum vitae; necnon, Epistula universalior*, ed. Joseph A. Munitiz (CCSG 13) (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984).

⁵⁴ Cf. Larchet (ed.), *La vie*, 95–112, esp. 99, 111, with further bibliography.

⁵⁵ Larchet (ed.), *La vie*, 110. For Bekkos' dependency on Blemmydes and Nicetas "of Maroneia" (but not on Latin theologians), see esp. Alexandra Riebe, *Rom in Gemeinschaft mit Konstantinopel. Patriarch Johannes XI. Bekkos als Verteidiger der Kirchenunion von Lyon (1274)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005).

as Gift, he is sent and bestowed by nature” (Ὡς μὲν οὖν ἐνέργεια τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ Λόγου, τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἀϊδίως ἐκλάμπει παρ’ αὐτοῦ, ταυτὸν δ’ εἰπεῖν δι’ αὐτοῦ, παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς· ὡς δὲ δωρεὰ καὶ ἀποστέλλεται καὶ δίδοται φυσικῶς).⁵⁶

Blemmydes tries not to acknowledge the order in the Trinity in the sense that the Spirit is posterior to the Son. Apparently, he unequivocally follows the mainstream Byzantine tradition insisting that they both share the same place in order:

The Spirit has in respect to the Son the same order and nature as the Son has in respect to the Father; the same shall have been also the order and the nature that has the Son in respect to the Spirit as the Spirit has in respect to the Father.

Τοιαύτην τάξιν καὶ φύσιν ἔχει τὸ Πνεῦμα πρὸς τὸν Υἱόν, οἷαν ὁ Υἱὸς ἔχει πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα· τοιαύτην ἂν ἔχοι καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς πρὸς τὸ Πνεῦμα καὶ τάξιν καὶ φύσιν, οἷαν αὐτὸ πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα.⁵⁷

Then, in the same treatise, he proceeds to the conclusion formulated in strictly symmetrical terms: a “division” (διαίρεσις) will be introduced into the Trinity if the Logos and the Spirit are not from the Father “through each other” (διὰ θατέρου θάτερον).⁵⁸ Nevertheless, he evidently felt insecure with such statements. Thus, he makes the awkward claim that, “we therefore know the sending of the Spirit to be the mean between the natural and the hypostatic idioms” (ἐγνώμεν ἰδοὺ τὴν τοῦ Πνεύματος ἀποστολὴν μέσσην φυσικῆς τε καὶ ὑποστατικῆς ιδιότητος).⁵⁹ Michel Stavrou is perhaps right to consider this as a mistake further on abandoned by the author.⁶⁰ But what does the author propose instead?

Until recently, all our answers were conjectural, because all previously known texts by Blemmydes were open to different interpretations. My own

⁵⁶ Blemmydes, *Letter to Jacob of Bulgaria* [dated 1256], 6.47-50, ed. and trans. Michel Stavrou, *Nicéphore Blemmydès. Œuvres théologiques*, vol. 2 (SC 558) (Paris: Cerf, 2013), 92, 94 (for the date, see 56–62).

⁵⁷ Blemmydes, *Letter to Theodore II Laskaris* [dated 1255], 4.29-32, ed. and trans. Stavrou, *Nicéphore Blemmydès. Œuvres théologiques*, vol. 1 (SC 517) (Paris: Cerf, 2007), 314 (for the date, see 282–288).

⁵⁸ Blemmydes, *Letter to Theodore II Laskaris*, 10.4-5, ed. Stavrou, vol. 1, 346.

⁵⁹ Blemmydes, *Letter to Theodore II Laskaris*, 8.23-24, ed. Stavrou, vol. 1, 334. Blemmydes here avoids acknowledging the sending of the Spirit as the second hypostatic idiom of the Son and instead invented “a mean” between the two actual kinds of idioms in order to connect the temporal sending and the Triune nature.

⁶⁰ See Stavrou’s commentary in *Nicéphore Blemmydès. Œuvres théologiques*, vol. 1, 357 (note complémentaire 8).

interpretation was in the line of Gregory of Cyprus and especially of hieromonk Hierotheos and Gregory Palamas.⁶¹ However, Michel Stavrou has found, in a unique fourteenth-century manuscript, a work of Blemmydes that (if the manuscript attribution is correct) disambiguates the corpus of Blemmydes' texts. This is a series of syllogisms (without a proper title) proving the truth of "though the Son" for the Spirit. Number four is the following: "If the Holy Spirit is not through the Son, then the Son will be through the Spirit; but this is not so; therefore, the opposite (must be true)" (Εἰ μὴ διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἔσται διὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος ὁ Υἱός· ἀλλὰ μὲν τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστι, τὸ ἕτερον ἄρα).⁶² If the attribution to Blemmydes is correct, and, especially, if Stavrou is correct in dating this work to the time after the *Letter to Jacob of Bulgaria* (1256),⁶³ we have to conclude that Blemmydes eventually succumbed to the pressure of the requirement of logical consistency, *de facto* recognizing the order wherein the Spirit is posterior to the Son.

The order wherein one out of the two, either the Son or the Spirit, is posterior to another implies a dyad within the triad, which was incompatible with mainstream Byzantine triadology, from the Cappadocian Fathers up to Nicholas of Methone. Blemmydes certainly tried to discuss the mutual relations between the Son and the Spirit *in divinis* without compromising this principle, but he failed to produce any coherent doctrine. The reason why he failed is obvious: one cannot discuss the mutual relations between the two without the possibility of considering them as an ordered pair (dyad) or, at the very least, as an orderable pair (where—at least, theoretically—if this one element is the Son, then, the another element of it must be the Spirit). If we have, however, a pair that is not only unordered but even not orderable, it means that each of its two elements is simultaneously the first and the second. This would be not a consistent way of thinking. It was, indeed, implied in the previous Byzantine triadological tradition, but, in order for it to be made explicit, we have to wait for hieromonk Hierotheos. Something had to be sacrificed, either the consistent logic or logically inconsistent theological tradition. Blemmydes was too attached to the former.

5.2. Theodore Laskaris: A Cautious Theologian

Theodore II Laskaris (1222–1258, r. 1254–1258) was heavily dependent on Nicephorus Blemmydes, but this dependence was ambivalent and sometimes in

⁶¹ Especially in Lourié, "Blemmydes."

⁶² Blemmydes, *Œuvres théologiques*, vol. 2, 224.

⁶³ Blemmydes, *Œuvres théologiques*, vol. 2, 217.

an opposition to his teacher.⁶⁴ Laskaris was closely acquainted with Blemmydes' approach to "through the Son." In 1255, he became the addressee of the first major theological treatise, quoted above, where Blemmydes developed these ideas. However, he followed Blemmydes only in acknowledging that a specific interrelation between the Son and the Spirit *in divinis* does exist.

Theodore's theological work is mostly collected by himself in the eight-book *Christian Doctrine* published not long ago by Christos Krikonis (the *editio princeps* in 1987)⁶⁵ and, to my knowledge, has still never been investigated in depth. The only place where Theodore discusses a triadological diagram seems to me distorted. This is the first of his two *Orations against the Latins* (included in *Christian Doctrine* as book VI) dated to the autumn of 1256.⁶⁶

The diagram (Figures 6a, 6b)⁶⁷ illustrates the part of the text that begins as follows: "The three are either a (geometrical) figure or not (representable as) a figure. If they are a figure, then it is a six-partite trifold" (Τὰ τρία ἢ σχῆμα ἢ ἀσχημάτιστον. Εἰ μὲν οὖν σχῆμα, ἑξαμερὲς τρίπλοκον).⁶⁸ The sentence "Εἰ μὲν οὖν σχῆμα, ἑξαμερὲς τρίπλοκον" ("If they are a figure, then it is a six-partite trifold") is never commented upon later or elsewhere in Theodore's works. The diagram itself is hardly "six-partite." We know six-partite diagrams from a later period, beginning in the late thirteenth century (Figure 9). Finally, as we will see below, in this sermon, Theodore argued *against* the possibility of using diagrams (figures) in theology. Given the scant manuscript tradition of the treatise,⁶⁹ I would conclude that the difficult sentence is a later interpolation that might have occurred rather naturally in the late thirteenth-century. Indeed, the witness of the *Vaticanus gr.* 1113 is not so distant from the lifetime of the author and, therefore, is highly valuable. But it belongs to a quite different

⁶⁴ For their mutual relations, which became quite difficult, see esp. Maria Aleksandrovna Andreeva, *Полемика Θεοδόρου II. Λασκάριος καὶ Νικηφόρος Βλεμμυδῶν* [Polemics of Theodore II Laskaris with Nicephoros Blemmydes], *Věstník Královské české společnosti nauk. Třída filosoficko-historicko-filologická* (1929): 1–36 (Prague: Královská česká společnost nauk, 1930). However, Andreeva did not go deeper into theological matters.

⁶⁵ Christos Th. Krikonis, *Θεοδώρου Β' Λασκάρεως Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, 3rd edn (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1990). The text of this third edition is identical to that of the second edition (1987–1988).

⁶⁶ Date according to Dimiter Angelov, *The Byzantine Hellene: The Life of Emperor Theodore Laskaris and Byzantium in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 342.

⁶⁷ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, ed. Krikonis, 129. Here and below the drawings from a manuscript are added by the author.

⁶⁸ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 15.148–150, ed. Krikonis, 129.

⁶⁹ It is preserved in three manuscripts, but one of them (*Vaticanus gr.* 1942, 17th c.) is a copy of another (*Vaticanus gr.* 1113, second half of 13th c.) having no independent value. The third manuscript is Oxford, Bodleian, *Barrochianus* 97 (15th c.).

epoch in respect to triadological diagrams. Theodore lived before the revolution in this field made by hieromonk Hierotheos, but his earliest manuscript is either posterior to or contemporaneous with it.

After having put aside the difficult sentence, we can proceed with a smooth text. Even before turning to the diagram, Theodore denies any value of logical reasoning in theology (arguing, in this way, for the necessity of taking at face value Gospel sayings about the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father):

The type (character) of logical argumentation is syllogistic: the syllogistic standard, demonstrating the conclusion through the middle (terms). Without an intermediary, the purpose of the syllogistic argumentation would be indemonstrable. The theological (type of argumentation) demonstrates the truth without an intermediary and simultaneously. The (argumentation) without an intermediary does not imply (logical) necessity, but what is introduced using (logical) necessity, is not theologically demonstrative.

Ὁ τῆς λογικῆς πραγματείας χαρακτήρ συλλογιστικός, ὁ συλλογιστικὸς κανὼν, διὰ μέσων δείκνυσιν τὸ συμπέρασμα, ἢ τῆς συλλογιστικῆς πραγματείας περάτωσις ἀμέσως οὐκ ἂν ποτε δείκνυσιν. Ὁ θεολογικὸς ἀμέσως καὶ ἅμα δείκνυσιν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Ὁ ἀμέσως δεικνύων οὐ βίαν φέρει· ὁ δὲ μετὰ βίας ἀγόμενος, οὐ θεολογικὸς ἀποδεικτικῶς.⁷⁰

Turning to the diagram, Theodore previously discussed whether the Trinity is not representable as a figure (ἀσχημάτιστον, lit., “without a shape, shapeless”) but, nevertheless, representable with a line (γραμμικός). There are two possibilities here: this line would be either infinite, without beginning, or issuing from a monad (ἢ ἀναρχον, ἢ ἐκ μονάδος). If the former, then there would be no Trinity at all. If the latter (“from the monad having no beginning,” ἐξ ἀνάρχου μονάδος), the two other monads must proceed from it directly and as “the equipoised monads, not the one from another, but both from the one” (αἱ ἰσόρροποι μονάδες, οὐ διὰ τῆς ἐτέρας ἐτέρα, ἀλλ’ ἐκ μιᾶς ἀμφοτέραι), because, otherwise, they would be never equal in glory (τιμῇ), and their “essential interpenetration” that is “from,” “in,” and “through” the unique beginning (ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς αἱ ἀμφοτέραι, ἐξ ἧς καὶ ἐν ἣ καὶ δι’ ἧς τὴν οὐσιώδη περιχώρησιν ἔχουσι) would be broken. He therefore concludes that any linear (shapeless) diagram is unsuitable for the Trinity.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 11.11-16, ed. Krikonis, 127. For the late Byzantine meaning of βία, see Emmanuel Kryaras, *Λέξικο της μεσαιωνικῆς ἐλληνικῆς δημώδους γραμματείας, 1100–1669*, vol. 4 (Thessaloniki: Κέντρο Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσας, 1975), 105–106.

