A Historical Overview of Eastern Orthodox Theology on the Doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ

by

Anatoliy Bandura

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Anatoliy Bandura
Master of Theology (ThM)
Theology Department
Regis College of the University of Toronto
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Abstract

This thesis deals with the dogma of the threefold office of Christ that constitutes an integral component of the Christian doctrine of justification and reconciliation in the West. Though it has a certain value, the tripartite scheme of Christ’s office that presents Him as High Priest, Prophet and King does not exhaust the description of Jesus’ ministry and identity. This thesis looks at the three offices of Christ from an Orthodox perspective, and includes a history and critique of modern Orthodox authors concerning the threefold office. The need for the given thesis is based on the absence of research done by Orthodox thinkers on the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ and its place in Orthodox theology. Only a few Orthodox dogmatists have written on the said doctrine. They can be separated into two groups: the one attempting to make a unique interpretation of the concept of the threefold ministry of Christ in line with Eastern patristic theology, while the other has been influenced by Western theological approaches to the doctrine. The latter rely heavily on scholastic concepts or duplicate various ideas of Reformed theology. A comprehensive study of both groups of Orthodox theologians constitutes the nucleus of the given research. The conclusion summarizes the differences between the two parties, relates them to traditional Orthodox understandings of the redemptive work of Christ, and offers suggestions for further research on the doctrine.
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Introduction

This thesis will look at the concept of the three offices of Christ from an Orthodox perspective, and will include a history and critique of modern Orthodox authors concerning the threefold office. A need in this thesis is primarily dictated by absence of a relative research in Orthodox soteriology since no other Orthodox thinker has written on the three offices of Christ in particular, but only within the framework of larger dogmatic theologies. Fortunately, there is an abundance of primary and secondary literature on the topic that is found among manuals of Orthodox Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology. These, however, do not necessarily follow traditional Orthodox courses of thought and contain a variety of dogmatic interpretations with scholastic influences. Thus, the majority of the Orthodox authors that wrote on the topic were influenced by Western theological approaches to the doctrine. Only a few Orthodox dogmatists interpreted the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ in line with the patristic tradition and in a unique way. A comprehensive study of the both camps of Orthodox authors and an attempt to clarify a unified Orthodox stance on the doctrine constitute the nucleus of the given research.

Chapter 1 consists of two parts and will introduce the context of contemporary Orthodox theologians concerning the threefold office. Part one will focus on a brief exploration of early patristic sources on the three offices of Christ within the context and the purpose (very often polemical) for which particular writings were composed. The scheme of the tripartite ministry has its roots in the writings of the Fathers and teachers of the Church. In the embryonic stage, it is found in Gregory of Nyssa, Lactantius, and especially in the Church historian Eusebius of Caesarea. Part two will look into the basic features and development of the doctrine in the West, accompanied by references to John Calvin, Reformation thought and a few patterns of
subsequent Latin scholastic theology. Chapter 2 will discuss a number of Orthodox thinkers who were influenced by the schemes and methods of scholastic theology concerning the threefold office. Several Orthodox thinkers do heavily rely on scholastic concepts or uncritically duplicate the schemes of Calvin, his followers, and certain ideas of Reformed or Lutheran theology. Their works will be critically analyzed and checked for the conformity with the theological principles of Orthodox soteriology. Chapter 3 will discuss a few Orthodox authors who are in agreement with patristic theology in regards to the doctrine. The unique approaches of Taras Kurgansky and Nikos Matsoukas to the threefold office of Christ will be extensively analyzed here. This and the previous chapter are distinguished in that they show different approaches to the doctrine. The conclusion will summarize the thesis findings and sketch out some trajectories for future research. It will look into theological complications and relate them to traditional Orthodox understandings of the redeeming work of Christ.

The thesis will begin with a historical overview, which provides the context of the comparison of Orthodox thinkers of 19th and 20th century who dealt with the concept of the three offices of Christ. The plethora of Orthodox dogmatists who wrote directly or indirectly on the doctrine as part of their ‘systematic’ theology is primarily represented by authors from Ukraine, Russia and Greece. The following thinkers are considered in the thesis: Lavrenty Zizany, Peter Mohyla, Eugene Voulgaris, Apostolos Makrakis, Christos Androutsos, Panagiotis Trembelas, John Papadopoulos, John Karmiris, Maximos Aghiorgoussis, Athanasios Frangopoulos, Demetrios Kavadas, Andreas Theodorou, Demetrios Tselengidis, Nicholaj Malinovski, Sergius Bulgakov, Michael Pomazansky, and Vasilij Sarychev. The above authors can conditionally be divided into the faithful, moderate and ‘undeliberate’ adherents of the Western approaches to the doctrine.
Sometimes one and the same author either advances from one category to the next or shares mixed and contradicting views. All of them are examined through the prism of the Orthodox patristic theology. The majority of these authors describe the tripartite ministry of Christ following basically the Western patterns, to a lesser or larger extent. Their elaborate descriptions of the tripartite work of Christ do not diminish the value of their contributions. Nonetheless, dependence on scholastic forms of interpretation of the doctrine as it is viewed by representatives of the Reformed and Lutheran theology irrevocably marks their manuals of dogmatics. In their turn, Taras Kurgansky, Georges Florovsky, Nikos Matsoukas, Vasilios Kalliakmanis, Paul Evdokimov, and Hilarion Alfeyev are the most independent thinkers who are in line with the Orthodox soteriology. The most extensive Orthodox stance on the three offices was expressed by Kurgansky and Matsoukas. The former predates the latter and they are completely independent from each other. Also, while Kurgansky completely rejects the concept of the three offices, Matsoukas interprets it in a unique way and in agreement with the Orthodox tradition. Thus, contemporary Orthodox dogmatists can be basically divided into three groups that vary from each other. Therefore, the dominant trends are: 1) Orthodox authors who accepted the Latin/Reform approaches, 2) those who accepted the Three Offices with more of an orthodox approach, and 3) those who rejected the Three Offices. Their soteriologies are also another way of distinguishing their approaches and seeing the extent to which they correspond to general trends in the Orthodox doctrinal tradition.
Chapter 1
1. Patristic (Non-Scriptural) Sources of the Doctrine

The scheme of the threefold ministry of Christ, that is of His three offices: prophetic, high-priestly and royal, has its roots in Holy Scripture but also in the writings of the ecumenical teachers and Fathers of the Church. All Christian authors who wrote on the Three Offices of Christ, and will be mentioned in my thesis further, refer to abundant biblical excerpts in regards to the doctrine, such as: Deut. 18:15-19, Ps. 21:28, 109:1-4, Is. 9:6-7, 62:2-3, Jer. 23:5, Zech. 6:13, 9:9, Mat. 16:28, 21:1-7, Luke 4:18-19, John 6:4, 7:40, 17:6, 17:19-20, 17:26, 18:36-37, 19:12-22, Acts 3:22-23, Heb. 3:1, 7:23-24, 7:27-28, 8:1, 8:3, 8:6, 9:12, 9:24, Rev. 19:16, etc. Commentary to these books was written by many ancient Church Fathers and writers,\(^1\) therefore an extensive analysis of these verses is beyond the scope of my work. Hence, the research will initially focus on some non-scriptural sources beginning with early patristic works. Several sources of Church Fathers’ literature are briefly examined within the context and the purpose (very often polemical) for which particular writings were composed. This provides the context of Orthodox thinkers of both groups – those in full or partial agreement with the Western scholastic ideas, and independent authors described in the last chapter.

At first glance, the scheme of the tripartite service seems to have established the grounds for itself in the writings of the Fathers and teachers of the Church. In the embryonic stage, it is found in Gregory of Nyssa, Lactantius, and especially in the Church historian Eusebius the

\(^1\) Such as: Origen, Clement and Cyril of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Theodoret of Cyrus, Augustine of Hippo, Ambrose of Milan, Jerome of Stridon, Paterius of Brescia, Caesarius of Arles, Eusebius of Caesarea, Basil the Great, Justine the Philosopher, Irene of Lions, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyprian of Carthage, Gregory the Great, Bede the Venerable, Ephraim the Syrian, Hilarius Pictav, Chromatius of Aquileia, Victorinus of Petavia, Primasius of Hadrumetum, Tichonius the Donatist, Apringius of Beja, Andrew of Caesarea, and Ecumenius of Tricca.
Bishop of Caesarea (280 – 339 A.D.). Eusebius was a disciple of Pamphilos who taught him Origenism. He also took part in the first Ecumenical Council as a supporter of Arius. Eusebius was the first writer who seriously dealt with the history of the Church unfolded in 10 volumes.²

In essence, his work *Ecclesiastical History* is an anthology of original patristic sources in the history of the Church. Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History* is the first work in the list of the reference literature since it is the first source that clearly speaks about and distinguishes the three offices of Christ.

In his work, Eusebius alludes to the three offices of Christ while writing on the name *Jesus* and the name *Christ*.³ The author resorts to the method of biblical typology in order to better explain Christ’s offices. Typology is the interpretation of certain historical events occurring in the Old Testament as ‘types’ that prefigure events to be fulfilled through the Incarnation of the Son of God. In each case, the type – the first event – is linked to its corresponding future event, called the ‘prototype.’⁴ For instance, the ultimate sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God (prototype) was foreshadowed in type by Abraham’s offering of his son, Isaac (type).

Thus, Eusebius tries to draw a line from Israel’s kings, prophets and priests (who were christs, i.e. the anointed ones) to Jesus, seeing in them the types (‘typical christs’) of the true and only Christ. The author holds that: “not only those who were honoured with the high priesthood, and who for the sake of the symbol were anointed with especially prepared oil, were adorned with the name of Christ among the Hebrews, but also the kings whom the prophets anointed under the influence of the divine Spirit, and thus constituted, as it were, typical christs. For they also bore

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³Ecclesiastical History 1.3 PG 20,72 B.
in their own persons types of the royal and sovereign power of the true and only Christ, the
divine Word who rules over all.”5 The emphasis here does not fall so much on Israel’s kings,
priests and prophets as Jesus’ types (‘christs in type’), but rather on Christ as the prototype of the
bearers of the three Old Testament ministries: “and we have been told also that certain of the
prophets themselves became, by the act of anointing, christs in type, so that all these have
reference to the true Christ, the divinely inspired and heavenly Word.”6 In other words, the stress
falls on the notion of Christ rather than on the concepts of king, prophet and priest.

However, in order to prove that Christ is the archetype, Eusebius first strives to show that
representatives of the said three offices bear the types of the royal and sovereign power of the
true and only Christ in their own persons: “and a proof of this is that no one of those who were of
old symbolically anointed, whether priests, or kings, or prophets, possessed so great a power of
inspired virtue as was exhibited by our Saviour and Lord Jesus, the true and only Christ.”7
Although Eusebius does assert that Christ “is the only high priest of all, and the only King of
every creature, and the Father’s only supreme prophet of prophets,”8 he immediately shifts
accent to the truth (which constitutes Jesus’ property) rather than to any symbol: “He, although
He received no symbols and types of high priesthood from any one, although He was not born of
a race of priests, although He was not elevated to a kingdom by military guards, although He was
not a prophet like those of old, although He obtained no honour nor pre-eminence among the
Jews, nevertheless was adorned by the Father with all, if not with the symbols, yet with the truth

5 Eusebius, Church History. (Hist. Eccl.) Book 1. Chapter 3. The Name Jesus and Also the Name Christ Were Known From the Beginning, and Were Honoured by the Inspired Prophets. [v. 7]
http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250101.htm
6 Ibid. [v. 8]
7 Ibid. [v. 9]
8 Ibid. [v. 8]
itself." Christ, in His turn, does not grant and bestow to His disciples just symbols, types and images but “the uncovered virtues themselves and a heavenly life in the very doctrines of truth.”

The clear difference of Christ’s priesthood – “not after the order of the others” – from those anointed in the Old Testament “who received symbols and types” is seen here. Consequently, it is not Christ who needs a reference in the Old Testament representatives of the three offices, but the kings, priests and prophets are the ones whose type is fulfilled in Christ: “History, therefore, does not relate that He was anointed corporeally by the Jews, nor that He belonged to the lineage of priests, but that He came into existence from God Himself before the morning star, that is before the organization of the world, and that He obtained an immortal and undecaying priesthood for eternal ages.” Eusebius primarily highlights the fact that Jesus is the Christ and the pre-existent Word of God, who “is admired as more than a prophet, and is glorified as the true and only high priest of God. And besides all this, as the pre-existent Word of God, called into being before all ages, He Has received august honour from the Father, and is worshipped as

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9 Ibid. [v. 11]
10 Eusebius wrote: “And therefore, although He did not possess like honours with those whom we have mentioned, He is called Christ more than all of them. And as Himself the true and only Christ of God, He has filled the whole earth with the truly august and sacred name of Christians, committing to His followers no longer types and images, but the uncovered virtues themselves, and a heavenly life in the very doctrines of truth.” Ibid. [v. 12]
11 “And elsewhere the same writer (David) speaks of Him as follows: ‘The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool; and, Out of the womb, before the morning star, have I begotten you. The Lord has sworn and He will not repent. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec.’” Ibid. [v. 16]
12 “But this Melchizedec is introduced in the Holy Scriptures as a priest of the most high God, not consecrated by any anointing oil, especially prepared, and not even belonging by descent to the priesthood of the Jews. Wherefore after his order, but not after the order of the others, who received symbols and types, was our Saviour proclaimed, with an appeal to an oath, Christ and priest.” Ibid. [v. 17]
12 Ibid. [v. 18]
God.” As a result, it is the divinity of Christ that is emphasized here in the first place rather than His individual offices.

Lactantius (240 – 320 A.D.), an early Christian author, teacher of rhetoric and advisor to a Roman Emperor, also points out to the priesthood of Christ in his Divine Institutions. His logic is that if Christ is the head of the Church (“the great and eternal temple”) then He himself must possess an everlasting priesthood: “Christ ... should build an eternal temple in honour of God, which is called the Church, and assemble all nations to the true worship of God. And since Christ was the builder of this great and eternal temple, He must also have an everlasting priesthood in it.”

According to Lactantius, Christ’s dignities of Priest, King and Judge are the result of His faithfulness to God the Father who sent Him to keep His commandments: “Because He was so faithful, because He arrogated nothing at all to Himself, that He might fulfill the commands of Him who sent Him, He received the dignity of everlasting Priest, and the honour of supreme King, and the authority of Judge, and the name of God.” Thus, the name of God is raised above all these titles and justly befits Christ who received the dignity of everlasting Priesthood from the Father. In his vision, the Prophet Zechariah mentions the name of the everlasting Priest: “And the Lord God showed me Jesus (Hebr. Joshua) the great Priest standing before the face of the Angel of the Lord, and the adversary was standing at His right hand to..."
resist Him (3:1-8).” The LXX makes the Christological typography of the fourth vision crystal clear. Paul calls Jesus the High Priest who supersedes the high priest in the Jerusalem temple (Heb. 3:1-2; 7:21). The high priest in the Old Testament is also a type of Christ, as is the case here. Joshua, the high priest, wears the filthy garments (Zech. 3:3-5) of the Jews of his time, while Jesus Christ the Great High Priest wore them in the Incarnation for all people. Jesus took the flesh of the servant, wore our filthy rags, bore our sins, and was accused on our behalf before God and by man unjustly.17

Commenting on Christ as the Great High Priest, a prominent theologian and bishop St. Gregory of Nyssa (335 – 384 A.D.), highlights the reality of the Incarnation described by St. Paul as participation and sharing in the same ‘flesh and blood’ of the children, whom God gave Him (Heb. 2:14). According to St. Gregory, “in the Epistle to the Hebrews we may learn the same truth from Paul, when he says that Jesus was made an Apostle and High Priest by God, ‘being faithful to Him that made Him so (Heb. 3:1-2).’ For in that passage too, in giving the name of High Priest to Him who made with His own Blood the priestly propitiation for our sins, he says ‘made’ with the intention of representing that grace which is commonly spoken of in connection with the appointment of priests. For Jesus, the great High Priest (as Zechariah says in 3:1), who offered up his own lamb, that is, His own Body, for the sin of the world; who, by reason of the children that are partakers of flesh and blood, Himself also in like manner took part with them in blood. In that He emptied Himself in the form of the servant, and offered an oblation and sacrifice for us.”18 Apparently, a metaphor of the ‘priestly propitiation’ of Christ, “Who offered

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16 “But who this was about to be, to whom God promised an everlasting priesthood, Zechariah most plainly teaches, even mentioning His name (Zech. 3:1-8).” Ibid. [v. 114]
18 Gregory of Nyssa, Dogmatic Treatises, Book VI. §2. Against Eunomius. [185]
up His own lamb, that is, His own Body, for the sin of the world” aptly conveys the idea of incarnation to the Jewish world under the image of a sacrifice, so customary to the entire Mediterranean basin.

Furthermore, Christ “became a High Priest many generations later, ‘after the order of Melchizedek’ (Heb. 7:21). As, then, in that passage He is said to have been made Priest and Apostle, so here He is said to have been made Lord and Christ, – the latter for the dispensation on our behalf, the former by the change and transformation of the Human to the Divine (for by ‘making’ the Apostle means ‘making anew’).”

Melchizedek is not only a priest but a king as well. In this dual office, he is able to reconcile the justice of God (the business of a king) with His mercy (the business of a priest). His name means ‘King of Righteousness,’ and his title ‘King of Salem’ (Gen. 14:18) means ‘King of Peace.’ He may be a theophany – a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ; at the very least he is a type of Christ.

St. Gregory basically says that by assuming man in Him, the Word and Son of God becomes ‘Lord and Christ,’ – “For, being what He was, God, and Word, and ... Christ, ... He did become, in the Man assumed by Him, Who was none of these, all else which the Word was and among the rest did become Lord and Christ, ... not in the sense that the Godhead acquired anything by way of advancement, but (all exalted majesty being contemplated in the Divine Nature) He thus becomes Lord and Christ, not by arriving at any addition of grace in respect of His Godhead (for the Nature of the Godhead is acknowledged to be lacking in no good), but by bringing the Human Nature to that participation in the Godhead which is signified by the terms ‘Christ’ and ‘Lord’.”

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http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf205.viii.i.viii.ii.html

19 Ibid. [185]


21 Gregory of Nyssa, Dogmatic Treatises, Book VI. §2. Against Eunomius. Ibid. [185]
The teaching of the early Church on this matter is also partially reflected in the *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* (375–380 A.D.), a collection of treatises on ecclesiastical order that calls Jesus ‘the universal Bishop and High Priest.’ Christ is seen here as the great High Priest by nature. That honour was appointed to Him by the Father, – “the honour of the high-priesthood ... is an imitation of the great High Priest Jesus Christ our King ... the universal Bishop and the High Priest of the Father, Jesus Christ our Lord ... The great High Priest therefore, who is so by nature, is Christ the only begotten; not having snatched that honour to Himself, but having been appointed such by the Father; who being made man for our sake, and offering the spiritual sacrifice to His God and Father, before His suffering gave it us alone in charge to do this, although there were others with us who had believed in Him.”

There are a number of Church Fathers who speak on one, two, three and more offices of Christ. Such authors are the selectively listed Fathers below. St. John Chrysostom (347 – 407 A.D.), Archbishop of Constantinople, in his homilies ascribes to Christ various titles, among which are mentioned those of the king, prophet and priest: “... in regard to Christ: for King indeed He always was, but has become Priest from the time that He assumed the Flesh, that He offered the

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22 The *Apostolic Constitutions* are a 4th and 5th century collection of texts on Christian doctrine, worship, and discipline. While given respect as an ancient Christian text, this collection, owing to some unorthodox additions, has not had the authority in the Church. The Quinisext Council (692) rejected the *Apostolic Constitutions* as a whole because of the ‘adulterous matter’ which had been added to them (Canon 2; Seven Ecumenical Councils, NPNF, p. 361).


http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf07.ix.ix.v.html?highlight=christ,high,priest,king,prophet#highlight
In a homily on the Ascension of the Lord, attributed to St. John Chrysostom, we can read: “But if He is the great God and the great Lord, He is also the great King, ‘a great king over all the earth’ (Ps. 47(46):3). He is a great Prophet, a great Priest, a great Light, in every way He is great.”

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (313 – 390 A.D.) stresses the high priestly office of Christ, who “is a High Priest, whose priesthood passes not to another ... He received not the High-Priesthood from bodily succession, nor was He anointed with oil prepared by man, but before all ages by the Father; and He so far excels the others as with an oath He is made Priest.”

This Father also alludes to Christ’s royal office: “For kings among men have their royal style which others may not share: but Jesus Christ being the Son of God gave us the dignity of being called Christians.”

St. Cyril also speaks about Jesus’ priestly office in his mystagogical Catechesis: “He is the true Christ; not having risen by advancement from among men to the Priesthood, but ever having the dignity of the Priesthood from the Father.”

Another Father, St. Cyril of Alexandria (370 – 444 A.D.), speaks of Christ’s royal office describing His title ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews’ (John 19:20): “It was very providential, and the fruit of God’s inexpressible purpose, that the title that was written embraced three inscriptions – one in Hebrew, another in Latin, and another in Greek. For it lay open to the view, proclaiming the Kingdom of our Saviour Christ in three languages, the most widely known of all, and bringing to the crucified

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24 «Βασιλεύς ἴν αεί», «ἱερεύς γέγονεν, ὅτε τὴν σάρκωσιν ἀνέλαβεν, ὅτε τὴν θυσίαν προσήγαγεν».  
Ιωάννης Χρυσόστομος, Είς τὴν Πρὸς Εβραίους Επιστολὴ Ομιλία 13, § 1, M. 63 103.

25 «Εἰ δε μέγας Θεός καί μέγας Κύριος, μέγας καί βασιλεύς. Βασιλεύς μέγας επί πάσαν τὴν γην ... Μέγας προφήτης, μέγα ιερέως, μέγα φως, τα πάντα μέγας ... »  
Ιωάννης Χρυσόστομος, Είς Ανάληψην τού Κυρίου 16, PG 52, 790.

26 Ουχὶ ἀλαίων σκεπασμένον ἄλλα πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων υπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοσοῦτον διαφέροντα τῶν ἄλλων, ὅσιο μεθ᾽ ὀρκομοσίας εστίν ιερεύς».  
Κύριλλος Ιεροσολύμων, Κατήχησις 10, § 14.

27 Ωτι «βασιλείς μεν ἀνθρώπων αἰκονούντων πρὸς ανθρώπους ἐχοσι τῆς βασιλείας την προσηγορίαν, Ἰησοῦς δὲ Χριστός Θεοῦ υἱὸς ὁν Χριστιανοὺς καλεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς κατηξίωσεν».  
Κύριλλος Ιεροσολύμων, Ibid. 10, § 16.

28 «Χριστός οὐκ ἐλθης υἱὸς εὐ κριστιανοῦς πατρόθεν ἐγει αξίωμα».  
Κύριλλος Ιεροσολύμων, Ibid. 11, § 1, M 33, 680, 556, 692.
One the first-fruits, as it were, of the prophecy that had been spoken concerning Him. For the wise Daniel said that ‘there was given Him glory and a Kingdom, and all nations and languages shall serve Him.’”

Epiphanius of Salamis (315 – 403 A.D.) presents Christ as a Priest in his anti-heretical book *Panarion*: “He is the sanctuary, he is the victim, He is the Priest, He is the altar, He is God, He is man, He is a King, He is a High Priest, He is a sheep, He is a lamb, He became all in all for our sake.”