⁷¹ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 15.151-166, ed. Krikonis, 129.

DIAGRAM REASONING AND PARAconsistent THINKING:
HIEROMONK HIEROTHEOS, HIS ANCESTRY, AND LEGACY

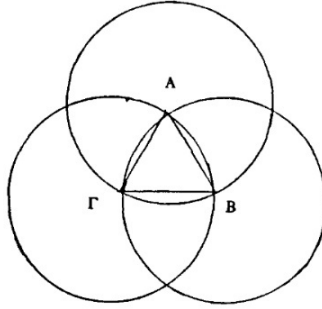


Figure 6a. The triadological diagram by Theodore II Laskaris restored by Christos Krikonis (*Θεοδώρου Β' Λασκάρεως Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, 129)



Figure 6b. The triadological diagram by Theodore II Laskaris in the *Barroccianus* 97, f. 63^v (15th c.)

Theodore then proceeds to a discussion of the “closed” triangle that we know from Nicetas “of Maroneia” (here never mentioned by name). Theodore refers to “the (figure formed with) the one-dimensional line (lit., a line ‘having no breadth’) α, β, γ” (ἀπλατὲς γραμμικὸν α, β, γ) on the diagram, that is, to the “closed” triangle without its interior part. As a scheme of the inter-Trinitarian proceedings, this diagram is also unacceptable, because the longer trajectory would render the respective monad exhausted (ἐξίτηλον) in power, which would mean the two monads are not ἰσοδύναμα (“equal in power”).⁷² This argument is, more or less, in the same line as Eustratius of Nicaea’s argument against the “closed” triangle. What is unlike Eustratius is the conclusion that follows immediately after this: “Therefore, God is neither a figure nor an unreasonable linear setting” (Οὐ τοίνυν σχῆμα Θεός, οὐ γραμμική τε θέσις παράλογος).⁷³ Theodore repeats this

⁷² Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 16.167-170, ed. Krikonis, 129.

⁷³ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 16.170-171, ed. Krikonis, 129.

denial of the applicability of σχῆμα and σχηματισμός later in the same treatise,⁷⁴ even exclaiming in the concluding passage: “How could I, while making my reason stretch forth toward that blessed nature, configure the entirely ineffable essence in the terms and figures of those who have expressed their opinions?” (Πῶς ἂν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ μακαρίᾳ φύσει πείσω τείνεσθαί μου τὸν λογισμὸν καὶ τὴν ἄρρητον πάντῃ οὐσίαν λέξεσι καὶ σχηματισμοῖς σχηματίσω γνωμοδοτῶν;).⁷⁵ I think Theodore called here γνωμοδοῦναι “those who have expressed their opinions” the theologians having no divine inspiration.

In this oration, Theodore says nothing about the entire diagram with its three circles. Is it, nevertheless, applicable to the Trinity? The answer is to be found in his earlier treatise, “That the One is Three” (ὅτι τὸ ἓν ἔστι τρία), composed without a direct polemical purpose and included in *Christian Doctrine* as book III. Its precise date is unknown; it is likely earlier than book VI quoted above, but it was written, as stated in its title, when Theodore was already emperor.⁷⁶

Theodore proves that “the one is three” illustrating his words with a diagram (Figures 7a, 7b),⁷⁷ though without involving this diagram directly in his reasoning. The three identical circles with their centers in the three apexes of an equilateral triangle do not refer to the divine hypostases but refer to certain notions. Theodore argues that in τί—“this” or “this something,” the main Aristotelean term for either an individual, a particular, or both⁷⁸—is implied ἓν (“one”), whereas in ἔστι (“is”) and in ζῶν (“living [being]”) is implied “this.” Therefore, the term “this” is prior in respect to “is” and “living (being)” (and this conclusion is in no way illustrated by the diagram), but “one” is present (implied) in all three of the other terms. It is only the latter conclusion that is illustrated by the diagram.

⁷⁴ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 26.257, 258, VI, 37.371, ed. Krikonis, 132, 136.

⁷⁵ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, VI, 37.366-368, ed. Krikonis, 136.

⁷⁶ Theodore II Laskaris, *Περὶ χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, III, title, lines 1-3, ed. Krikonis, 95.

⁷⁷ This diagram is repeated three times throughout the text for convenience of the reader, saving him from having to turn the pages back. The words within the circles in the *Barrochianus* are sometimes varying, which is not noticed in the apparatus by Krikonis (the reading ζῶν “animal” instead of ζῶν “living being” in Figure 7b is not noticed either).

⁷⁸ Cf. Gabriele Galluzzo, *The Medieval Reception of Book Zeta of Aristotle’s Metaphysics*, vol. 1: *Aristotle’s Ontology and the Middle Ages: The Tradition of Met., Book Zeta*, vol. 2: *Pauli Veneti Expositio in duodecim libros Metaphisice Aristotelis, ‘Liber VII’* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), vol. 1, 128–129. The understanding of the Aristotelean τί by Theodore is a topic worth of a separate study, which is beyond my present interests.

DIAGRAM REASONING AND PARAconsistent THINKING:
HIEROMONK HIEROTHEOS, HIS ANCESTRY, AND LEGACY

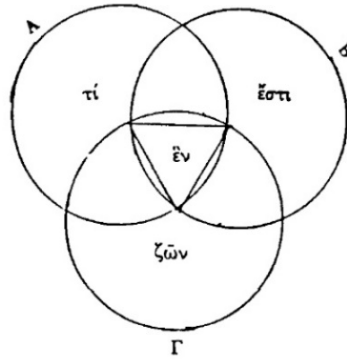


Figure 7a. The logical diagram by Theodore II Laskaris restored by Christos Krikonis (*Θεοδώρου Β' Λασκάρεως Περί χριστιανικῆς θεολογίας λόγοι*, 97, 98); the diagram is repeated three times

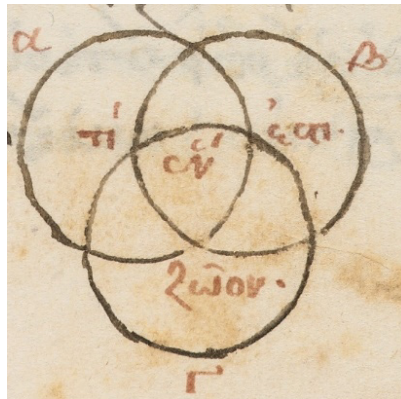


Figure 7b. The logical diagram by Theodore II Laskaris in the *Barrochianus gr.* 97, f. 17^r (15th c.)

This diagram is interesting to us for two reasons. The first is that Theodore, while rejecting logical diagrams as a visual mode of reasoning in theology, uses them in logic. The second is that, despite being used as a simple illustration, this diagram contains something more than Theodore extracted from it, being a quite recognizable variant of the Venn diagram⁷⁹ for the conjunction of three conjuncts (Figure 8).

⁷⁹ John Venn (1834–1923) first introduced his diagrams in a journal article in 1880 that was republished as chapter 5 of *Symbolic Logic* (London: Macmillan, 1881), 100–125.

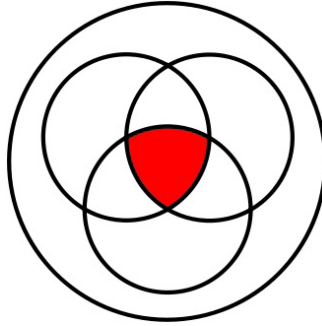


Figure 8. Venn diagram for conjunction of three conjuncts

We must leave to other scholars the interesting study of logical diagrams in the works of Theodore Laskaris (something he uses in his secular works, as well, in this way following Blemmydes). What we can take away from the above is that Laskaris knew only the “Latinophrone” usage of diagrams in Trinitarian theology. Despite his own good (or, at least, certainly not bad) acquaintance with the diagrams in logic, Theodore failed to propose an adequate diagram for the Byzantine understanding of the Trinity. To my mind, the reason for this is similar to that which caused the failure of Nicephorus Blemmydes’ project: there was no visual language for inconsistency. It will be invented, together with a new symbolic language, by hieromonk Hierotheos.

6. Hieromonk Hierotheos: Preliminaries

Before approaching Hierotheos’ theology, I will start with some observations about his life and works.⁸⁰ But even before this, I would like to recall that, in the person of Hierotheos, we meet a late Byzantine peer of Dionysius the Areopagite: an extremely authoritative figure, albeit not under his own name but under the name of the alleged teacher of the Areopagite, St. Hierotheos, the bishop of Athens.

⁸⁰ For a general discussion of Hierotheos’ biography and works, see two seminal studies that superseded earlier publications: Gabriel Patacsi, “Le hiéromoine Hiérothée, théologien du Saint-Esprit,” *Κληρονομία* 13 (1981): 299–330, and Nicholas Ch. Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος (ΙΓ΄ αἰ.) καὶ τὸ ἀνέκδοτο συγγραφικὸ ἔργο του. Κριτική ἔκδοση*, 3rd edn (Athens: Κυριακίδη, 2009). In this latter monograph, first published in 2003, Ioannidis provided the *editio princeps* of all texts preserved under the name of hieromonk Hierotheos, omitting the greatest diagram (Figure 9). The editor perhaps considered that it had been attributed to the bishop of Athens even in the manuscripts, where the name of ‘Hierotheos’ was stated by itself. Hierotheos’ texts will be quoted from this edition using page and line numbers only; the lines are numbered throughout the given work, not by page.

It is under this name that Hierotheos' main theological texts and diagrams are presented in manuscripts (his primary theological treatises, written in his own name, being either lost or preserved in unique or very rare manuscripts). What would become crucial for his theological legacy is that his writings were also quoted as belonging to the ancient Hierotheos by Joseph Bryennios (ca. 1350–1431/8), whose disciples were Mark Eugenikos⁸¹ (1394/5–1446)⁸² and, albeit mostly in absentia, Gennadios Scholarios (ca. 1400–ca. 1472).⁸³ Blemmydes completed the “canonization” of Hierotheos' theology as highly authoritative and purely patristic.

In what follows, I will pass over a discussion of the contribution of Joseph Bryennios in the definitive acknowledgement of Hierotheos' theology by the Byzantine tradition.⁸⁴ But I will nonetheless refer to the works of Bryennios as a medium of transmission for the writings of Hierotheos.