References to the offices of Christ can also be found in St. Ignatius of Antioch and the Theophorus (35 – 113 A.D.), St. Martyr Polycarp of Smyrna (69 – 155 A.D.), the pseudo-Barnabas (mid of the 2nd c.), St. Justin the Philosopher (103 – 165 A.D.) and other authors of the early Church, but none of them provides a systematic teaching on the doctrine or mentions exclusively prophetic, high-priestly and royal offices of Christ.

2. Basic Features and Development of the Doctrine in the West

Further, a reference is specifically made to only those Christian authors of the West who contributed to the formation of the doctrine itself and to its development: to Calvin, Reformation...
thought and a few patterns of subsequent Latin\textsuperscript{35} scholastic theology, from where it was borrowed by some Orthodox scholastics. The given research does not claim that no one had written on the three offices between the 4\textsuperscript{th} and the 16\textsuperscript{th} centuries. The study of the early and late medieval authors who might have also dealt with Christ’s offices is beyond the scope of this thesis with its focus on the Orthodox theologians’ stance on the doctrine. Besides, Reformed theologians themselves do not quote authors or sources other than Scripture and Early Church Fathers. Thus, some initial and classical forms of the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ as well as the stages of its development, as taught by Western thinkers in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century and onwards, are briefly and selectively examined here.

John Calvin (1509 – 1564), a French theologian during the Protestant Reformation, is the one who for the first time considers the triple ministry in detail within the context of Dogmatics in his \textit{Institutio Religionis Christianae} (1559 A.D.). Calvin’s line in this matter was faithfully followed by his disciple Theodore Beza (1519 – 1605) in his work \textit{Confessio Christianae Fidei} (1560). Subsequent representatives of the Reformed and Lutheran theology of the next three centuries introduced further developments and closely related aspects of the doctrine. According to Calvin, the office which Christ “received from the Father consists of three parts. For He was appointed both Prophet, King, and Priest; though little were gained by holding the names unaccompanied by a knowledge of the end and use.”\textsuperscript{36} Unlike Eusebius with a focus on Christ as the Anointed One, Calvin theologizes in a retrospective way focusing on Jesus as the One who

\textsuperscript{35} Understood here as Augustinian legacy, which is common both to Protestantism and Catholicism.

http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.iv.xvi.html
too (though in a different way) possesses the sacerdotal, prophetic and royal offices. The prophetic and sacerdotal unction is of great importance to Calvin and must not be overlooked. Calvin refers the name Christ to those three offices and explains each one of them by quoting the Scriptures.

Thus, speaking about the Prophetic Office, Calvin states that Christ “was anointed by the Spirit to be a herald and witness of His Father’s grace, and not in the usual way; for He is distinguished from other teachers who had a similar office. The purpose of this prophetical dignity in Christ is to teach us, that in the doctrine which He delivered is substantially included a wisdom which is perfect in all its parts.”

Commenting on the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom and His Royal Office, Calvin justly says: “He reigns by divine authority, because His reason for assuming the office of Mediator was, that descending from the bosom and incomprehensible glory of the Father, He might draw near to us.”

The Priestly Office is presented by Calvin in a way of correcting strained relations. Unlike the ancient patristic tradition that considers the fall of Adam as a voluntary separation of man from God with its all ontological consequences, Calvin introduces the saving work of Christ in terms of restoring the broken relationship between two parties by means of Christ’s mediation procuring the favour of God: “As a Mediator, free from all taint, He may by His own holiness procure the favour of God for us. As a priest employed to appease the wrath of God, He may reinstate us in His favour. Wherefore, in order that Christ might fulfil this office, it behoved Him

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37 Ibid. [sec. 2] (427)
38 Ibid. [sec. 5] (431)
to appear with a sacrifice.” 39  Reconciliation between God and man is also viewed in a very juridical way: “God could not be propitiated without the expiation of sin. The sum comes to this, that the honour of the priesthood was competent to none but Christ, because, by the sacrifice of His death, He wiped away our guilt, and made satisfaction for sin.” 40  This very approach speaks of atonement as one of expiation for our sins. According to Calvin, who simply follows here Anselm of Canterbury (1033 – 1109), divine justice required some sort of satisfaction for our sins since Christ, procuring the favour of God, was to appease His wrath. Calvin views the restoration of the initial ontological integrity of man and removing of the consequences of human fall 41 by Christ as juridical satisfaction and forgiveness.

Seniority of the offices and their number differ among representatives of the Reformation thought. Karl Muller (1866 – 1942), a German Protestant theologian, notes that according to representatives of Lutheran theology, such as Philipp Melanchthon (1497 – 1560) and Tilemann

39 “For, as has been said, there is no access to God for us or for our prayers until the priest, purging away our defilements, sanctify us, and obtain for us that favour of which the impurity of our lives and hearts deprives us. ... if the benefit and efficacy of Christ’s priesthood is to reach us, the commencement must be with His death. Whence it follows, that He by whose aid we obtain favour, must be a perpetual intercessor. Christ now bears the office of priest, not only that by the eternal law of reconciliation He may render the Father favourable and propitious to us, but also admit us into this most honourable alliance.” Ibid. [sec. 6] (433)

40 “Nor could it be elsewhere said, there is ‘one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all,’ (1 Tim. 2:5, 6,) had not the punishment which we deserved been laid upon Him. Accordingly, the same Apostle declares, that ‘we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins,’ (Col. 1:14) as if he had said, that we are justified or acquitted before God, because that blood serves the purpose of satisfaction. These words denote the payment or compensation which acquits us from guilt. And the source of this efficacy is just that the Son of God was crucified as the price of our justification. Hence it is proved not only that salvation was given us by Christ, but that on account of Him the Father is now propitious to us.” Ibid. [sec. 5]

41 Such as: spiritual and bodily death, shattering and distortion of the image, i.e. darkness of mind, corruption of heart, disposition towards evil; a shame, i.e. the bad conscience; heredity of the ancestral sin’s consequences.
Hesshusen (1527 – 1588): “Christ is before everything priest; even as king He exercises essentially priestly functions.”42 The same point is found in Nicholas Hemming43 (1513 – 1600), Nikolaus Selnecker (1532 – 1592), and Nicolaus Hunnius (1585 – 1643). In the meantime, however, Matthias Hafenreffer (1561 – 1617) and especially Johann Gerhard (1582 – 1637) direct their attention to the idea of a threefold office as advocated by Eusebius and Calvin. Further Muller holds that: “Since the middle of the seventeenth century, after the old Melanchthonian scheme of dogmatics had been replaced by an objective and historical arrangement of the material, there was room for a coherent representation of the work of Christ, which was systematized according to the threefold office. There was a reaction of the old Lutheran sentiment in 1773 when Ernesti44 criticized the reigning doctrine because he could not see why the clear and sufficient designation of the work of Christ as *satisfactio* should be obscured by metaphorical phrases.”45 Other dogmatists after him raised similar objections on the ground that neither the prophetic nor the royal office stands upon equal footing with the priestly office, but that both point to the *atonement* which is included in it. But the majority of the 16th – 19th centuries’ dogmatists adhere to the scheme of a threefold office. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768 – 1834) attempted to prove that “the three offices in their indissoluble union completely define and circumscribe the character of redemption as accomplished by Christ.”46

Thus, Calvin, the first in the Protestant world, emphasized the prophetic, priestly and royal functions of Christ by highlighting them among His other multiple ministries and insisted on the


43 Known also as Nicolaus Hemmingius or Niels Hemmingsen.

44 Johann Ernesti (1707 – 1781) was a German Rationalist theologian and philologist.


threelfold office of the Redeemer. According to Panagiotis Tremelas,\(^{47}\) the same thinking was repeated by many Protestant theologians, among whom were: Karl Nitzsch (1787 – 1868), Johann Lange (1802 – 1884), Hans Martensen (1808 – 1884), Jan Sholten (1811 – 1885), Jan van Oosterzee (1817 – 1882), Johannes Ebrard (1818 – 1888), Christoph Luthardt (1823 – 1902), and Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965).\(^{48}\) As I will discuss later, in his turn, Christos Androutsos rejects the extreme positions of: 1) ancient Lutheran theologians of Giessen with their inclination towards Nestorianism, who assumed that although Christ possesses human nature He cannot make a full and continuous use of His divine properties, 2) theologians of Tübingen with their digressing towards Docetism, who believed that the God-man even on earth remains to mystically use His divine attributes, and 3) the newer Protestant theologians, such as: Wolfgang Gess (1751 – 1814), Ernst Sartorius (1797 – 1859), Johann Lange (1802 – 1884), Heinrich Ewald (1803 – 1875), Karl Liebner (1806 – 1871) and Christoph Luthard (1823 – 1902), who arrived at peculiar Monophysitism by either entirely denying the hypostatic union of Christ or by preserving it and yet extending the *kenosis* to His divinity.\(^{49}\)

As for the Roman-Catholic stance on the doctrine, such theologians in the West as Peter Chrysologus (380 – 450 A.D.), Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) and others, even though they did

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47 More data on the author can be found in the next chapter.


49 See Ανδρούτσος, Χρήστος. *Δογματική της Ορθοδόξου Ανατολικής Εκκλησίας*. Μέρος Β’. p. 217: “Ούτω εκ των αρχαίων Λουθηρείων εκδέχονται την «ταπείνωσιν» τινές μεν (οί Giessener), ως «κένωσιν χρήσεως», ήτοι η ανθρωπίνη του Κυρίου φύσης κατέχει μεν, αλλά δεν δύναται να πουήσηται πλήρη και συνεχή χρήσιν των θείων ιδιοτήτων, τινές δε (οί Tubinger καί κατ’ ουσίαν η decisio Saxonica) ως κρύψιν χρήσεως, ήτοι ο Θεάνθρωπος διατελεί καί επί τῆς χρώμενος μυστικάς ταίς θείες ιδιότητιν. Αλλ’ η μεν πρώτη θεωρία άγει είς τον Νεστοριανισμόν, η δε δευτέρα είς τον Διαμαρτυρόμενον, καθίσον κατ’ αυτήν ή είναι φαινομενικά τα παθήματα του Χριστού ή ανέγκε τα αποδεχθή τις διπλήν ανθρωπότητα εν τω Χριστώ, μίαν κεκρυμμένην καί μίαν φανεράν. Οι δε νεώτεροι Διαμαρτυρόμενοι θεολόγοι ή αρνούνται καθόλου την υποστασίαν την κένωσιν του Χριστού ή καθότατης αυτήν επεκτείνουσι την κένωσιν καί είς την θέωσιν αυτήν. (Ούτως ο Sartorius, ο Liebner, ο Luthardt, ο Lange, ο Ewald και άλλο).”
not use the term *munus* or *office*, present Christ as an instructor (Legislator), Priest (Sacerdos) and King (Rex). Generally, however, scholasticism did not demonstrate special preference to the threefold office of the Redeemer. Nevertheless, it was included in the newer Roman Catholic dogmatics, among which were those of Grisar Hartmann (1845 – 1932) and Ludwig Ott (1906 – 1985).50 The teaching on the threefold office of Christ in its classical scholastic form can also be found, for instance, in the *Manual of Catholic Theology* of Matthias Scheeben (1835 – 1888) that mentions the foundation of a certain “spiritual society” whose head – Christ – teaches its members “supernatural truth,” makes “holy things” and provides them with “supernatural happiness.” According to this approach, the triple function of Christ serves precisely these needs.51

The doctrine of the Three Offices is inseparably linked with a concept of the Two Estates of Christ in Western Christianity. The estates of Christ are two – the State of Humiliation (from incarnation to crucifixion) and the State of Exaltation (from the descent into Hades to ascension). According to American Protestant theologian Wiley Orton (1877 – 1961), “A consideration of the estates and offices of Christ forms the natural transition between the doctrine of His Person and that of His finished work – commonly known as the Atonement. The doctrine of the two estates was formulated in the fourth century and was an outgrowth of the Apollinarian controversy. As to the limits of the humiliation, different positions are held. The Reformed Church holds that it extends from the miraculous conception to the close of the descent into

Hades, while the Lutheran Church makes the descensus the first stage in the exaltation.\textsuperscript{52} Based on the historical survey of Karl Muller, the orthodox followers of Calvin within Reformed theology attempted to analyze the act of salvation in its historical development according to the threefold scheme assuming that Christ had become first prophet, then priest, and finally king. Thus, it became the custom to deprive Christ of His royal function in the state of humiliation and of the prophetical function in the state of exaltation.\textsuperscript{53} Such a concept introduces division in Christ assuming that at one time He is a prophet, another time – a priest, and the other time – a king, depending on His state of either humiliation or exaltation.