⁸¹ To understand the reception of this Hierotheos–Bryennios line in Mark of Ephesus, see esp. his discussion of the “order” in the Trinity with John of Montenero at the Council of Florence: Joseph Gill, *Quae supersunt auctorum graecorum Concilii Florentini*, II: *Res Florentiae gestae* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1953), 340–346. This discussion is, most often, represented by the modern historians as purely source-critical, thus ignoring the core of the problem discussed, namely, the (non)existence of a natural order between the hypostases; cf., e.g., Nicholas Conostas, “Mark Eugenikos,” in *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, vol. 2: (*XIII^e–XIX^e s.*), eds. Carmelo Giuseppe Conticello and Vassa Conticello (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 411–475, at 418; nevertheless, Conostas provides a good introduction to this aspect of Mark's triadological thinking (448–449), although he does not pay due attention to its role as a core element of the whole structure of Byzantine triadology. For Mark Eugenikos as a Palamite theologian, see also Lourié, “L'attitude de S. Marc d'Éphèse aux débats sur la procession du Saint-Esprit à Florence. Ses fondements dans la théologie post-palamite,” *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 21 (1989): 317–333.

⁸² The dates according to Evelina Mineva, *To υμολογιακό έργο του Μάρκου Ευγενικού* (Athens: Κανάκη, 2004), 38.

⁸³ Cf. Marie-Hélène Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400–vers 1472). Un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'Empire Byzantin* (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 2008). Scholarios was fortunate to have some time to learn from Bryennios personally, and, after Bryennios' death, according to Scholarios' own testimony, he continued to learn from his writings; cf. Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios*, 15 and 297.

⁸⁴ For the theology of Bryennios and his appropriation of Hierotheos' works, see esp. Patacsi, “Joseph Bryennios et les discussions sur un concile d'union (1414–1431),” *Κληρονομία* 5 (1973): 73–96, where he recognised Hierotheos' diagrams and their explanations in the works of Bryennios; Ioannidis, *Ο Ιωσήφ Βρυέννιος. Βίος – Έργο – Διδασκαλία* (Athens, 1985); Lourié, “A Logical Scheme,” Michael Platis, *An Annotated Critical Edition of Joseph Bryennios' Third Dialogue on the Procession of the Holy Spirit with a Brief Theological and Historical Commentary* (PhD diss., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2020).

6.1. *Hierotheos' Diagram and Its Nine-circle Distortion*

Hierotheos' biography is recoverable almost exclusively from his own works, three in particular: the *Sermon against the Calumniators* (thereafter *SC*), the *Sermon Addressing Michael VIII* (thereafter *SM*), and the *Sermon against the Latins* (thereafter *SL*). Among the most established facts of Hierotheos' life, we may consider those on which the Hierotheos' two primary biographers, Gabriel Patacsi and Nicholas Ioannidis, agree. These I will discuss without specific references to the biographers. Nevertheless, even in such facts, the degree of conjecture is sometimes rather high.

The earliest among the three major works published by Ioannidis, *SC*, is already an apology for the use of diagrams and for Hierotheos' triadological teaching. Hierotheos here insists that his theology has never deviated from patristic tradition but merely provides additional explanations for the claims misunderstood by some of his co-religionists. This work is dated by the author himself to 1277. From its very purpose, the apology implies that there were other works that preceded it.

Among the earlier works, there was certainly a large diagram of the Holy Trinity containing six circles and six "syllogisms" (Figure 9), because *SC* defends a certain diagram that, judging from its description, was very similar or identical to this, and especially because there was a separate work entitled *Διαγράμμα Ἱεροθέου*. Ioannidis treats it as an attachment to Hierotheos' *Ἀπόδειξις* ("Proof") and not as a separate work,⁸⁵ though he did not include it in his edition. Indeed, the *Ἀπόδειξις* is a relatively short explanation of this diagram, different, however, from the diagram's "key" (the series of six "syllogisms" placed near the diagram).⁸⁶ In the two extant manuscripts of the *Ἀπόδειξις*, it is preceded by the diagram and its "key."⁸⁷

Most likely, Ioannidis is correct in identifying the work referred to by Leo Allatius as *Διάγραμμα περὶ τῆς ἐκπορεύσεως τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος* ("Diagram Describing the Procession of the Holy Spirit")⁸⁸ as this diagram joined with its *Ἀπόδειξις*. Allatius described it as *exigua, & confusa sine ordine moles: consumpsi tamen horam in eo evolvendo*⁸⁹ ("small, and a heap without order; I nevertheless

⁸⁵ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱεροθεός*, 45.

⁸⁶ See a photo of the relevant spread of *Marcianus gr. Z. 83*, ff. 211^v–212^r in Safran, "Diagramming," 509 (Fig. 17.16), and Willson, "Aesthetic," Figs. 12 and 13.

⁸⁷ Safran, "Diagramming," 507, notices that in the second manuscript of the *Ἀπόδειξις* (out of two), namely the *Barberinus gr. 291* (15th c.), the text is preceded by "a near blank folio (118^v)" having only a label *Ἱεροθέου διάγραμμα*.

⁸⁸ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱεροθεός*, 45, n. 91.

⁸⁹ Leo Allatius, *De Ecclesiae Occidentalis atque Orientalis perpetua consensione, libri tres* (Cologne: Apud Jodocum Kalcovium, 1648), col. 871.

spent an hour in unravelling it"). Allatius would have rather read a treatise of several pages than a one- or two-page diagram with its "key."

Ioannidis thinks that the *Ἀπόδειξις* was written in the final years of the author (which, according to Ioannidis, are 1281–1282), but, as he himself acknowledges, the text has no chronological marks. Ioannidis' only grounding is stylistic, specifically the work's developed theological explanations.⁹⁰ I would not provide any dating on such ground. Nevertheless, there are reasons to consider the diagram (with its "key") as a separate work written perhaps earlier than its "Proof."

It is without the "Proof" that the diagram was attributed to Hierotheos of Athens in the late (18th c.) manuscript Athos, *Laura I* 54, f. 175r (a single page): Τὸ περὶ τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος θεώρημα τοῦ ἁγίου Ἱεροθέου ἐπισκόπου Ἀθηνῶν⁹¹ ("The Commentary on the Holy Trinity by St. Hierotheos, bishop of Athens"). A separate manuscript tradition would corroborate the conclusion that the diagram with its "key" appeared as a self-standing work. However, I am not in a position to make a decisive conclusion.

The two earliest drawings of the diagram in question are those by Makarios Chrysokephalos (ca. 1300–1382) (then a young man, Michael, but later the Palamite metropolitan of Philadelphia)⁹² in a 1327 manuscript; and by Joseph Bryennios in an autograph manuscript of his unpublished anti-Latin work, the *Antirrhetical Sermon against Ten Chapters* written ca. 1406.⁹³ Nevertheless, it is striking that the "key" and the *Ἀπόδειξις* contain six "syllogisms" explaining only six circles in the diagram, whereas the drawings of both Chrysokephalos and Bryennios (which are identical) contain nine circles—three for each of the hypostases—though this composition deforms the round shape of the whole diagram into "a flattened diamond" (as Willson describes it). In fact, it is easy to notice that both the "key" and the *Ἀπόδειξις* correspond to the six-circle diagram that is preserved in another of Hierotheos' work attributed to Hierotheos of

⁹⁰ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 45.

⁹¹ Spyridon Lavriotis and Sophronios Eustratiades, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts in the Library of the Laura on Mount Athos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 187. This is pointed out by Patacsi, "Le hiéromoine Hiérothée," 327, n. 113.

⁹² See *supra*, n. 86, for the manuscript and two publications of the photos of the relevant pages. Cf. Gaetano Passarelli, *Macario Crisocefalo (1300–1382). L'omelia sulla festa dell'Ortodossia e la basilica di S. Giovanni di Filadelfia* (OCA 210) (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1980).

⁹³ Manuscript Sofia, Centre "Ivan Dujčev," *D. gr.* 268, f. 155r; photo of this page in Willson, "Aesthetic," Fig. 14. On the manuscript and this work of Bryennios (reproduced by the author within two later works which have been published), see Hélène Bazini, "Une première édition des oeuvres de Joseph Bryennios: les *Traitées adressés aux Crétois*," *REB* 62 (2004): 83–132, esp. 91–93 and 102–104.

Athens (Figure 9). The nine-circle diagram is a distortion of Hierotheos' original six-circle diagram, even though it is dated to a relatively early period (*terminus ante quem* 1327). Apparently, this distortion has no logical explanation.

6.2. Chronology of Hierotheos' Life

The latest dates of Hierotheos' life are to be extracted from *SL*, which is a work composed as detailed minutes of a discussion between Hierotheos and his two Latinophrone opponents (which, judging from its contents, must have taken place under the Union of Lyon and before the excommunication of Michael VIII by the Pope in 1281) followed by an account of their attempt to kill him at the hands of a pirate. However, there is no obvious way to do this. At opposite extremes are the attitudes of Patacsi, on the one hand, who takes *SL* at face value, and, on the other hand, of the anonymous scribe of the *Laur. Plut.* VII 19 (14th c.),⁹⁴ who states, in a *scholion* preceding the text, that the whole story is written as a pious fiction (προσωποποιία γέγραπται). Ioannidis considers the latter approach exaggerated: at the very least, the persons mentioned must, according to him, be historical.⁹⁵

SL mentions, in a way that could be useful for its dating, four patriarchs that were opposed to Emperor Michael VIII. The Patriarch of Constantinople Arsenius (†1273) is said to have reposed, whereas the Patriarch of Alexandria Nicholas II (†1276) is said to be alive, though exiled for his support of Arsenius.⁹⁶ For Ioannidis, these two dates limit the chronological interval for dating *SL* (though of course it must be posterior to the Union of Lyon proclaimed in 1274).⁹⁷ This conclusion of Ioannidis is corroborated by data that he did not take into account. In *SL*, Hierotheos proceeds to mention the patriarchs of the two remaining sees, Antioch and Jerusalem, who were opposed to Michael VIII, though without calling them by names; the scribe, however, has added their names in the margin. These are Euthymius I of Antioch (†1273) and Gregory I of Jerusalem, though the correct dates of the patriarchate of the latter were unknown to Ioannidis. Ioannidis knew only an erroneous date for the death of Patriarch Gregory (1298) but concluded, on the basis of *SL*, that his patriarchate must have begun before 1276.⁹⁸ Ioannidis is correct in his guess: the patriarchate of Gregory

⁹⁴ *SL* is also preserved in a manuscript of the 17th c.

⁹⁵ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 38.

⁹⁶ Their successors are also mentioned as having had surrendered their thrones to Michael VIII (evidently, in the affair of Arsenius) but, nevertheless, having rejected the Union of Lyon; the gloss adds their names, Joseph of Constantinople (1266–1283) and Athanasius II of Alexandria (1276–1316); Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 215.

⁹⁷ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 39.

⁹⁸ For the text of Hierotheos, the glosses, and commentary, see Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 215.

began before 1275 and continued until his death, which occurred sometime after August 1281 but certainly before April 1291.⁹⁹ Ioannidis is thus certainly correct in placing the dialogue between Hierotheos and his two adversaries in the historical context of about 1276. Does this mean that *SL* itself is to be dated to this interval? If it is a fictional account, even if based on memories of true facts, this is not necessarily the case. There is another difficulty in the text that would be hardly compatible with such dating.

Hierotheos recalled a failed attempt at reunion with the “Italians” that was made 132 years earlier by the people and the emperors (notice the plural!): “Ἐτεσι τοῦτο πρὸς τοῖς δυσὶν ἑκατὸν καὶ τριάκοντα πράττοντες λαῶν τε καὶ βασιλέων προσκυνούντων τὸ πρᾶγμα¹⁰⁰ (“When, 132 years ago, the people and the emperors were respectfully working on the issue”). Counting back from 1275/6, we reach 1143/4 as the date of the event. This date could approximately correspond to the activity of Nicetas “of Maroneia,” the exact circumstances of which remain unknown. However, there certainly did not occur anything especially splendid and official in this time. What is more important, there were, at this time, no “emperors” (in the plural) in Byzantium but only a single emperor. John II Komnenos had appointed his younger son Manuel as his successor (thus putting aside his elder brother Isaac) immediately before his death (April 8, 1143), without a period when Manuel would have been a co-emperor. Under John II, the period of two co-emperors lasted from 1119 to 1142, up to the untimely death of the emperor’s eldest son Alexios the Younger (1106–1142).