In essence, the States of Humiliation and Exaltation of Christ theologically represent varying emphases upon the two natures of the God-man. This creates theological problems with regards to the doctrine of the Two Estates common to those Christian authors who theologize in a scholastic way. According to their own imagination, the scholastics present Christ in either first or only second estate: one time Christ is in the state of humiliation and the other time – in the state of exaltation. Thus, the ontological and hypostatical unity of Christ is not taken into consideration. The Word cannot be exclusively in the State of Humiliation or in the State of Exaltation. Likewise, He cannot act once as a Prophet, another time as a Priest and another time as a King. According to German Reformed theologian Johannes Brenz (1499 – 1570), “Divine nature can neither be humiliated nor exalted.”\textsuperscript{54}


Commenting on the interpretation and significance of the doctrine of the Three Offices Muller states that: “In every moment of His earthly and heavenly activity Christ exercises at one and the same time all His offices. The permanent union and simultaneous exercise of the three functions do not exclude, however, a fixed aim, namely, the kingdom.” Otherwise, His unity will lose its integrity. On the other hand, the notion of the Two Estates of Christ cannot be entirely discarded since it serves the purpose of better understanding of the truth of God’s appearance in the flesh and “God’s self-offer in Christ becomes conceivable only by the humiliating sacrifice of the eternal Son for sinful humanity.”

Meanwhile, the Christian doctrine of justification and reconciliation in accordance with some Protestant theology (expressed by Luther and Melanchthon on one hand, and Calvin on the other) claims that the essential order of the offices evolves itself in the temporal sequence of events, namely, “Christ first taught, then offered Himself as a sacrifice, and finally entered upon His Lordship. The origin of this threefold type is to be found in the literal meaning of the word Christ, it being regarded as legitimate to refer the anointing with the Holy Spirit, not only to the anointing of a king, but also that of a priest and of a prophet.”

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55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
57 “The form, in which this dogma was taught in the seventeenth century by both sides alike, was a compound of elements from Luther and Melanchthon on the one hand, and from Calvin on the other. The theologians who follow Melanchthon and Luther down to Hafenreffer and Gerhard, treat the saving work of Christ only under the two heads of King and Priest.”
58 “What Christ is for us, must verify itself in the transferring of His worth to us. The recognition of Jesus as the Christ has for us no meaning unless through Him we know ourselves raised to kingship or dominion over the world, and to priesthood or undisturbed communion with God.” Ibid. pp. 417, 418.
In summary, the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ as viewed by those Reformed and Lutheran theologians, who accept the teaching on all three ministries of Jesus, has common characteristics that can be described in the following way. The whole work of our salvation accomplished by Jesus is viewed from three perspectives, namely as the High-Priestly, Prophetic and Royal ministry of Christ. The common feature of the three offices is that the calling to these three ministries in the Old Testament was accompanied by anointing with oil. The very name ‘Christ’ signifies ‘Anointed One.’ The Prophetic Office of Christ is seen in that Jesus proclaimed the good news, the teaching of faith, of life and piety; it is also seen in wisdom of Christ that is perfect in all its parts. He was a perfect Teacher and moral example. He even prophesied the events to come. The Priestly Office of Christ is seen in that Jesus is not offered only as a sacrifice, but He is at the same time the One who offers, i.e. the High Priest. The priesthood of Christ, which remains eternal, surpasses the ministry of the Old Testament high priests for He performed the sacrifice with His own blood once and for all. With this sacrifice, Christ appeased the wrath of God the Father, atoned for the sins of men, wiped away their guilt, and brought reconciliation by correcting the strained relations between Creator and creation. The Royal Office is seen in that Christ is the eternal King according to divinity and He is also King according to His God-manhood both in His earthly ministry and in His glorified condition after the resurrection. The royal ministry of Christ was expressed in His miracles, His authority over the power of Hell and over death, in His descent into Hades, resurrection, ascension, the sitting at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, and the foundation of the Church. With respect to the three offices, there are also three obstacles that must be overcome by Christ in order to accomplish His redemptive work: the obstacle of nature, the obstacle of sin and death, and the obstacle of the Devil. Finally, the three offices are allocated between the two conditions of
Christ: the State of Humiliation and the State of Glorification. This teaching is known as the doctrine of the Two Estates of Christ. Thus, one time Christ acted as a prophet, other time as a priest, and another time as a king. Correspondingly, Christ was in either one of His two states. Although opinions differ among authors, the first two offices are usually placed by most theologians into the state of humiliation, and the third office – to the state of glorification.

Although both Eastern and Western Fathers of the first five centuries write on different ministries of Christ along with a mention of His states and descent into Hades, these concepts had not been yet systematized to be explicitly identified as a doctrine. The notion of the Three Offices of Christ in its ‘classical form’ originates and becomes a doctrine in the 16th century Protestant world. The Latin Church as a counterpart of the scholastic Augustinian legacy unresistingly shares it with slightly different emphasis. The doctrine insignificantly develops over the consecutive centuries. After being introduced into some Eastern Church dogmatics by some Orthodox writers, it is now found in the teaching of all three branches of Christianity (Catholicism, Protestantism and Orthodoxy) with certain variations. The Doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ in the West is inseparably related to juristic views on salvation. The doctrine avoids considering other numerous ministries and titles of Christ as well as other traditional interpretations of His mission. Apparently, not all ideas and aspects relevant to this doctrine managed to successfully define and comprehend Christ’s ministry in the world with an emphasis on the three particular offices.
Chapter 2
Orthodox Thinkers Influenced by Scholastic Theology in Regards to the Doctrine

In the following two chapters, the Orthodox authors who wrote on the doctrine are analyzed through a prism of Patristic Soteriology as well as the Orthodox teaching on *theosis*, i.e. divinization or deification of man, versus juridical understanding of justification. The Orthodox theology does not deny the possibility to allegorically describe the economy of our salvation by means of a concept of the threefold office. However, the Orthodox Church takes a maximalist approach to salvation, seeing it as a process, which ends in deification (*θέωσις*). A brief remark on such an approach must be made at this point.

Harry Boosalis\(^{59}\) maintains that, “For the Orthodox Church, salvation is more than the pardon of sins and transgressions. It is more than being justified or acquitted for offenses committed against God. According to Orthodox teaching, salvation certainly includes forgiveness and justification, but is by no means limited to them. For the Fathers of the Church salvation is the acquisition of the Grace of the Holy Spirit. To be saved is to be sanctified and to participate in the life of God – indeed to *become partakers of the Divine Nature* (II Peter 1:4).”\(^{60}\) The restoration of the initial ontological integrity of man and removing of the consequences\(^ {61}\) of the human fall by Christ are viewed in the Orthodox Church not as juridical satisfaction and forgiveness, but as the process of healing and divinization (*theosis*) of the human being by the God-man. Thus, according to

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\(^{59}\) Dr. Harry Boosalis, of a Greek-American descent, in present is a Professor of Theology at St. Tikhon’s Orthodox Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania.


\(^{61}\) Such as: spiritual and bodily death, shattering and distortion of the *image*, i.e. darkness of mind, corruption of heart, disposition towards evil; a shame, i.e. the bad conscience; heredity of the ancestral sin’s consequences.
Dumitru Staniloae,⁶² “Deification is the passing of man from created things to the Uncreated, to the level of the Divine Energies. Man partakes of these, not of the Divine Essence. So it is understood how man assimilates more and more of the Divine Energies, without this assimilation ever ending, since he will never assimilate their Source itself, that is, the Divine Essence, and become God by Essence, or another Christ. In the measure in which man increases his capacity to become a subject of ever richer Divine Energies, these Energies from the Divine Essence are revealed to him in a greater proportion.”⁶³ According to Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev,⁶⁴ “the destination point for all humanity and every individual is the fullness of deification in which God becomes ‘all in all’ (I Cor. 15:28). It is for this deification that God first created man and then, when ‘the time had fully come’ (Gal. 4:4), became man, suffered, died, descended to Hades, and was raised from the dead.”⁶⁵ That is why Orthodoxy does not see salvation as juridical justification but rather view Christ’s diverse offices along with His Incarnation, the Cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension as one and the same goal – deification of the person.

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⁶² Fr. Dumitru Staniloae (1903 – 1993), a renowned Romanian Orthodox theologian and Professor at the Faculty of Theology in the University of Bucharest.

⁶³ According to the experience of the Orthodox Church, deification may also be understood in a strict sense: that is, as God’s full and perfect penetration of man, in which the operations and energies of human nature cease, having been replaced by the Divine Operations and Energies. But although we cannot become God by nature as Christ was and is, we can become ‘gods by Grace,’ being united with God and participating in Him through His Divine Energies. Fr. Dumitru Staniloae explains: “God ‘by Grace,’ not by nature, means precisely that the nature of deified man remains unchanged, in the sense that it does not itself become the source of Divine Energies; it has them by Grace received as a gift. No matter how much the Divine Energies grow in it, it remains only a channel, a medium which reflects them – never will it assume the role of the source.” “The deified Christian, Fr. Dumitru continues, is as God, yes even god, but not God. He is a dependent god, or, to say it another way, a ‘god by participation.’ The consciousness of this dependence excludes the pantheistic identification of man with God.”


⁶⁴ Data on the author is provided in the 3⁶⁴ chapter.

Unlike traditional teaching on deification and salvation, there is a tradition of Orthodox scholastics who perceive soteriology according to the Western theological patterns as mentioned above. Thus, the focus of the rest of this chapter is shifted exclusively to a number of Greek, Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox thinkers who were influenced by the schemes and methods of scholastic theology concerning the threefold office. Chapters dealing with the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ in its ‘classical’ form were written for the first time as part of Orthodox dogmatics by two composers of catechetical literature in 17th century Ukraine: Lavrenty Zizany and Peter Mohyla. Therefore, the review of Orthodox scholastics writing on the three offices logically starts with them, whereas the rest of the same category thinkers, selected at random, are reviewed in historical sequence.

Lavrenty Zizany Tustanovsky (1560–after 1634), a priest, theologian, and Church activist, was the author of the Great Catechesis (1626). His work was heavily criticized for excessive rationalism and the introduction of some concepts of Socinianism and scholasticism. Commenting on Zizany’s stance on the three offices, Theodor Iljinski notes that: “Lavrenty commences his review on the doctrine of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity by explaining the name of Jesus Christ. The name ‘Christ’ means the Anointed One. Such title was attributed to the Son of God because He, being in the flesh, received the anointing from the Holy Spirit to be the king, prophet and priest. ‘Jesus’ means Saviour for He had the salvation of mankind as a goal of His appearance on earth ... and so that people did not forget His promise, they had been

66 Socinianism is a system of Christian doctrine named for Fausto Sozzini, which was developed among the Polish Brethren in the Minor Reformed Church of Poland during the 15th and 16th centuries and embraced also by the Unitarian Church of Transylvania during the same period. It is most famous for its Nontrinitarian Christology but contains a number of other “unorthodox” beliefs as well. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socinianism
67 Theodor Iljinski (1863 – 19??), a Russian historian, ethnographer and publicist, was a graduate of Kyiv Theological Academy.
reminded of it by means of various ways. Thus, the Son of God had prototypes in the persons of the three men of the period under the Law; these are: Joshua of Nun, who foreshadows the royal dignity, Jesus of Sirach – the teaching dignity, and Jeshua of Jozadak – His priesthood. All three of these dignities were united in the person of Jesus Christ.” Such a position of the author is not unique to the theological thought. According to Margarita Korzo, Zizany’s work was influenced by the Catechism (1562) of Anti-Trinitarian Belarusian-Polish theologian and radical reformist Symon Budny (c. 1530 – 1593) of Vilna. Zizany’s commentary contains explicit similarities with Budny’s Catechism: “Fragments about the meaning of the name ‘Jesus’ overlap in both Lavrenty (sh. 3-4) and Budny (sh. 119-120). The three Jesuses of the Old Testament are mentioned in both texts: Joshua the son of Nun, Jesus the son of Sirach, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak; however the Orthodox author’s argument is much lengthier.” Apparently, this is a very naive Zizany’s attempt to derive Christ’s offices from the three chosen at random (out of a total of seven known) names of the Old Testament Jesuses. According to Taras Kurgansky, “a purely accidental circumstance of the existence of the three famous people that had the same name as Christ is interpreted in the spirit of the Latin innovations.” Thus, Zizany’s interpretation of the origin of the threefold office is too simplistic. In comparison, the New Testament references to Christ’s offices would have much more weight than the poorly chosen Old Testament ‘types.’

68 Ильинский, Теодор. Большой Катехизис Лаврентия Зизани. Типография П. И. Горбунова. Киевь, 1899. pp. 44-45.
69 Margarita Korzo (born in 1969), a lecturer who holds PhD in History and is the senior research associate in the Department of Ethics at the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow.
71 The author’s data and his stance on the issue are considered in the third chapter.
72 Курганский, Тарасий. Перелом в Древнерусском Богословии. Особенности Западного Богословия о воплощении. Крутицкое Подворье. Общество Любителей Церковной Истории, Москва, 2003.
http://www.roacbulgaria.org/contents/Tarasii_perelom.htm
St. Peter Mohyla (1596 – 1646), a prominent Moldavian hierarch who reached the summit of his career as Metropolitan of Kyiv, was a composer of the *Orthodox Confession* (cir. 1640). His work was based on Latin catechism by Dutchman Jesuit Peter Canisius (1521 – 1597) and others, and became a reference book in the entire Orthodox East. Its revised edition was succeeded by Mohyla’s *Small Catechism* (1645). In these works, the author describes the three offices of Christ in detail. In the *Orthodox Confession*, as observed by Margarita Korzo, Mohyla talks about three ‘authorities’ of Christ: “The first question is ‘about three authorities of Christ,’ or about a fact that Christ is ‘first of all a priest in the order of Melchizedek,’ as the One who offered Himself as a sacrifice: initially in a form of bread and wine, and then on the Cross in reality. The royal dignity and prophetic functions of the Saviour also pertain to the ‘authorities’ (sh. 16-17)."73 After all, it would be of great significance to understand why the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ was so important in the Protestant world. Ultimately, Korzo provides such explanation: “In the writings of Reformed theologians, the triple ministry of Christ – as of the Prophet, Priest and King – constituted the very basis of a teaching concerning the works of Christ as mediator between men and God.”74 Greek, Ukrainian and Russian theologians, of the 18th century and onwards, unreservedly referred to Mohyla’s Latinized *Confession* and an idea of Christ’s mediation when writing on His offices.

Among the Greek authors, the first to be mentioned is Eugene Voulgaris (1716 – 1806), Archbishop of Kherson, Ukraine. He was one of the most eminent Greek scholars and theologians of the 18th c. Although he was strictly Orthodox, Voulgaris tried to convey the ideas of the European Enlightenment to the Greek Orthodox cultural circles through translations and

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74 Ibid. p. 389.
teachings of his Western counterparts. His work, *Theologikon* contains two chapters on the priesthood and kingship of Christ, but there is no mention of the prophetic office. Besides, the first two offices are simply numbered among several other Jesus’ ministries. Thus, Christ is considered as the head of men and angels, as legislator (law-giver), as judge and as mediator. According to the author, Christ was ‘*a priest by human nature*.’ He was not a king as man, but has received His kingdom as a gift from the Father. Also Christ happens to be ‘*a king according the world*’ who has a right and power of life and death. Thus, it appears that Christ saves humanity by the virtue of His offices and not by the virtue of His divinity. Describing Christ’s ministry, Voulgaris quotes exclusively the Scriptures and only a few of the Church Fathers, including Augustine.

The next author chronologically is Apostolos Makrakis (1831 – 1905), one of the most important religious personalities of the 19th century, a controversial and charismatic Greek theologian and philosopher. His work *The Human Nature of Christ: Growth and Perfection* is filled with some scholastic and questionable concepts. In particular, when the author speaks about Jesus’ priestly office, he operates with ambiguous and, in essence, alien to Orthodox theology concepts of satisfaction of our ‘*religious need*’ and the ‘*divine justice*’.

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75 «Ο Χριστός εστίν κεφαλή ανθρώπων και αγγέλων. Ο Χριστός εστίν ιερεύς. Ο Χριστός εστί βασιλεύς. Ο Χριστός εστί νομοθέτης. Ο Χριστός εστί κριτής. Ο θεώνθρωπος εστί μεσίτης.»


76 «αλλ’ εστι δὴ πού ιερεύς ο θεάνθρωπος κατά φύσιν την ανθρωπίνην, καθ’ ήν προσηύξατο προς τον πατέρα» ... «ήν άρα ιερεύς την ανθρωπίνην φύσιν, ούμενον απλώς εκληφθείσων, αλλ’ ή τη υπέρθεώ υποστάσει υφεστώσαν».


77 It is remarkable how Protopresbyter John Romanides (1927 – 2000), a famous Greek-American tenured Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, calls *religion* a sickness and *religious feeling* – a superstition: “Religion is a neurobiological illness, Orthodoxy – its healing. Human nature encourages man to be religious ... people are by nature inclined toward superstition.”

universal spiritual need, our religious need. Such a need is the one, which a sinful human being feels inwardly to be reconciled with God, who governs all things in a spirit of righteousness and of justice, to be relieved of condemnation to death, and to live forever with God. After taking upon Himself our sins, He placed Himself on the Cross in our stead, and by thus satisfying the divine justice. Evidently, then, in order to satisfy our religious need, in order to obtain the favour of God, fearlessness of death, life everlasting, we must sincerely repent.79 The author is fond of Jesus’ rational wisdom, His moral perfection to such an extent that His divinity is overshadowed by these qualities. Thus, commenting on Christ as teacher, the author mentions another concept alien to Orthodoxy – a notion of our coming ‘out of nothing’ and emphasizes our ‘philosophical need of knowing everything.’ Here, he calls Jesus ‘the moral light,’ ‘the sole professor’ and our ‘natural teacher:’ “We human beings come out of nothing, out of the supernatural darkness, having natural ignorance, or perfect darkness. Our Lord Jesus Christ, however, the moral light ... is the sole professor of all things related to knowledge and teaching about God. In fact, Jesus is the natural teacher and professor of us who have come out of a state of utter ignorance ... In the same way as a man feels the bodily need betokened by hunger and

78 One may observe the use of this terminology even by Orthodox authors. Such an example is St. Nektarios of Aegina (1846 – 1920), who speaks of the satisfaction of divine justice. There is clearly an verbal influence from the teaching of Anselm, but there is an enormous difference. In the teaching of the Latins the theory about propitiation of divine justice has direct consequences in the spiritual life, because the whole ascetic effort is to ‘cure’ God and not man, to satisfy God’s justice, while in the teaching of St. Nektarios one can see the purpose of Orthodox ascetic practice, which aims at the cure of man.


80 Orthodox theology normally speaks of our coming out of the “non being” (“ἐκ τοῦ μη ὄντος”), which is sometimes denoted by term “nought” (“μηδέν”). This nought is not an imaginary nothing but an indication of the essential difference between “the being” (“το οὐ”), i.e. Creator and the “non being” (“το μη οὐ”), i.e. the creation. In other words, by admitting that the world was created ‘from nothing,’ Orthodox theology implies that the world does not stem from God’s nature, but belongs to the created reality. Thus, the world is created from the elements that themselves are the part of creation. Certainly, the nature of those elements is not a matter of theology; it is a domain of physics.
thirst, so does he also feel a spiritual yearning to know things, a philosophical need. Behold today the same Jesus meeting in the fullest possible manner our philosophical need of knowing everything, of knowing the truth about everything, as the professor that is directly aware of everything in truth.\textsuperscript{81} Here, the author most likely wanted to convey our ontological need to know God and to be in communion with Him, but used inappropriate terminology. Such concepts, however, would have been well understood in the post-enlightenment puritanical era. Besides, every attempt of attributing to Christ diverse secular titles in reality belittles Him even more than ‘positive names’ of cataphatic theology.\textsuperscript{82} The more God is defined, the more His true image is distorted with concepts taken from our created reality.

As for the royal office, Makrakis calls Jesus a king in two ways: with respect to His divinity – and His humanity, whose kingdom is grounded upon ‘divine justice:’ “The truth is that Jesus is a king. His kingdom in fact is not grounded upon the unstable basis of human fluctuations on which the kingdoms of men are, which are temporal and vain, but upon a safe and everlasting basis, namely, divine justice. For Jesus is a king not only by nature, but also by virtue. By nature He is king in two ways: with respect to His divinity being descended eternally from the King of kings and Lord of lords, i.e., from the sole Dynast, Lord, Almighty God; and with respect to His human side from the royal tribe of Judah, from King David.”\textsuperscript{83} Finally, the author envisages our enrolment in the register of citizens of the kingdom of Christ in a very moralistic way, through complying with His ‘religious laws:’ “We must repent in our heart and return to the Lord, first

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. XI. Jesus as Professor. pp. 47-48.
\textsuperscript{82} Cataphatic theology (not to be confused with Western ‘positive’ theology) attributes to God names by means of affirmation, such as: God is Light, Almighty, Omnipresent, etc. To find out more on an intrinsic difference between Eastern cataphatic theology and Western positive theology one may wish to refer to Prof. Matsoukas’ 1\textsuperscript{st} volume of Dogmatic Theology. See Ματσούκας Νίκος, Δογματική καί Συμβολική Θεολογία Α’. Εισαγωγή στη Θεολογική Γνωσιολογία. Εκδόσεις Πουρναρά, Θεσσαλονίκη, 2000. pp. 138-139, 151, 153-154, 156-158, 172.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid. XII. Jesus as King. pp. 50-51.
complying with His religious laws. Thus we shall be enrolled in the register of citizens of the kingdom of Christ.”

In his other work *The Holy Orthodox Church*, Makrakis asserts that the office of high priest is ‘the reward of virtue’: “The office of high priest is clothed in great honour and dignity; it is the reward of virtue. Yet even this great position would have no reality or existence if there were no sinners – just as the dignity of a king would have no reality, were there were no subjects who require the king’s protection.”

It means that Christ was anointed high priest by God due to His ‘faultless will’: “Because He was known to be possessed of faultless will, because He remained firm in every virtue ... and ... as high priest He observed the law of God carefully. He received it as a reward for His virtue and His obedience to the will of God unto death.”

Such moralistic approach goes side-by-side with legalistic view of the role of Christ the High Priest who came ‘to make atonement’ to God the Father, and to satisfy ‘divine Justice’: “There cannot be two or more high priests, or two or more sacrifices, because there is no reason for their existence, when a single, eternal high priest and a single, eternal sacrifice are sufficient to save believers, to make atonement to God the Father, and to satisfy divine Justice.”