I cannot exclude with a certitude that Hierotheos is not referring to an event unknown to us that took place around 1142, or shortly earlier, perhaps with the participation of Nicetas “of Maroneia.” However, without overestimating our present knowledge of the epoch, I consider this highly unlikely. Instead, I would look to the next period of two co-emperors that began in 1171, when Manuel crowned his one-year-old son, the future Alexios II Komnenos (1169–1183, *r.* 1180–1183), and when there took place, in 1172, a series of important discussions between the emperor and two cardinals whose minutes are preserved in the *Sacred Arsenal* by Andronikos Kamateros.¹⁰¹ This supposition is corroborated by a known chronological error by Bessarion of Nicaea, who dates

⁹⁹ Venance Grumel, “La chronologie des patriarches grecs de Jérusalem au XIII^e siècle,” *REB* 20 (1962): 197–201, at 199–200. In the reference to the publication of his main source, Grumel confused the title of the multi-volume publication by Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, writing *Ἀνάλεκτα ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς βιβλιοθήκης* (197, n. 1) instead of *Ἀνάλεκτα ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς σταχυολογίας*.

¹⁰⁰ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 214; *SL*, lines 1498–1499; cf. the discussion of this locus by Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 39–40, who was unable to identify the event.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Andronikos Kamateros, *Sacrum Armamentarium. Pars prima*, ed. Bucossi (CCSG 75) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), xxiv–xxvi.

the arrival of Hugo Eterianus in Constantinople to 1141–1143, whereas the correct date is no earlier than 1166.¹⁰² In the case of *SL*, a similar shift of roughly 30 years could have occurred. However, it is possible to explain this in two different ways: either Hierotheos committed an error similar to that of Bessarion (in which case the correct number of years would be about 102 instead of 132) or he was correct, and, therefore, the events of 1172 took place about 132 years earlier than Hierotheos wrote *SL*. In the former case, the date of *SL* remains about 1276. In the latter, the date of *SL* must be postponed to *ca.* 1304.¹⁰³

6.3. Hierotheos' Church(es): Transition to the Arsenites

It is a received opinion that Hierotheos never joined either the Uniates or the Arsenites. I think that the former is certain, whereas the latter is not. Hierotheos' address to Michael VIII (*SM*) that is dated, most likely, to the period after the excommunication of Michael by the Pope (1281–1282) evidently aimed at persuading the emperor to restore the Orthodox Church as the state church. However, those modern biographers who do not believe the calumnies about Hierotheos' apostasy to the Union are simply unable to explain why, when addressing the emperor who was excommunicated by both the Latin and Greek sides, Hierotheos calls himself a schismatic who is out the communion with his mother Church.¹⁰⁴ I think, in the historical context, that only one explanation is both possible and evident: Hierotheos had already left the part of the Greek church to which he formerly belonged—then divided between the followers of the late Patriarch Arsenius and the followers of Patriarch Joseph—and planned to join the opposite party with the hope of inspiring the emperor, by his personal example, to do the same.

¹⁰² Cf. Bucossi's introduction to *Nicetas Thessalonicensis. Dialogi*, xxvi; cf. Jean Darrouzès, "Les documents byzantins du XII^e siècle sur la primauté romaine," *REB* 23 (1965): 42–88.

¹⁰³ It is interesting to ask further whether such synchronism with the representative Constantinopolitan Synod of 1304 is accidental, when the emperor Andronikos II made the last of his failed attempts to heal the schism with the Arsenites. His next attempt, in 1310, was successful; the Arsenites forced the state Church to capitulate (almost) unconditionally. For a general review of the sources and events, see Paris Gounaridis, *Τὸ κίνημα τῶν Ἀρσενιατῶν (1261–1310). Ἱδεολογικὲς διαμάχες τὴν ἐποχὴν τῶν πρώτων Παλαιολόγων* (Athens: Δόμος, 1999).

¹⁰⁴ *SM*; Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 133–134, esp. 133.19–26: Τοίνυν κἀγώ, <...> τὰ τῶν σχισμάτων καὶ μερισμῶν, εἴπερ καὶ σχίζων καὶ μερίζων εἰμί, κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἀποσκευασάμενος ἄρρεπῶς ἐκ ψυχῆς <...>, τῇ μητρὶ μου πάλιν τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ προσέρχομαι, εἴπερ ἐξ αὐτῆς ὅλως καὶ ἀπεσχοίνισμαι, καὶ ἐνοῦμαι ταύτῃ τῷ Πνεύματι <...> ("Thus, I too <...>, having indiscriminately rejected from my soul, to the best of my ability, what (belongs) to schisms and divisions, even though I am (myself) making schisms and divisions <...>, make approach again to my mother the Church, even though I entirely fenced off from it, and unify myself with her by the Spirit <...>"). The choice of words is appropriate for the repentance of a schismatic but not of a heretic.

There is clear testimony that Hierotheos was then passing from one of the two Greek Orthodox Churches to the other, but in which direction? The balance of likelihoods leans toward the Arsenites as his destination. There are, at least, four arguments for this.

1. The anti-unionist emperor's relatives, especially his sister Maria-Martha Palaeologina (1214/6–after 1267), and her sons who belonged to the highest level of aristocracy, were Arsenites. Therefore, the Arsenites would have been closer to the emperor in a very “familiar” sense of the word. It would have been reasonable to take this into account for the hypothetical situation of the emperor's return to Orthodoxy.

2. Hierotheos' references to Nicephorus Blemmydes as the only mentioned authority from the recent past and a saint¹⁰⁵ (I elaborate on this point below, in this section).

3. In *SL*, Patriarch Arsenius (“the great Arsenius”) is explicitly called “confessor,” “the advocate of the truth (ὁ τῆς ἀληθείας συνήγορος),” and “martyr.”¹⁰⁶ Such epithets go beyond mere sympathy.

4. The strange post-mortem destiny of the works of Hierotheos that can best be explained by a *damnatio memoriae* that only partially succeeded. Such a *damnatio* would have been rather natural in the fourteenth-century Hesychast milieu which was heavily influenced by such staunch anti-Arsenites as the Patriarch of Constantinople Athanasius I (1230–1310, patriarch in 1289–1293, 1303–1309)¹⁰⁷ and Theoleptos of Philadelphia (1250–1325).¹⁰⁸ This impression is corroborated by the manuscript tradition. The fourteenth-century scribe of *Laur. Plut.* VII 19 containing *SM* was an Arsenite. More correctly, he simply was not an anti-Arsenite, because the veneration of Patriarch Arsenius as a saint was, already in 1410, introduced to the Great Church in a quite literal sense, when his

¹⁰⁵ The quotations from Blemmydes are introduced as those of τις σοφός τε καὶ ἅγιος τὴν νικηφόρον κλῆσιν αὐχῶν “a certain man wise and saint boasting of the appellation of one bringing victory” and ὁ αὐτὸς σοφός τε καὶ ἅγιος “the same wise and holy man;” *SM*, lines 210–211 and 227; Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 139–140.

¹⁰⁶ *SL*, lines 1510–1513; Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 214–215.

¹⁰⁷ See John L. Boojamra, *Church Reform in the Late Byzantine Empire: A Study for the Patriarchate of Athanasios of Constantinople* (Ἀνάλεκτα Βλατάδων 35) (Thessaloniki: Πατριαρχικὸν Ἰδρυμα Πατερικῶν Μελετῶν, 1982).

¹⁰⁸ See Alexander Przhegorlinsky, *Византийская Церковь на рубеже XIII–XIV вв. Деятельность и наследие св. Феолупта, митрополита Филадельфийского* [The Byzantine Church at the Turn of the 13th–14th Centuries. The Activities and Heritage of St. Theoleptos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia] (St. Petersburg: Алетея, 2011).

relics were deposited in Hagia Sophia; from 1410, it was the irreconcilable anti-Arsenites who became dissidents.¹⁰⁹ An anti-Arsenite bias in the Hesychast milieu would serve as an explanation for the rarity of manuscripts in which Hierotheos' works are preserved under his own name.

Now, a note on Hierotheos' references to Blemmydes (all of them in *SM*) is in order. We will see that, in their theology, there was a gap between Blemmydes and Hierotheos, though, of course, the very attempt to take "through the Son" in an eternal sense must have been close to the heart of Hierotheos. Hierotheos' address to the emperor, however, was a work in which one had to limit oneself to established authorities. Therefore, it is symptomatic that, as the only contemporary authority, Hierotheos chose Blemmydes. Blemmydes was certainly not a partisan of Patriarch Joseph.

If we are to believe Pachymeres (1242–*ca.* 1310), Blemmydes considered himself to be in communion with both sides. Pachymeres described Patriarch Joseph's visit to Blemmydes in 1268 (or 1267), when Joseph undertook a tour in which he sought to draw to himself the sympathizers of Arsenius. Blemmydes said to Joseph that, for him, Joseph and Arsenius were the same (lit., "one") (ἐν ἐλογίζετο καὶ Ἀρσένιον εἶναι καὶ Ἰωσήφ), because—Pachymeres provides an interpretation of his own—Blemmydes attained so high a spiritual state that he never looked at the mere facts (οὐ γυμνοῖς αὐτοῖς προσέχων τοῖς γιγνομένοις) of earthly events but was interested only in the immovable divine eternity. Therefore, he was not interested "to judge which was the injured part and which was the intruder" (ὥς τὸν μὲν κρίνειν ἀδικηθέντα, τὸν δ' ἐπιβήτορα).¹¹⁰ Pachymeres thus says that Blemmydes did not consider the case as a situation of vagueness, where both sides could be right (or both wrong), but, instead, Blemmydes allegedly considered the topic itself as unworthy of attention. Even if Pachymeres' interpretation of Blemmydes' attitude is adequate (which we cannot verify), it could hardly have been understood by the majority of the people, monastics, and clergy, including, most likely, both Hierotheos and Michael VIII. In their eyes, the lack of support for Joseph must have looked like support for Arsenius.

¹⁰⁹ He comments on the name of Arsenius in a gloss (to line 1503): ὁ τῆς ἀληθείας οὗτος ὁμολογητὴς μέγας Ἀρσένιος ("this great Arsenius was a confessor of the truth") and on the name of Patriarch Nicholas of Alexandria with another gloss (to line 1510): ὁ σύναθλος οὗτος Ἀρσένιος τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου μεγάλου Νικολάου ("this Arsenius is a comrade-in-arms of the most reverend great Nicholas"); Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 214.

¹¹⁰ George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ ἱστορίαι*, V, 2, ed. Albert Failler, *George Pachymères. Relations historiques*, vol. 2: *Livres IV–VI* (CFHB 24.2) (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984), 439.

To sum up, I think that, in 1281–1282, Hierotheos left the Church of Patriarch Joseph to join the Church of Patriarch Arsenius,¹¹¹ and this fact severely affected the manuscript tradition of his works in the fourteenth century.

7. Hierotheos' Symbolic Logic vs. Logical Diagrams

According to a helpful phrase by Gabriel Patacsi, Hierotheos espoused a Photianist (i.e., a traditional Byzantine) theology “avec une clarté choquante.”¹¹² Such a degree of clarity was reached thanks to his diagrams. Nevertheless, Hierotheos also elaborated a symbolic language strictly equivalent to his diagrams. He called his symbolic expressions “syllogisms” and attached them to his diagrams as “keys” (written near the diagrams and/or within them) and explained them in plain words in his works, especially in the *Ἀπόδειξις*, but also, most probably, in even more detail in the works used by Joseph Bryennios as the writings of Hierotheos of Athens. I have discussed these “syllogisms” elsewhere.¹¹³ There is no need now to repeat all these details, sometime very technical. Instead, we should outline the main idea implied in Hierotheos' logical symbolism, namely, how it represents a logic now called paraconsistent.