Again, moralistic, juridical and rational concepts of scholasticism that speak to one’s logic, but can be hardly applied or verified empirically, predominate in this work as well. Although the two reviewed works of Apostolos Makrakis still seem to be somewhat tolerated in the area of Christian Ethics, they

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84 Ibid. p. 52.
86 Ibid. pp. 70-71.
87 Ibid. p. 70.
88 Tolerance in theology, however, is quite often known to be a synonym with negligence. Thus, tolerance of unorthodox views in the domain of any sound theology is normally considered a heresy. Although tolerance can be applied to erring (or an object of erring), the only proper attitude towards error is intolerance.
definitely pose a lot of questions and cannot represent an official Orthodox stance. According to the experience of the Orthodox Fathers, a perverted ethics leads to a distorted doctrine, and vice versa.  

Another Greek author, Christos Androutsos (1869 – 1935), a Professor of Dogmatics and Ethics at the University of Athens, comments on the three offices of Christ in the second part of his *Dogmatics of the Orthodox Eastern Church*. A typical scholastic reasoning is given in his introduction to the threefold office of Christ. Redemption is aimed against: 1) “the sufferings stemming from Adam that were guilt and eternal punishment of the sin,” 2) “darkening of one’s mind” and 3) “weakening of one’s will.” It is immediately followed by another scholastic concept of the fulfillment of the threefold office in sequence: “in teaching Christ exercises His prophetic office prior the Cross, His high priestly energy is revealed in the passions and the Cross, He exercises His royal work at the foundation and arrangement of His kingdom on earth, of which He is the eternal ruler.”

On the other hand, the author provides valuable information on the history of the development of the doctrine by admitting that “the Church Fathers, who were engaged in a fight against heretics concerning the person of the Lord, did not deal in particular with the work of the Lord [while] the scientific dissertation on the threefold office belongs to the later times when the articles of faith, researched theologically, began to be the topics of methodical

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89 The evil doctrines lead to corrupt life, just like the vicious life leads to evil doctrines: “Το ήθος και το δόγμα συνδέονται μεταξύ τους οργανικά και αδιάσπαστα. Τα πονηρά δόγματα οδηγούν σε διεφθαρμένη ζωή, όπως και η διεφθαρμένη ζωή σε πονηρά δόγματα.”


91 Ibid. p. 195.
classification and systematic expression.”92 This also applies to the development and systematization of the doctrine under consideration.

Androutsos, although he holds that Jesus exercised His offices in sequence, emphasizes that the three ministries of Christ are inseparably linked among themselves and only the methodical classification requires separate examination of His offices. The author also admits the concept of Two Estates of Christ, i.e. of His humiliation and exaltation, as they are mentioned in the Scriptures (Phil. 2:5-11) and repeated by the Fathers, for example, Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329 – c. 390).93 Nikos Matsoukas94 criticizes Androutsos for excessively relying on Western theology stating that in order to understand how much dependence the Orthodox dogmatic and symbolic theology used to previously have from unassimilated Western standards, it might be sufficient to read the criticism of Demetrius Balanos (1877 – 1959) that he makes to the Dogmatics of Christos Androutsos: “But surely both of them cannot understand each other because they think in scholastic way that the three offices of Christ – the royal, the priestly and the prophetic – should be hermetically distinguished.”95 Apparently, Orthodox theology cannot allow such interpretation that threatens the integrity of Christ. A methodical classification of Christ’s offices must clearly state the wholeness and indissoluble unity of the God-man.

Panagiotis Trembelas (1886 – 1977), a renowned 20th century Greek theologian and Professor of Practical Theology at University of Athens, is the author of a 3-volume Dogmatics of the

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93 «Ο ην εκένωσε καί ο μη ην προσέλαβε. Κένωσιν δε λέγω την της δόξης οίον ύφεσιν τε καί ελάττωσιν». Γρηγόριος Ναζιανζινός, Λόγος 31 Θεολογικός, Ε`. Περί Αγίου Πνεύματος, ΡΓ 35.
http://users.uaa.gr/~nektar/orthodoxy/paterikon/grhgorios_8eologos_logoi.htm#31
94 The author’s data and his stance on the issue are considered in the third chapter.
Orthodox Catholic Church. In this elaborate work, he deals with the doctrine of the threefold office of Christ most extensively among the Greek authors. Trembelas combines and reconciles all pre-existent typological and allegorical views concerning various aspects of the doctrine of the Threefold Office and makes his own remarks. According to the author, the threefold office in Christ presents three areas joined into one. It shows a unitary and indivisible task of one and undivided Saviour. According to the author, it would be an error to think that Christ held His offices successively and not simultaneously. The author finds it admissible to say that the Lord exercised His prophetic and high priestly office above all in a state of humility, while He exercised His royal office in an already exalted state. However, a separate exposition of each one of the three offices can be tolerated only as facilitation for the complete and methodical examination of the single and undivided work of our redemption. In truth and in reality, these three offices are unbreakably united in Jesus Christ and present the full extent of the ineffable and indescribable wealth of His redemptive work. Hence, one understands that it would not be possible to seriously ask about which of these offices is the most significant since all three are simultaneous to each other and mutually dependent. Also, these offices are concentrated in one Person and in the unified work of the Redeemer,\textsuperscript{96} i.e. in the economy of our salvation.

Trembelas claims that it would be a mistake to think that the three offices followed each other successively in time, so that the Lord first had to exist exclusively as a prophet, then had to be raised to high priest, and finally, to king. He admits the possibility differentiating and distinguishing Christ’s offices from each other, but only for the sake of facilitation of their methodical study. Nevertheless, “the ministries that correspond to these offices are inseparably

and unbreakably joined among themselves.”97 Since in Christology there is a talk about two estates of Christ, namely the state of humiliation (ταπείνωσις) or kenosis and the state of exaltation (δόξα), an exercise of the prophetic and high priestly office of Christ is mainly manifested during the period of Jesus’ humiliation, while the works of Christ’s royal office become manifest in the state of exaltation. However, the author admits: “the distinction of these cannot be entirely accurate, due to the interdependence of the activities of the three offices.”98 In that, the author managed to avoid hermetical distinction of the three offices of Christ and of His two estates among each other. Thus, the author’s dependence on the Western schemes was lessened to a minimum and his stance on the said doctrines is characterized by theological sobriety and alienation from extremities of the scholastic approach, as described in the previous chapter.

John Papadopoulos (first half of the 20th c.), a parish priest known mostly in the Diaspora and professor at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary in Boston, MA writes on the three offices of Christ in his Concise Dogmatics of the Orthodox Eastern Church (1932). From the start, he links the prophets anointed by oil, the high priests and the kings of the Old Testament with the three offices of Christ – prophetic, high priestly and royal: “Since the character of the work of redemption, which the Son of God … had to accomplish, is threefold, therefore the office of the Lord is threefold too.”99 Describing the Lord’s prophetic office, Papadopoulos boldly states that Jesus, who called Himself teacher (John 13:13 and Mat. 23:8), “by means of His teaching, solved all the problems that for long centuries concerned the human mind, and so He proved, by

97 Ibid. p. 148.
98 Ibid. p. 148.
the prophetic prediction, to be the light for those sitting in the darkness of ignorance.”\textsuperscript{100} The risk of diminishing the redemptive work of Christ either to some comprehensive and problem-solving teaching or to a perfect moral conduct is apparent here: “That kind of ethical perfection, which is realized in practice as the fruit of the life of faith, constituted the main purpose of the Redeemer’s presence on earth.”\textsuperscript{101} According to a traditional Orthodox perspective,\textsuperscript{102} however, 1) moral perfection is a gift of the Holy Spirit and a result of one’s life in Christ, but it is not a goal in itself; 2) the Redeemer’s goal was deification of man and not simply one’s ethical perfection. Some careless, or perhaps accidental, use of terminology by the author leaves one to wonder about the intended meaning of some of his expressions. In the chapter on Christ’s high priestly office, Papadopoulos mentions: 1) a certain ‘\textit{highest moral value}’ for the humankind of the God-man’s death according to His humanity and the goods that stem from it: grace, mercy and glory;\textsuperscript{103} 2) pardoning of the ‘\textit{original sin}’ along with pardoning of all our past and future

\textsuperscript{100} \textit{Ibid.} § 31. \textit{Το Προφητικόν Αξίωμα}. p. 118.
\textsuperscript{101} \textit{Ibid.} p. 118.
\textsuperscript{102} “Perfection of the person constitutes an ontological and not merely a moral event. The moral life is the fruit of participation in the grace of the Holy Spirit.” 

“Joining the Body of Christ connects the created man with uncreated God and makes one a participant of the divine life. Thus one’s moral life comes as a result of one’s participation in the divine life. The source of life and virtue is, and always remains God, while the person becomes virtuous by taking part in the life and virtue of God. The moral life does not constitute a means to ransom our salvation or theosis, but is a way to discover God’s grace and the renewal of the person. Therefore, in the Orthodox tradition, ethics is not considered as an independent and autonomous phenomenon, but as the fruit of God’s grace and human cooperation.” \textit{Ibid.} pp. 535-536.

“Perfection in Christ is attained by unselfish and unrewarded love which is greater than the desire of the instinct of self-preservation. In this type of unselfish love Christians are compelled to love even their enemies. Perfection is not a moral achievement; it is a gift from God in cooperation with man.”

“Perfection is voluntarily to sacrifice all and to follow Christ for the cause of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God does not belong to sluggards, but to those who want to be perfect.”


trespasses,\textsuperscript{104} and 3) the spiritual gifts of ‘the Saviour’s merits,’ by means of which the grace that eternally stems from the Cross on the faithful is constantly poured out and supplied to them in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.\textsuperscript{105} Such a moralistic approach places the divine-human relations into a domain of a mere favour or disposition of God towards man whereas Christ’s or the saints’ merits function as bonuses.

Finally, pondering on the Two Estates of Christ, Papadopoulos holds that “the estate of humiliation, which embodies the prophetic and high priestly stage of Christ, begins from birth and ends at Golgotha” while “the estate of exaltation, which includes the triumph over the death, culminates by resurrection and ascension to heaven.”\textsuperscript{106} To prove his conclusions, the author refers exclusively to scriptural passages (Hebr. 5:7; 2:9; Phil. 2:6, Eph. 1:10, etc.) and Gregory of Nazianzus (Λόγος 31). In this, he does not differ from the scholastic division and allocation of the three offices and the two estates of Christ among each other, as described in the previous chapter. The author is not original in his statements and refers to other renowned dogmatists of Greece, such as: John Karmiris, Christos Androutsos and John Mesoloras.\textsuperscript{107}

John Karmiris (1904 – 1991), a Professor of Theology at the University of Athens and the author of A Synopsis of the Dogmatic Theology of the Orthodox Catholic Church, a kind of concise summa of the Orthodox doctrine. Although the author abundantly quotes Orthodox Fathers, his works are criticized by newer theologians\textsuperscript{108} for the scholastic approach in the interpretation of

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid. p. 122.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid. p. 123.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid. § 33. Το Βασιλικόν Αξίωμα. p. 127.
\textsuperscript{107} John Mesoloras (1851 – 1942), a Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics in the University of Athens.
\textsuperscript{108} For instance, by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware (born in 1934), a titular bishop of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in Great Britain and former lecturer of Eastern Orthodox Studies at Oxford
doctrinal matters. As for the threefold ministry of Christ, the author specifies and allocates the activities of Christ in accordance with His offices and in the following consecutive and rationalistic manner: “It can be added, that the Saviour commenced His redemptive work by means of His divine Incarnation. He manifests His Prophetic Office in that He taught until the Cross, He manifests His High-Priestly Office in His atoning sacrifice on the Cross, and He manifests His Royal office in His resurrection, ascension, sitting at the right hand of the Father and establishing of the Church.”