Paraconsistent logic is a logic that allows subcontrary contradictions. Subcontrary contradictions are contradictions of the form “*A* and *B* are both identical to *X*, whereas *A* is not identical to *B*,” or, in an equivalent form, “*A* is simultaneously identical and not identical to *B*.” Paracomplete logic that is dual to paraconsistent logic allows contrary contradictions. It implies inconsistency of the form “*A* is not identical to *A*” (something is not identical to itself). We have mentioned above, and will return to it below, the triadology that is dual to what we are dealing with now, namely that of the Damianites, where the three Persons of the Trinity are absolutely indistinguishable while still countable. For the sake of completeness, let us mention non-alethic logic, which is the conjunction of paracomplete logic and paraconsistent logic. This allows for contradictory contradictions, such as those of the form “*A* is identical to *non-A*” (that is, to the whole universe of logical objects except *A*).

¹¹¹ If *SL* is, nevertheless, to be dated to *ca.* 1276, we either have to take this date as the *terminus ante quem* for Hierotheos' transition to the Arsenites (in this case, the wording of *SM* wherein Hierotheos speaks about himself in the present tense is to be understood as *praesens historicus*) or we must suppose that Hierotheos was already convinced of the Arsenite cause but had still not managed to join them.

¹¹² Patacsi, “Le hiéromoine Hiérothée,” 305.

¹¹³ Lourié, “A Logical Scheme.”

In paraconsistent logic, all three hypostases are simultaneously different (and distinguishable!) but also identical. Insofar as they are different, they allow ordering, wherein one is marked as the first, another as the second, and the remaining one as the third. Insofar as they are identical, they allow all six variants of ordering simultaneously, wherein ordered pairs (called ‘permutations’ in combinatorics¹¹⁴) are selected from a set of three elements. There are six permutations for every two from three, and this is why the number of Hierotheos’ “syllogisms” is six. The general idea of Hierotheos’ system of six “syllogisms” is, therefore, a specific understanding of the order (τάξις) of the three hypostases in their *perichoresis* (interpenetration): there is no order in the sense of classical logic. Nevertheless, one can say that there is an order in another sense (the paraconsistent sense), wherein all variants of ordered pairs (permutations) are realized simultaneously. Thus, each of the three hypostases is the first, the second, and the third. In this way, of course, the “three” in the word “Trinity” is not a natural number.¹¹⁵

Hierotheos explains his six “syllogisms” as three pairs, wherein one pair “gives the principality/first place” (τὸ πρωτεύον) to the Father, another to the Son, and another to the Spirit.

Therefore, not only in the Scriptures are the three Persons of the divinity found to be called, each of them, the first, the second, and the third [*Hierotheos often provided a number of biblical examples*], but also in the syllogisms the same subcounting is used without differentiation. It is a distortion and absolutely incorrect to limit the first order exclusively to the Father, the second and middle one to the Son, and the third and final one to the Spirit. This is an impious invention of heretics.

Εἰ τοίνυν τὰ τρία πρόσωπα τῆς θεότητος οὐ μόνον ἐν Γραφαῖς τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ πρῶτα καὶ δευτέρα καὶ τρίτα εὐρίσκονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν συλλογισμοῖς ἀδιάφορον τὴν τοιαύτην ὑπαρίθμῃσιν χρώμενα, παρέλκον ἐστὶ καὶ παντελῶς ἀκατάλληλον τὸ ἀφορίζειν τῷ Πατρὶ μὲν τὴν πρώτην τάξιν ἰδίως, τὴν δὲ δευτέραν καὶ μέσιν τῷ Υἱῷ, τὴν δὲ τρίτην καὶ τελευταίαν τῷ Πνεύματι. Αἰρετικῶν τοῦτο δυσσεβὲς τὸ ἐφεύρημα.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ An ordered selection is called permutation, whereas an unordered selection, combination. The number of combinations from three per two is three.

¹¹⁵ For details, see Lourie, “What Means ‘Tri-’ in ‘Trinity’?” There, I called this kind of numbers quasi-ordinal, because the dual kind of numbers (based on paracomplete logic) has been recently coined “quasi-cardinal.” The latter were introduced for new formalisms of Quantum Mechanics. However, I think that “three” in the Damianite Trinity, whose “diagram” we will see in Ethiopic icons, is also a quasi-cardinal number.

¹¹⁶ *SL*, lines 813-846, quoted 838-845; Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 191-192 (quoted 192).

We can compare Gregory Palamas (who wrote *ca.* 1335 without reference to Hierotheos): “Because we do not adore the God Father as first, the Son as second, and the Spirit as third, imposing the order from necessity on what is higher than order, as it is also higher than all other things” (οὐδὲ γὰρ πρῶτον μὲν Θεὸν τὸν Πατέρα σέβομεν, δεύτερον δὲ τὸν Υἱόν, τρίτον δὲ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὑπὸ τάξιν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἄγοντες τὰ ὑπεράνω τάξεως, ὥσπερ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων).¹¹⁷ However, the paraconsistent order described analytically as a set of three elements containing six simultaneous permutations from three for every two is not visualizable. Hierotheos, however, does find a visualizable equivalent—of course, one that is still not completely visualizable but much more visual.

The paraconsistent pair of the identical but not-identical logical objects *A* and *B* could be considered as either a pair of non-identical objects that are identical or as a unique object identical to itself (this is, without the paracomplete breaking of self-identity) but also identical to another. The second approach will show a paraconsistent object *A* as, e.g., a pair formed with non-identical (but identical) objects *A* and *B*.¹¹⁸ Thus, Hierotheos uses two different names for each hypostasis (something he takes from Gregory of Nazianzus): the Father is also Προβολεύς (lit., Projector, or, as Linda Safran translates, Emanator), the Son is also Logos, and the Spirit is also Πρόβλημα (Projection, or, in Linda Safran’s translation, Emanation). This *system* of double names (not the names themselves) for each of the three hypostases was an invention by Hierotheos.¹¹⁹ Such pairs could be depicted, whereas the identity of their two elements remains indescribable. Hierotheos’ “syllogisms” serve as an expression of the same approach in the language of symbolic logic.

8. Hierotheos’ Logical Diagrams

The majority of the diagrams that occur in the manuscripts of the works of Hierotheos and Joseph Bryennios are published and studied by Linda Safran (who edited as well most of the texts within diagrams); some valuable additions (including diagrams in an autograph manuscript of Bryennios) are contained in

¹¹⁷ Gregory Palamas, *Λόγος ἀποδεικτικός* I, 32, *PS*, vol. 1, 61.5-9.

¹¹⁸ Logically speaking, this is an example of the inapplicability of Zermelo’s axiom of extensionality. It is this axiom that forbids, in the natural row of numbers, the appearance of more than a unique number one, two, three, etc. In the Byzantine Trinity, we have three—different but equal—numbers one, two, and three, because each hypostasis can acquire the respective ordinal numbers. For details, see Lourié, “What Means ‘Tri-’ in ‘Trinity?’”

¹¹⁹ As was already noticed by Safran, “Diagramming,” 504.

the study of Justin Willson.¹²⁰ Therefore, I will limit myself to some additions to their and my own previous studies.

8.1. Hierotheos' "Hexagonal Circle"

The greatest of Hierotheos' diagrams was called, by a late Greek hymnographer (Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain?) a "hexagonal circle,"¹²¹ using a phrase known previously from astronomical usage.¹²² Above (section 6.1) we have discussed its distortion into the nine-circle diagram. However, where it preserves its circular symmetry, it could also be depicted without distortions as well. Therefore, I believe that its best preserved variant is that of the eighteenth-century etching attached to Eugenios Boulgaris' edition of Joseph Bryennios¹²³ (Figure 9).

The beautiful miniature of the seventeenth-century manuscript published by Safran¹²⁴ is distorted by the addition of the seventh large circle in the center. The nine-circle diagram also has this additional circle in the center but adds two more on two sides and thus breaks the central symmetry. In this way, the central circle was the first step toward the nine-circle diagram that appeared before 1327. Therefore, despite the relatively late date of the manuscript from which the diagram is published by Safran, its shape is datable to the early fourteenth century at the latest. However, this was a distortion of the original diagram by

¹²⁰ Safran, "Diagramming," Willson, "Aesthetic."

¹²¹ In one of the additional *stichēra* at the Praises of Matins on October 4, the commemoration day of Hierotheos of Athens, *Ποίημα Νικοδήμου* ("the work of Nikodemos"): <...> τὸν Υἱὸν ἐνθεν δὴ, τὸν αὐτὸν καὶ Λόγον, καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα δὲ καὶ πρόβλημα, τ' αὐτὸ ἀπέδειξας, κύκλῳ ἐξαγώνῳ πανάριστ'· Πατέρα δὲ ὡς αἴτιον, διαγράφων τούτων ὀρθότατα <...> "<...> from there (*sc.*, θεωρία, the vision of God) you have demonstrated the Son as himself and as the Logos, and the Spirit as also the Projection, using the hexagonal circle—O most excellent of men—but the Father as the cause, drawing ("diagramming") them in the most upright manner <...>." This cycle of *stichēra* by Nikodemos is, in some rare editions, included in Greek *Menaia* after the standard text of the service. It is quoted here by Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 96, from the *Menaia* edited by Andreas Koromelas, a famous Greek publisher, in Constantinople in 1843.

¹²² Cf. an ancient gloss to the astronomical poem of Aratus, where ἐν κύκλῳ ἐξαγώνῳ means "in a circle with six radiuses:" *Scholia in Aratum vetera*, ed. Jean Martin (Berlin: Teubner, 1974), 309.8-9.

¹²³ Joseph Bryennios, *Τὰ εὐρεθέντα*, ed. Eugenios Voulgaris, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Βρεϊτκόπφ, 1768), σχῆμα (chart) Γ' (on a glued-in sheet out of pagination). For a detailed discussion of this diagram, see Lourie, "A Logical Scheme." Bryennios discussed this diagram as a work of Hierotheos of Athens in his theological testament, *The Hortatory Sermon on the Unity of the Churches* (Λόγος συμβουλευτικός περὶ τῆς ἐνώσεως τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν) (1422), ed. Voulgaris, vol. 1, 469-500, esp. 487-500.

¹²⁴ Safran, "Diagramming," 515, Fig. 17.22, from British Library, MS 19550, f. 310^v.

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Hierotheos. In the same manuscript, the three-circle diagram of Pseudo-Maximus (see below, section 8.3) is also distorted into the four-circle diagram.¹²⁵

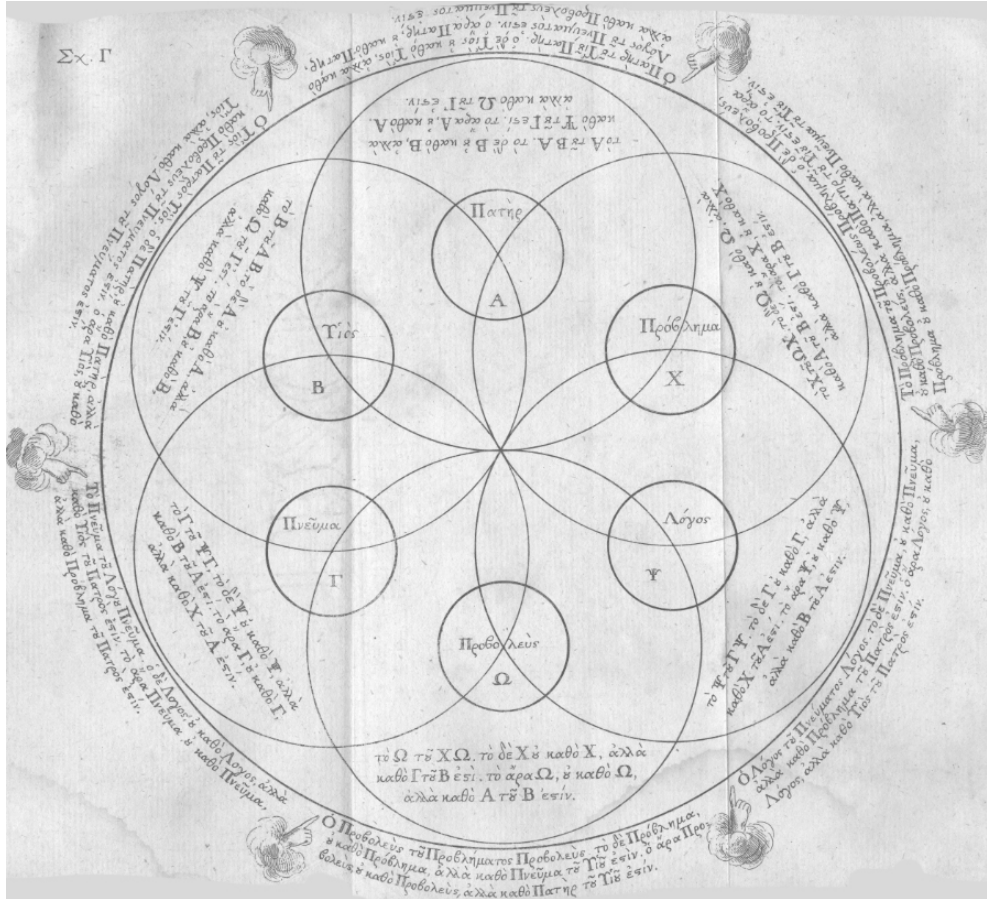


Figure 9. The “hexagonal circle” of Hierotheos. An 18th-century etching based on the best preserved drawing in a manuscript

From a logical point of view, of specific interest are the six large circles, where the members of each pair of circles representing the same hypostasis are tangential to one other and never overlap. I have noticed elsewhere that this is a kind of Venn diagram for paraconsistent conjunction; it implies that the

¹²⁵ See photo in Safran, “Diagramming,” 514, Fig. 17.21, from British Library, MS 19550, f. 15v. Safran, “Diagramming,” 513, noted: “I have no explanation for the fourth interior circle, which is devoid of text.”

two conjuncts have a boundary that belongs to each of them (in the topology representing Boolean algebra, the boundary can belong only to one of the two).¹²⁶

8.2. Hierotheos' Diagram of Movement and Its Inspirer Pseudo-Athanasius

Hierotheos proposed several diagrams with three circles. Without representing each hypostasis as a (paraconsistent) pair, they are less expressive in one respect, but they are more expressive in another. They highlight the 'proceedings' of the hypostases as inter-Trinitarian movement(s). The two names of each hypostasis are both presented within one circle, but they are written in opposite directions. Other inscriptions within the diagram are also written in opposite directions, and, in this way, the idea of movement is represented. This movement is, of course, paraconsistent as well: it moves in the two opposite directions simultaneously, thus being an equivalent of paraconsistent ordered pairs (where the two variants of order are realized simultaneously).

Below are a "minimalist" (Figure 10a) and an elaborated variant (Figure 11a) of three-circle diagram of Hierotheos, both together with their analysis by Safran (Figures 10b, 11b).¹²⁷ The "minimalist" variant is from Hierotheos' *SC*; the elaborated one, from *SL*.

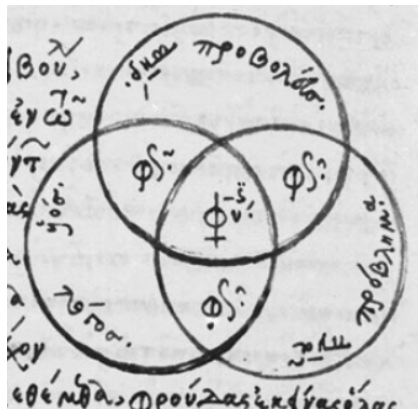


Figure 10a. A diagram by Hierotheos (*SC*) from the *Marcianus gr. Z 153*, f. 208^v (14th c.)

¹²⁶ Lourié, "A Logical Scheme."

¹²⁷ Safran, "Diagramming," 502 (Fig. 17.9), 504 (Fig. 17.10), 508 (Figs. 17.14 and 17.15). I am grateful to Linda Safran and the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection for their permission to reproduce the figures from this article.

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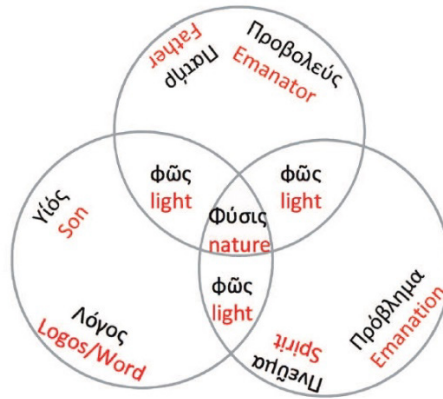


Figure 10b. Linda Safran's analysis of the diagram reproduced in Figure 10a

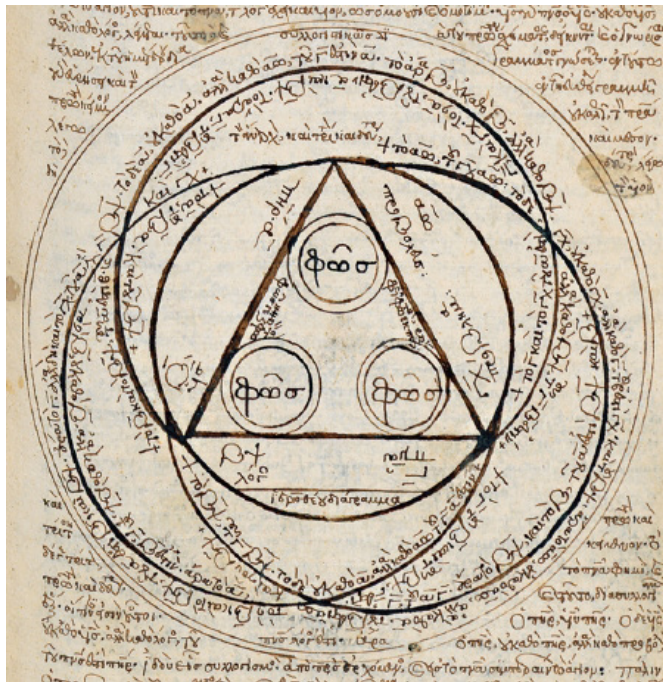


Figure 11a. A diagram by Hierotheos (SL) from the *Laur. Plut.* 7.19, f. 60^r (14th c.)

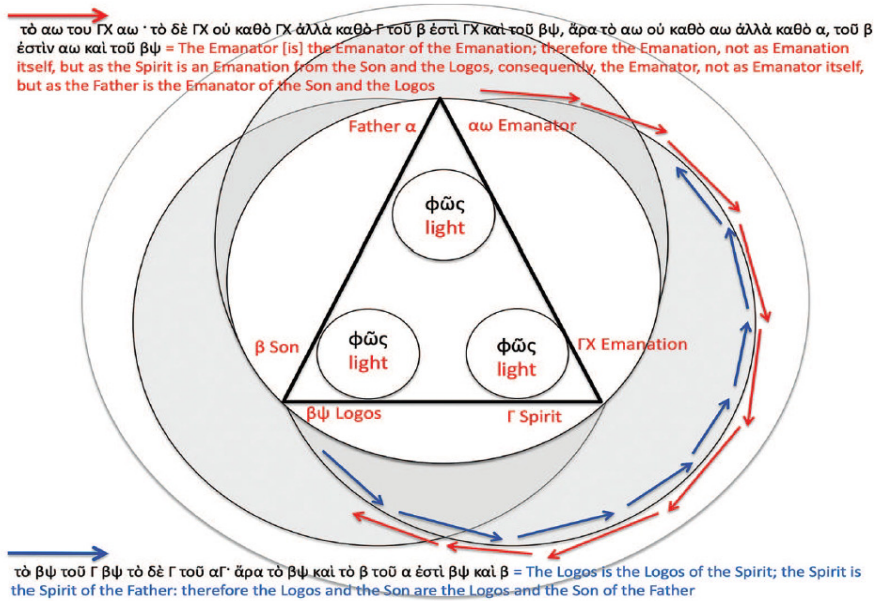


Fig. 11b. Linda Safran's analysis of the diagram reproduced in Figure 11a, with the principal texts

The idea of such movement, as Hierotheos explains at length in *SC*,¹²⁸ goes back to the scene of the hospitality of Abraham (one has to think, as Willson pointed out, especially of the respective icons)¹²⁹ and its exegesis attributed to St. Athanasius of Alexandria (*CPG* 2240). From the fact that the Son sits at the right hand of the Father (thus according to the Scriptures and iconography), Pseudo-Athanasius goes further, asserting that, therefore, the Spirit sits at the left hand of the Father but at the right hand of the Son, thus closing the circle.¹³⁰

One must notice that Pseudo-Athanasius' scheme is not quite symmetric and, therefore, not quite to the taste of Hierotheos, although Hierotheos made this scheme movable, and in the two opposite directions simultaneously. It seems that Hierotheos tolerated this Pseudo-Athanasian asymmetry as one of the imperfections of the diagrams. He compensated for it with the words and other diagrams. At any rate, such asymmetry is in agreement with the order of the temporal revelation of the Trinity, as is natural for the scene of the hospitality

¹²⁸ Ioannidis, *Ὁ Ἱερομόναχος Ἱερόθεος*, 114–118.

¹²⁹ Willson, "Aesthetic."

¹³⁰ Pseudo-Athanasius, *De communi essentia*, 9 (chapter's title: *Περὶ τοῦ καθῆσθαι τὸ Πνεῦμα* = "On the Seating of the Spirit"), *PG* 28, 44B–45B.

of Abraham, wherein the Trinity revealed itself to a human being. Thus, the applicability of the respective diagram to the inter-Trinitarian relations must be limited accordingly.

By the time of Hierotheos, this Pseudo-Athanasian text was received as the genuine Athanasius the Great. As Sever Voicu established recently, the part of the Pseudo-Athanasian compilation *CPG* 2240 that contains the respective chapter was already present by 1172, when it was quoted by Andronikos Kamateros in his *Sacred Arsenal*.¹³¹ However, the source of the chapter we are interested in remains unknown.¹³² I suppose, because of a kind of confusion between the temporal revelation of the Trinity and the relations *in divinis* implied in this text, that its author was closer to Nicetas “of Maroneia” than to Nicholas of Methone. Nevertheless, for Hierotheos, this was a piece of patristic exegesis that could have no other meaning than the orthodox interpretation.

8.3. Pseudo-Maximus' *Theōrēma* (CPG 7707.26)

The three-circle diagrams by Hierotheos are very similar to another three-circle diagram attributed to Maximus the Confessor. It occurs both separately and as a quote in the works of Joseph Bryennios. I think that the question whether Hierotheos knew this Pseudo-Maximian text must be posed, but, thus far, it cannot be answered.