The author draws a parallel between Paul’s teaching on Jesus and the doctrine of Three Offices of Christ, as later presented by Eusebius, based on the similar concepts: “The Apostle Paul expresses a teaching concerning the three offices of the Redeemer, in which he writes about Him ‘who became for us wisdom from God – and righteousness and sanctification and redemption’ (1 Cor. 1:30), while from the Holy Tradition we refer to Eusebius: ‘Christ ... is the only high priest of all, and the only king of every creature, and the Father’s only supreme prophet of prophets’ (Eccl. Hist. I,3, Migne P.G. 20, 72).” Therefore, the author finds the doctrine of the threefold office to be a part of the Church Tradition.
According to Karmiris, “by the power of His prophetic dignity, the Lord, as the highest and absolute and unique and eternal teacher and professor, revealed and taught by word and deed the highest religious and moral truth, which truly had a redemptive influence onto the fallen man.”

Ironically, such interpretation makes one think that salvation wrought by Christ was achieved by simply His perfect teaching skills and excellent moral conduct: “The Lord, as the supreme divine teacher, liberated and redeemed humanity from the error by means of teaching the truth.”

And this is so because the truth that was ‘preached’ by Christ stimulates the consciousness of the person enslaved to sin: “it prompts one to realize the necessity of one’s redemption; it liberates one from error and servitude to sin.”

The teaching the author is talking about is understood literally: “The Saviour enlightened the mind of men by means of His teaching, through the light of the divine truth.”

Here, there is no clear distinction between truth as some truthful knowledge and the personified Truth (Christ). The Old Testament prophets also ‘preached’ the truth, but their truth could not liberate humanity from sin. So, unlike the Eastern Patristic tradition with the emphasis on communication of the person with Christ, the author mentions only theoretical knowledge about the truth.

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111 Italics are mine, – author.
113 Ibid. pp. 60-61.
114 Ibid. p. 61.
115 Ibid. p. 61.
116 According to Orthodox patristic theology, one matter is to know about Christ, another matter is to know Christ (personally). Knowledge is co-existing and participation. The point of genuine theology is not to speak about God, but to speak with God. So, truly enlightened is not the one who acquired some accurate knowledge, but the one who let the Light (Christ) in and made one’s soul His abode.

Archimandrite Zacharias Zacharou, a Cypriot monk from St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox monastery in Essex, England and a disciple of Elder Sophrony Sacharov, is a contemporary writer, lecturer and translator who holds PhD in theology. Commenting on the teaching of Elder Sophrony, Fr. Zacharias asserts that knowledge of truth is a ‘two-way act of the One who gives and of the one who receives’. Relationship and communication of these two is always personal, and the knowledge of God is a fruit of ‘existential conjunction’.

Traditional figurative terminology, such as: expiation, propitiation, atonement, debt, etc. is also used by Karmiris to describe our salvation: “In this way through the infinite and perpetual atoning power of His bloody sacrifice, the Saviour ... washed away all sins and expiated and reconciled us with God, becoming ‘the propitiation for our sins, and ... for the whole world’ (1 John 2:2), inasmuch as He paid our debt.”\textsuperscript{117} The author points to Christ’s eschatological energies as of a King and tries to fit them into a system of the threefold ministry: “The Saviour completed and crowned His redemptive work by the operations of His Royal Office, i.e.: of His descent to Hades, resurrection from the dead, His ascension and enthronement at the right hand of the Father.”\textsuperscript{118} Certainly, it is fine to say that our redemption was achieved by virtue of the operations of Christ’s particular office in a figurative speech. Nevertheless, an emphasis on Christ’s humanity should not overshadow His divinity, which is a main agent in providing the ‘therapy’ (i.e., salvation) to people. Both natures of Christ take part in salvation and neither one has to be neglected.

Finally, Karmiris faithfully holds that, “We have to discern the two estates of the Lord: one of humiliation and one of exaltation and glory (based on Phil. 2:5-11). From these two, the first estate includes the incarnation but also Prophetic and High-Priestly Office that starts from arrest of the Lord and pervades throughout His entire life, reaching a peak at the Cross. The estate of exaltation and glory commences from the descent of Christ to Hades, but also includes resurrection, ascension and sitting at the right hand of the Father, i.e. the Royal Office of Christ.”\textsuperscript{119} Further, the author provides a critique of Calvinists for placing the descent of Christ

\textsuperscript{117} Καρμίρης, Ιωάννης. Σύνοψις της Δογματικής Διδασκαλίας της Ορθοδόξου Καθολικής Εκκλησίας. Θεολογική Σχολή του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών. Αθήνα, 1957. p. 63.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid. p. 66.
\textsuperscript{119} Καρμίρης, Ιωάννης. Συμβολική. Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών, Θεολογική Σχολή. Αθήνα, 1961. p. 65.
into Hades to the State of Humiliation and His resurrection to the State of Glory. In reality, the author himself operates with the same rationalism by thoroughly allotting Christ’s activities to either one of His two estates. Eventually, such a scholastic approach prompts the author to conclude that, “The Saviour ... saved the human kind from sin: a) as Prophet and Teacher, who taught the highest revelation and teaching, who corroborated it through His perfect and exemplary life, b) as High Priest, who offered Himself as atoning sacrifice for men, and c) as King, who founded and governs His Church.”

In general, the author’s stance on the doctrine is all too similar to Androutsos’ position and does not present more worthwhile aspects on which to focus.

Metropolitan Maximos Aghiorgoussis (born in 1935 in Greece), a retired hierarch of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, PA, is a composer of The Dogmatic Tradition of the Orthodox Church (1984). There the author mentions certain hindrances on Christ’s way to the redemption and deification of the human person. Since salvation, as life in communion with God, is already present in Christ’s humanity on the basis of the hypostatic union of human and divine natures in Christ, what needs to be done, is for the other obstacles to be abolished: “Jesus had the following obstacles to overcome in order for Him to accomplish the work for which He came (theosis): the obstacle of nature, the obstacle of sin, the obstacle of death, and the dominion of the devil. The obstacle of nature was overcome with His Incarnation; the obstacle of sin and death was overcome by the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus; the dominion of the devil was over come by Christ’s descent into Hades.”

A scholastic notion of the foregoing obstructions on Jesus’ way to man’s salvation basically reminds an Orthodox teaching on the consequences of

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120 Ibid. p. 66.
the ancestral sin\textsuperscript{122} and the author does not hold any different approach to it except that he employs a scholastic scheme describing the process of restoration. However, in Orthodox tradition Christ’s activities in solving the ‘obstacles’ are not seen in a juridical way, neither are they methodically numbered in a one-two-three sequence with characteristic scholastic precision. The work of salvation is one and unified: it commences with Incarnation and advances towards Pentecost, and all its stages are equally important. Besides, Jesus provides humanity with something greater than forgiveness and judicial atonement. He grants it restoration, healing and deification.

The late archimandrite Athanasios Frangopoulos (mid of the 20\textsuperscript{th} c.), a Greek Orthodox theologian, writer and member of Christian Brotherhood “Zoe,” presents the ‘three great evils’ that distorted the image of God in the person similar to Protestant views on the ‘inherent human limitations.’\textsuperscript{123} Thus, in his \textit{Handbook of Popular Dogmatics}, the author mentions: 1) darkening of man’s mind, 2) bondage to sin and carnal passions, and 3) guilt before God: “Three were the great evils, which distorted man whom God has fashioned ‘in His image.’ First, man’s mind was darkened so that he could not discern the truth, nor understand what was proper and just, nor distinguish well good from evil. Secondly, he was overcome by sin and its tyrannical carnal

\textsuperscript{122} Orthodoxy accepts the following as the consequences of the ancestral sin: 1) spiritual death, i.e. the separation of man from God; 2) bodily death, i.e. separation of the soul from the body; 3) the shattering and distortion of the \textit{image}, i.e. darkness of mind, corruption of heart, and disposition towards evil; 4) the shame, i.e. the bad conscience but not the guilt; 5) heredity of the ancestral sin’s consequences and not of the sin itself.

\textsuperscript{123} Robert Sherman, Professor of Christian Theology at Bangor Theological Seminary in Portland, ME, who mainly focuses on Protestant Theology, holds that the issue of ‘obstacles’ “is understood from a threefold perspective – human bondage to external powers of evil, internal impurity through human sinfulness, and tragic human limitations that arise from life in a fallen world. First, the problem is external to us: we are “held in bondage by powers in some sense external to us and greater than we are.” Secondly, our problem is also internal: “We are not so much victims of evil as perpetrators of evil.” Thirdly, our problem arises from our finite “fallen” context and inherent human limitations that leave us weak, ignorant, and lost. All of these things separate us from God and call for atonement – at-one-ment.”


passions, and his will was subjugated to them. And thirdly, he became guilty before God and was judged unto eternal death.”

Correspondingly to the three evils, Jesus who offered general restoration and redemption to man with a purpose to ‘atone’ for man’s sins and set him at peace with God, carried out three ‘specific works and gifts’ and fixed the three ‘disasters of life’ by: 1) enlightening of man’s mind, 2) guiding him to all truth and 3) liberating him from the bonds of sin. Here, the numerous and multilateral consequences of Christ’s redemptive work are squeezed again into the ‘one-two-three’ solution framework (opposed to the three evils), that inevitably predetermines unutterable work of our salvation to a corresponding (to the three evils) and, therefore, limited number of solutions.

As for the three offices of Christ, Frangopoulos admits that they “are particular or separate only in name. In essence they are inseparably and indivisibly united in the one and same person of the Divine Redeemer.”

As for the prophetic work of Christ, the author limits it by presenting Jesus as ‘a model of moral perfection:’ “And when the Lord taught, He presented Himself as a model of moral perfection, applying in His life all that He taught.”

In a very Anselmian way the author speaks of man’s sin by which God was ‘offended’ and Divine Majesty was ‘insulted,’ wherefore His righteousness and holiness demanded the ‘punishment’ of the sinner. Therefore, Christ sought to save man from ‘condemnation’ and ‘guilt’ in His priestly ministry: “Man sinned, and with his sin he offended God, he insulted Divine Majesty. And God’s righteousness and holiness demanded the punishment of the sinner, and there was no other

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125 Ibid. p. 152.
126 Ibid. p. 153.
127 Ibid. p. 154.
128 PL 158, 382-430.
punishment for his grievous transgression save eternal death. Man was condemned: He was condemned to death. And God’s love sought to save sinful man, to save him from guilt and condemnation and from the consequences of this condemnation: from corruption and death.”\textsuperscript{129}

As eternal High Priest Jesus performed the mystery of our redemption by offering His own life as ‘\textit{an atoning sacrifice:}’ “Upon the Cross then, the Lord Jesus as our Great and eternal High Priest performed the mystery of our redemption by offering as an atoning sacrifice His own life. Then with His precious blood He ransomed us from the condemnation of sin, and gave us over to God holy and spotless and worthy of His kingdom.”\textsuperscript{130} Little or nothing is said about therapy and healing of the human being, for the sake of which Jesus mainly sacrificed His life.

In accordance with scholastic tradition, Frangopoulos also classifies Christ’s offices by allocating the Prophetic and High-Priestly Dignities into a state of humility and condescension during His public ministry; while the Lord’s Royal Dignity belongs to the state of glory: partially – during His public ministry in order to evoke (as the author surprisingly believes) ‘\textit{the astonishment}’ of the multitudes, but in its fullest – during His descent into Hades: “These two offices or dignities of Christ, the prophetic and the priestly, were exercised by our Lord here on earth during His public ministry and in His state of humility and condescension. His Royal or Kingly Office was exercised partially on earth in certain instances and in combination with His other two offices.”\textsuperscript{131} The same scholastic reasoning is observed in the author’s attempt to partially allocate Christ’s offices here and there, in this or that state.