Justin Willson has already noticed the coincidence between, on the one hand, the diagram and text published by Sergey Epifanovich from the unique manuscript *Parisinus gr.* 887 (copied in 1539/40 on Mount Athos by Constantine Palaeocappa) (Figure 12),¹³³ and, on the other hand, two quotations of both the diagram and its accompanying text in Joseph Bryennios—in his unpublished *Against Ten Chapters* (preserved in an autograph; see Figure 13) and the published *Sermon II, On the Holy Trinity*.¹³⁴ Both the separate text and the quotations in Bryennios preserve the title *Theōrēma* (θεώρημα).

¹³¹ Sever J. Voicu, "Il florilegio *De communi essentia* (CPG 2240), Severiano di Gabala e altri Padri," *Sacris Erudiri* 55 (2016): 129–155, esp. 51; cf. Andronikos Kamateros, *Sacrum Armamentarium. Pars prima*, ed. Bucossi, 142.

¹³² Voicu, "Il florilegio," 134.

¹³³ Sergey Epifanovich, *Матеріали кь изученію жизни и твореній преп. Максима Исповѣдника* [*Materials for a Study of the Life and the Works of St Maximus the Confessor*] (Kiev: Типографія Университета Св. Владимира, 1917), 78–80, with a photo of the manuscript page between 78 and 79.

¹³⁴ Willson, "Aesthetic." For Blemmydes' *Against Ten Chapters*, see above. For the published text, see Joseph Bryennios, *Τὰ ἐνρθεύοντα*, ed. Voulgaris, vol. 1, 24 and σχῆμα (chart) Α' (on a glued-in sheet out of pagination). I am very grateful to Justin Willson for his permission to use materials from his article before its publication.

Willson published a commentary on the diagram that is present only in *Against Ten Chapters* and recognizes in it a genuine text of Maximus (occupying about a half of this short commentary). Willson supposed that Palaeocappa, who was the most renowned forger of Greek manuscripts, produced his text using one of the text(s) by Bryennios. This is possible but not necessarily the case. In any event, we are still left with an open question about Bryennios' source.



Figure 12. Pseudo-Maximus the Confessor, *Theōrēma* (CPG 7707.26). *Parisinus gr. 887*, f. 1^r (copied in 1539/40 by Constantine Palaeocappa), as published in Willson, “Aesthetics”

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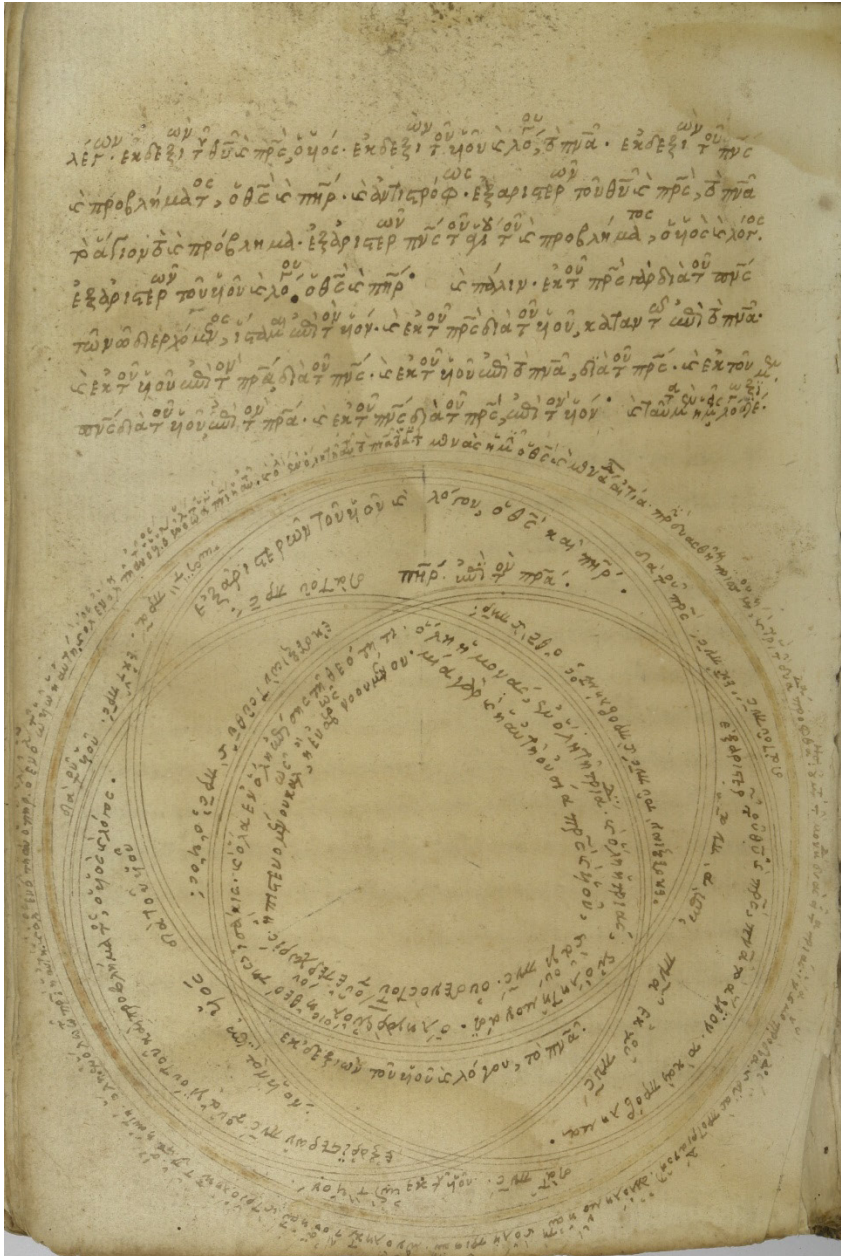


Figure 13. Joseph Bryennios, *Against Ten Chapters*, the page of an autograph manuscript containing the diagram of Pseudo-Maximus. Sofia, Centre "Ivan Dujčev," D. gr. 262, f. 174^v, as published in Willson, "Aesthetic"

Below I quote the published text by Bryennios.¹³⁵ Its Proclean overtones are already commented on by Willson, who noticed that the metaphor of the knowledge of God as a dance is Proclean: the lower entities who are unable to know and to grasp the One but also unable to not strive for it, “are all dancing/leading a round dance around it” (περὶ αὐτὸ πάντα χορεύει).¹³⁶ This is interesting, because, in our Pseudo-Maximian text, these Proclean motives are united with those of Pseudo-Athanasius in his exegesis of the hospitality of Abraham (that the Son sits at the right hand of the Father, and the Spirit at the left hand):

Ὁ μὲν τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ μέγιστος Μάξιμος τὸν λόγον ἡμῖν συνίστησιν οὕτω λέγων ἐν τινι θεωρήματι, ἐκ τριῶν κύκλων ἴσων ἀλλήλοις, καὶ ἀλλήλων ἀπτομένων ἐπίσης συνισταμένων· ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς, ὁ Υἱὸς καὶ Λόγος, ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ Λόγου, τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, τὸ καὶ πρόβλημα· ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος, τοῦ καὶ προβλήματος, ὁ Θεὸς καὶ Πατὴρ· καὶ ἀντιστρόφως· ἐξ εὐωνύμων τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς, τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, τὸ καὶ πρόβλημα· ἐξ ἀριστερῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος, τοῦ καὶ προβλήματος, ὁ Υἱὸς καὶ Λόγος· ἐξ ἀριστερῶν τοῦ Υἱοῦ¹³⁷ καὶ Λόγου, ὁ Θεὸς καὶ Πατὴρ. Καὶ πάλιν ὁ αὐτός· ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γὰρ διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τῷ νῶ διερχόμενος, ἵσταμαι ἐπὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα· καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος καταντῶ ἐπὶ τὸν Υἱόν· καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Πατέρα διὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος· καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα διὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς· καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος διὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐπὶ τὸν Υἱόν· καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Πατέρα. ὁρᾷς χορεῖαν ξένην ἣν οὐδέποτε εἶδες; Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁ μέγιστος Μάξιμος.

Indeed, Maximus, who is most great in confession, confirmed our reasoning, saying the following in a certain interpretation [or commentary: θεωρήμα], (where he represented the Trinity as) three circles put together, equal to each other and equally overlapping one another: *On the right hand of God the Father is the Son and Logos; on the right hand of the Son and Logos is the Holy Spirit, the Projection; on the right hand of the Holy Spirit, the Projection is God the Father. And vice versa: on the left hand of God the Father is the Holy Spirit, the Projection; on the left hand of the Holy Spirit, the Projection, is the Son and Logos; on the left hand of the Son and Logos is God the Father.* And again the same [Maximus] says: *Because traversing by the intellect from the Father through the Son I come to the Spirit; and from the Father through the Spirit I arrive at the Son; and from the Son to the Father through the Spirit; and from the Son to the Spirit through the Father; and from the Spirit through the Father to the Son; and from the Spirit through the Son to the Father. Do you see the strange round dance that you have never seen before?* And thus said the most great Maximus.

¹³⁵ Joseph Bryennios, *Τὰ εὐρεθέντα*, ed. Voulgaris, vol. 1, 24.

¹³⁶ Willson, “Aesthetic.” Cf. Proclus, *Platonic Theology*, I, 22, ed. and trans. Henri-Dominique Saffrey and Leendert G. Westerink, *Proclus. Théologie platonicienne. Livre I* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1968), 102 (quoted line 19).

¹³⁷ In the edition, Θεοῦ; I have corrected according to the meaning which seems to be here evident.

We have concluded above, judging only from his triadology, that Pseudo-Athanasius was an author not too distant from Nicetas “of Maroneia.” It is possible that he, like this Pseudo-Maximus, was not too distant from the eleventh- and twelfth-century authors heavily influenced by Proclus. We do not know, let us repeat, whether Hierotheos himself used the Pseudo-Maximian *Theōrēma*, but it was nonetheless used together with his own works by later readers and writers, especially Joseph Bryennios.

Is it possible that the name of Maximus appeared here as a result of further confusion between the two Hierotheoi—somewhere “in the margins” (not necessarily in the literal sense) of the *Corpus Areopagiticum*—perhaps because of Maximus’ reputation as the author of all the *scholia* to the *Corpus*. However, there are no such *scholia* among those hitherto known. We may note that, in the Slavonic translation of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* produced by elder Isaia on Athos in 1371, there is a long *scholion* to the *Divine Names* (chapter 2) that is absent in Greek.¹³⁸ It deals with the different degrees of participation in God and contains several diagrams that could be classified as ‘logical’ *sensu stricto* (Figure 14).¹³⁹



Figure 14. Diagrams illustrating participation in God. A *scholion* to Dionysius Areopagites, *Divine Names* (chapter 2), preserved in the Slavonic translation but lost in Greek. *Mosquensis, Bibliothecae synodalis* 986, f. 179r (16th c.)

¹³⁸ Cf. *Corpus Dionysiacum* IV/1: Ioannis Scythopolitani Prologus et Scholia in Dionysii Areopagitae Librum De Divinis Nominibus cum Additamentis Interpretum Aliorum, ed. Suchla (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011).

¹³⁹ Cf. the manuscript from the Russian National Library (St. Petersburg), *Gilferding* 46 (perhaps an autograph of the translator), f. 91v, but especially the 16th-century manuscript from State Historical Museum (GIM, Moscow), Synodal collection, *Mosquensis, Bibliothecae synodalis* 986 (the October volume of the *Great Menologion* by Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow compiled in 1530–1541 with the *Corpus Areopagiticum* placed on the third of October), f. 179r. These diagrams are reproduced in the printed volume *Великія мінеи четиі. Октябрь. Дни 1–3* [The Great Menologion. October, Days 1–3], ed. Spiridon N. Palauzov (St. Petersburg: Типография Императорской Академии наук, 1870), cols. 417–418.

This *scholion* to chapter 2 of the *Divine Names* is closely connected to the parts of the chapter that Dionysius attributes to his teacher Hierotheos. Leaving aside the meaning of these diagrams, which are not related to Trinitarian theology, it would be not illegitimate to suppose that, in some Greek fourteenth-century codices, the words that Dionysius attributed to Hierotheos might have been accompanied by a *scholion* taken from the work wrongly attributed to Hierotheos but written by our hieromonk Hierotheos. In this case, given that the commentaries in general were attributed to Maximus the Confessor, this particular *scholion* might also have been attributed to Maximus. Therefore, without attempting to resolve the riddle, I would not exclude any kind of relationship between hieromonk Hierotheos and Pseudo-Maximus. Hierotheos may never have known it, but he may also have been its author, or at least a person that deliberately contributed to its popularity. Be that as it may, the basic ideas of both Pseudo-Maximus and Pseudo-Athanasius are closer to each other than to Hierotheos.

9. A Clandestine Opponent: Theophanes of Nicaea

The entirety of the collection of anti-Latin treatises by Theophanes of Nicaea has not been published. In one of these treatises, the author makes use of diagrams. The pioneering study of the respective part of Theophanes' anti-Latin work appeared already in 1986,¹⁴⁰ although its author, Charalambos Sotiropoulos, still did not know the manuscripts where the diagrams are presented as drawings and not only as verbal descriptions (though the descriptions are clear enough). In his article, Sotiropoulos published several crucial passages. However, Justin Willson and David Jenkins have now prepared the *editio princeps* of the main part of book III *Against the Latins* by Theophanes, taking into account the manuscripts that preserve the diagrams.¹⁴¹ In the best and the earliest of these manuscripts (*Mosquensis, Bibliothecae synodalis* 461, late 14th/early 15th c.), the diagrams are preserved in excellent quality (the respective part of the manuscript was written by a scribe that has not touched other parts); in another manuscript (*Vaticanus gr.* 2242, ca. 1443), the diagrams are present but made by a scribe who was not sufficiently skilled.

¹⁴⁰ Charalambos Sotiropoulos, "Τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κύκλου καὶ ἡ τάξις ἐν τῇ Ἀγίᾳ Τριάδι κατὰ τὸν Θεοφάνη Νικαίας. Ἐπὶ τῇ βάσει τοῦ ἀνεκδότου ἔργου του, *Κατὰ Λατίνων, λόγοι τρεῖς*," *Επιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν* 27 (1986): 507–541.

¹⁴¹ Willson and David Jenkins, "Theophanes of Nicaea and the Diagram That Draws and Erases Itself," forthcoming. The authors shared with me this unpublished work and permitted its use in the present article. I am extremely grateful to them.

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Even without studying the diagrams, Ioannis Polemis had already characterized Theophanes of Nicaea's triadology as "a criticism of the Palamites," including Gregory Palamas and Nilus Kabasilas.¹⁴² The problem of the order *in divinis* was of course in the firing line. With the diagrams, everything becomes immediately clear (Figures 15a, 15b).

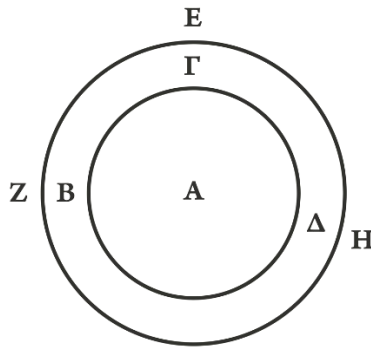


Fig. 15a. The triadological diagram by Theophanes of Nicaea as restored by Justin Willson and David Jenkins



Fig. 15b. The triadological diagram by Theophanes of Nicaea. *Mosquensis, Bibliothecae synodalis* 461, f. 247^v (late 14th/early 15th c.) as published in Justin Willson and David Jenkins, "Theophanes of Nicaea"

¹⁴² Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 149–160 (I quote the title of the respective paragraph). Moreover, among Theophanes' sources, Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 153–154, noticed Nicephorus Blemmydes.

Theophanes refers to his diagram in the following way. Point A is the Father, the circumference BΓΔ is the Son, and the circumference EZH is the Spirit. It is obvious that we are in the presence of a two-dimensional modification of the “Latin” linear diagram. No wonder that Theophanes was interested in Nicephorus Blemmydes as his predecessor, since the latter also refused to approve the *Filioque* but shared with the Latins the basic understanding of the Trinity as having a consistent order.

In the event that there is no priority between the Son and the Spirit—the hypothetical situation that Theophanes called ἀταξία (“disorder”)—the Trinity would be reduced to a dyad: “However, when no one is third, God will not be a Trinity but a dyad, because only the first and the second in order will be seen among the divine Persons according to the immovable personal idiom of each one” (Τρίτου δὲ μηδενὸς ὄντος, οὐκ ἔσται Τριάς ὁ Θεὸς ἀλλὰ δυάς, διὰ τὸ πρῶτον καὶ δεύτερον μόνον ἐν τοῖς θείοις προσώποις ὁρᾶσθαι τῇ τάξει κατὰ τὴν ἀκίνητον ἐκάστου προσωπικὴν ιδιότητα).¹⁴³ Here as elsewhere the logical consistency would become an insurmountable barrier between Theophanes and the mainstream of Hesychast theology.

10. Iconographic Epilogue

Justin Willson has studied Byzantine diagrams in their interconnection with iconographic canons of the Trinity. He has shown that the so-called “Paternity” icon of the Trinity (popular since the sixteenth century but highly controversial among the Orthodox) follows the pattern of the “Latin” linear diagram, whereas the Trinity patterned after the scene of the hospitality of Abraham (such as the Trinity icon ascribed to Andrei Rublev), follows that of one of Hierotheos’ diagrams (Figure 16).

The Ethiopic iconographic canon of the Trinity is dual (in the logical sense) to this iconography of the hospitality of Abraham. As an example, I provide a modern wall painting that, nevertheless, follows an ancient canon (Figure 17).¹⁴⁴ There are thousands of such icons, frescoes, manuscript illuminations, and other art objects with similar images in Ethiopia. The Trinity is represented with elders and not with young men due to the Oriental ideal of beauty (wherein old age is beautiful but young is not). The other differences, however, are of dogmatic order.

¹⁴³ Sotiropoulos, “Τὸ σχῆμα,” 532–533; not in the fragment published by Willson and Jenkins.

¹⁴⁴ For this photo, I am grateful to Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, who always provides me with her help.

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The three Persons are absolutely identical. Accordingly, the inscription must be only one and common to the three, “The Holy Trinity,” and never with the specific names for each person (in the current usage, there are of course exceptions and confusions, but the principle is still followed). The three are countable but indiscernible—similarly to quantum objects or dollars in a bank account. This model is paracomplete and, thus, dual to the paraconsistent Byzantine model. The consistent model is represented in the “Latin” linear diagrams, and the corresponding iconography of “Paternity,” as well as in the two-dimensional diagram by Theophanes of Nicaea.

The Ethiopian iconographic canon seems to me inspired by the triadology of Damian of Alexandria, where the unity of the Trinity was defended in the most radical way, though not in a Sabellian manner: the idioms serve only to preserve the hypostases as countable. Unlike a truly Sabellian Trinitarian theology (or any kind of modalism), which was consistent, this Damianite triadology is inconsistent. Unlike the mainstream Byzantine Christology, which is inconsistent but paraconsistent, this Trinitarian theology is inconsistent but paracomplete.



Figure 16. The Trinity icon against a diagram by Hierotheos (cf. Figure 11a).
Designed by Sam Richter. Published in Willson, “Aesthetic”



Figure 17. The Holy Trinity. Wall-painting, 20th c., Church of Ura Qirqos, Təgray, Ethiopia. Photo courtesy of Michael Gervers

11. Conclusions

In the history of Byzantine theology, conflicts between logically consistent and inconsistent conceptions were ongoing and permanent. The late Byzantine period was not an exception. It was marked by the appearance of methods of logical computation that possess much 'higher resolution.' I have called them, in a modern manner, symbolic logic and logical diagrams. In both methods, symbolic and diagrammatic, the elusive figure of the thirteenth-century theologian hieromonk Hierotheos turns out to be central. I have analyzed Hierotheos' symbolic logic elsewhere,¹⁴⁵ and, in the present study, I have focused on his logical diagrams.

The earliest history of logical diagrams in Byzantine theology remains mostly unknown, but their flourishing in the late Byzantine period begins in the early eleventh century with Eustratius of Nicaea. Yet Eustratius, despite being a highly authoritative philosopher, became isolated as a theologian. In the middle of the twelfth century, Eustratius' approach was brought back to life by Nicetas "of Maroneia," a Latinophrone theologian who never joined the Latin Church. It was he that brought the diagrammatic method into public view. The emperor Theodore II Laskaris polemicized against him. Then, no later than 1276 but,

¹⁴⁵ Lourié, "A Logical Scheme" and "What Means 'Tri-' in 'Trinity'?"

most likely earlier, hieromonk Hierotheos turned the weapon of diagrams in the opposite direction, using it to argue against the Union of Lyon and the Latinophrones.

Theologically, Hierotheos followed the path paved before him by many Fathers, the most recent being the greatest Byzantine theologian of the twelfth century, Nicholas of Methone. Nevertheless, using logical diagrams (and his own symbolic logical computation which was clearly inspired by the same diagrams) he reached his “clarté choquante” (Patacsi) of theological discourse. What was it that was especially *choquant* in his theology? Obviously, its inconsistency and, to put it more exactly, its paraconsistency. Before Hierotheos, a great philosophical and theological thinker who failed to acknowledge inconsistency in theology was Nicephorus Blemmydes. After Hierotheos, it was Theophanes of Nicaea.

However, the mainstream of Byzantine theology, by the 1330s at the latest (the date of Gregory Palamas’ anti-Latin works), followed Hierotheos.¹⁴⁶ His theology would eventually be “canonized” in the early fifteenth century by the main theological authority of the epoch, Joseph Bryennios. However, in the fourteenth century, paraconsistent logic came, in some way, to stand for Hierotheos himself. As a theologian who was not forgotten after his death, he continued to live as two theologically identical but mentally incompatible figures, hieromonk Hierotheos and the holy bishop of Athens, Hierotheos, the teacher of Dionysius the Areopagite. Eventually, the latter almost completely replaced the former. Hierotheos, whose theology was “canonized” by Bryennios, was to become this new St. Hierotheos of Athens. The most original theological thinker thus acquired the most unfamiliar biography or rather a set of two mutually incompatible biographies.

There must have been a serious reason for such an unusual splitting of the biography. It could hardly have been anything other than a kind of *damnatio memoriae* in that very same milieu wherein Hierotheos’ works were most needed, that is, among the Hesychast theologians. I have tried to substantiate the conclusion that, in 1281–1282 (most likely) or perhaps several years earlier, Hierotheos left the Church of Patriarch Joseph and joined the Arsenites. Despite the recognition, by the Great Church in 1410, of the Arsenites as the right side of the conflict and Patriarch Arsenius as a saint, the Byzantine Hesychast milieu was saturated with hostility toward the Arsenites, and this must have affected the manuscript transmission of Hierotheos’ works.

¹⁴⁶ The confused situation between the Synod of Blachernae in 1285 and the early fourteenth century is still not studied properly. For the time being, I consider it obscure.

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