\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Ibid.} p. 157.
\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Ibid.} pp. 158-159.
Protopresbyter Demetrios Kavadas (1932 – 2007), is a Greek Orthodox Church activist and religious educator. In his work *Orthodox Dogmatics – The Doctrine of Our Lord’s Work*, the author also adheres to the idea of methodological use of the threefold office to facilitate our better understanding of the divine economy: “The Fathers saw in part the implications of Holy Scriptures, but the scientific working out of His threefold office belongs to later times. We must not think, however, that there was an actual division or separation in the work of Our Lord Himself. We only distinguish the three offices as a help to our own reasoning and thinking.”\[^{132}\]

However, the author immediately deviates here from the unity of Christ’s salvific work by making preferences among His offices: “Yet it is true that the center of Our Lord’s threefold office was His priestly work by which He reconciled man and God. The other two serve as means for this end – the prophetic, by preparing the spirit of man to receive His teaching, and the kingly work, by bestowing the grace of Redemption and perfecting the believer in the Kingdom of God.”\[^{133}\] Thus, the priestly office is elevated above the prophetic and kingly.

In terms of Christ’s High Priestly Office, Kavadas states that Jesus who offered Himself as a spotless sacrifice to God the Father is ‘*a sacrifice of propitiation*’ made to ‘*appease*’ and ‘*satisfy*’ the righteousness of God: “The Saviour as the Great High Priest offered Himself as a spotless sacrifice to God the Father, a sacrifice of propitiation, being Himself both Priest and Victim, and both appeased and satisfied the righteousness of God offended by the sin of man in his transgression of the divine law.”\[^{134}\] By taking our nature Christ, as it were, “compensates for

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the guilt and punishment of sin by suffering for us and His death counterbalances the eternal death to which our race was doomed.}\textsuperscript{135} Describing Jesus’ Prophetic Office, the author presents Christ virtually almost as a fortune-teller, the One who foretells the events to come: “As prophet He foretold the fall of Jerusalem and the future of His Church.”\textsuperscript{136} Then, in consecutive methodological manner, the author claims that: “His royal office Our Lord exercised only in part on earth, in working miracles, establishing the laws of His Kingdom, and the like, but His royal power is chiefly seen in His descent into Hades, His Ascension, and His heavenly work.”\textsuperscript{137} Thus, the author believes that the Lord exercised His royal office mainly after death.

Andreas Theodorou (1922 – 2004), a Professor of the History of Doctrines and Symbolic Theology in the Theological School of Athens, was an author of the \textit{Answers to the Dogmatic Questions}. The author has similar views with those of Kavadas when he speaks of man’s guilt, which had to be ‘expiated’ before God: “Christ’s sacrifice indeed redeemed the world from the bondage of the devil and the guilt of the sin, expiating before God for the misdemeanours of the world and relieving the nation from the burden of mortification and death.”\textsuperscript{138} The author goes even further than Kavadas by asserting that Christ was a prophet literally, the One who would prophesy about the consummation of the world and the like: “In parallel, however, He was also a prophet to the letter. He prophesied about His own end, about the life and adventures of His Church and about the consummation of the history of men and of the entire creation.”\textsuperscript{139} This

\textsuperscript{135} \textit{Ibid}. p. 12.  
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Ibid}. p. 12.  
\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Ibid}. p. 13.  
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Θεοδόρου, Ανδρέας. Απαντήσεις σε Ερωτήματα Λογιστικά. 65. Τί Είναι το Προφητικό Αυτροπικό Αξίωμα τού Χριστού; 66. Τί Είναι το Αρχιερατικό Αυτροπικό Αξίωμα τού Χριστού; Αποστολική Διακονία. Αθήνα, 1997. p. 113.}  
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{Ibid}. pp. 111-112.
author also believes that Christ exercised His royal office mainly in the posthumous life: “The Lord exercises mainly His royal office after His death on the Cross, where the high priestly office has been completed and the ineffable kenosis of the Word has been finished.” However, it is namely this ineffableness of Christ’s kenosis (i.e. ‘self-emptying’) that does not allow to make such a conclusion and to limit the Uncircumscribed One in His functions.

Demetrios Tselengidis (born in 1940-es), a Professor of Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki presently, is an author of an outline on Western Theology and Spirituality (one of his early works). Initially, the author does not differ significantly from a scholastic interpretation of the doctrine of the Three Offices by asserting that Christ as a Prophet revealed the highest truth about Himself, i.e. that He Himself is ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:16): “As a High Priest, He offered the true expiatory sacrifice to God the Father and brought reconciliation of people with God since He took on Himself the burden of sins of the entire humanity. That is, the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross paid off people’s sins with its ‘redemptive’ power and made them pure and just in front of God.” Thus, Christ offered salvation with His atoning priestly sacrifice accompanied by His prophetic and royal functions: “Christ exercises the Royal Dignity by establishing and governing the Church.” Fortunately, in his later work on Satisfaction of the Divine Justice According to Anselm of Canterbury, the author breaks with a literal and juridical view on the doctrine and along with the Church Fathers

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140 Ibid. p. 115.
141 It is the incarnate Logos who on the Holy and Great Saturday simultaneously is: “In the tomb bodily and in Hades with the soul as God, in paradise with the thief, and on the throne with the Father and the Spirit … filling all things.”

143 Ibid. p. 61.
maintains that: “The necessity of incarnation serves the ‘end’ (i.e. perfection) of creation, which is divinization of man.” Lastly, there are three Russian (once again, chosen at random and out of a number of many other) authors who basically hold the same line in their approach to the three ministries of Christ.

Archpriest Nikolaj Malinovski (1861 – 1917), a Rector and Professor of Dogmatics in Vologda Theological Seminary and an author of the *Outline of the Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, holds that: “Since ancient times, in order to bring this matter as far as possible to the adoption by the believing consciousness, it was accepted to consider the redemptive ministry of the God-man from three sides that more or less fully embrace the essence of Christ’s work.” Similarly to Zizany and Mohyla, the author derives the concept of the three offices from Christ’s names: “The notion of the three ministries of the Saviour is contained in some way in His very name – the Messiah or Christ, which means Anointed One. In the Old Testament the prophets, priests and kings were consecrated to their ministry through the anointing, but the Son of God, accepting the human nature, was anointed with the *oil of gladness*, – the oil of the All-Holy Spirit, – *more than His partakers*. For this reason, in order of preference, the name Christ or Anointed One is given into possession to the God-Man Jesus as the One clothed with dignity of the great Prophet, High Priest and King.” Indeed, the fact of anointment (seen rather as outpouring of the grace of the Spirit) allows drawing a parallel between Christ and the bearers of the said three Old Testament

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offices. Nevertheless, it is not the three offices per se that validate Jesus as Christ but a mutual and pre-eternal concordance\textsuperscript{147} of the three Divine Persons.

Archpriest Sergius Bulgakov (1871 – 1944) was a controversial Russian Orthodox theologian, philosopher and economist who left Russia in 1922 and settled in Paris. The author dedicates entire fifth chapter of his work \textit{The Lamb of God} to the three offices of Christ. However, this extensive overview of the three offices focuses mainly on Christ’s \textit{work} itself. The writer simply uses the accepted framework of Christ’s threefold office to describe His mission on earth. Similarly to Malinovski,\textsuperscript{148} Bulgakov from the start admits the necessity to separate and classify the elements of soteriology for purposes of practical differentiation and in order to better embrace the essence of Christ’s work: “Our thought and knowledge always fragment their subject, abstract from it its separate sides and thus inevitably take the part for the whole. In this sense, the theological doctrine of the \textit{three} ministries of Christ is the product of such an inevitable abstracting or fragmentation of the unity of the whole. There are nevertheless sufficient biblical and theological grounds to use this distinction of three aspects for purposes of

\textsuperscript{147} In the Orthodox theology, such an agreement is known as the \textit{Pre-eternal Counsel of the Holy Trinity}, where a single divine will is expressed regarding creation of man and the role of the Second Divine Person (i.e. His incarnation, etc.) in case of man’s failure. The moment of the expression of the divine will can be discerned in the famous icon \textit{the Holy Trinity} written by Andrei Rublev (1360 – 1430), the greatest Russian medieval iconographer. ‘The Holy Scripture (Gen. 1:26) says that the creation of man was preceded by some mysterious counsel of the Divine Persons: ‘And God said, Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.’ In Orthodox theology, a counsel of the Divine Persons regarding the creation of man was named the \textit{Pre-eternal Counsel of God.} The very word ‘counsel’ in relation to the eternal Divine plan of salvation is found in the Holy Scripture (Acts 2:23 – ‘determinate counsel!’). It should be noted that the Slavic word ‘совет’ (counsel) means ‘expression of will’ and not ‘consultation,’ for ‘consultation’ means coordination of a number of wills, whereas the will of God is one.”

\textsuperscript{148} As well as to Pomazansky and Sarychev, as described further.
practical differentiation.” The author is not interested in the three offices per se but namely focuses on the description of Christ’s mission viewed through the prism of these ministries.

Speaking about the Prophetic office, Bulgakov views “Christ’s prophetic preaching about Himself from three points of view: as a theological doctrine of God the Word, as eschatology and apocalypses.” Also, the author does not see a reason in the case of Christ to: “consider the miracles as belonging to His ‘royal’ ministry, understood (erroneously) in the sense of God’s omnipotence, rather than as belonging to His prophetic ministry.” He argues that “Christ’s miracles in the days of His earthly ministry do not manifest ‘royal’ power over the world, for in descending into the world, He had abandoned such power and acquires it again only after His resurrection and glorification.” Rather, the author maintains, they manifest prophetic power.

According to Bulgakov, “the so-called high-priestly ministry is a generalizing concept expressing the significance of Christ’s work that consists in the redemption of the human race from sin by Christ’s offering Himself ... as redemptive sacrifice to God.” However, the author asserts, the high-priestly ministry is not limited solely to redemption from sin: “Its meaning extends to the universal deification of man’s creaturely being. The relation between redemption and the deification or sanctification of the human essence is such that the former precedes and conditions the latter.”

150 Ibid. p. 327
151 Ibid. p. 333
152 Ibid. p. 333
153 Ibid. p. 334
154 Ibid. p. 334
Finally, Bulgakov holds that Christ’s entire earthly ministry is namely the prophetic and high-priestly ministry. In his opinion, Christ’s royal office enfolds in its fullness after the Resurrection and belongs to the state of His exaltation: “This ministry is not simultaneous with the prophetic and high-priestly ministry but is accomplished after it.”\textsuperscript{155} Thus, he limits Christ’s royal office by the state of humiliation. In summary, the author adheres to the sound and traditional Orthodox views on Christ’s ministries. Furthermore, he expands on the three offices and provides their fascinating overview. Unfortunately, like many other Orthodox ‘scholastics,’ he does not escape an allocation of Christ’s works in accordance with His offices and arbitrarily places them into this or that historical sequence.

Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky (1888 – 1988), a Russian dogmatist from Ukraine and an instructor of Dogmatic Theology in Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary in Jordanville, NY, wrote a manual on \textit{Orthodox Dogmatic Theology}. The author maintains that: “The systems of dogmatic theology, following the ancient custom, in order to gain a fuller illumination of the whole work of salvation accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ, view it most often from three aspects, namely as (a) the High-Priestly ministry of the Lord, (b) His Prophetic ministry, and (c) His Royal ministry. These three aspects are called the triple ministry of the Lord.”\textsuperscript{156} After describing the three offices, the author tries to attach an additional paragraph on \textit{The Deification of Humanity in Christ},\textsuperscript{157} but such linking seems to be ‘artificial’ and out of the main content.

\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Ibid.} p. 411
\textsuperscript{157} \textit{Ibid.} pp. 220-223.
Vasilij Sarychev (1904 – 1980), a late Professor of the Fundamental and Dogmatic Theology in the Theological Academy of Moscow, was an author of *Synopsis of the Dogmatic Theology*. The author shares the same views with Frangopoulos concerning the three obstacles on the way of men in achieving unity with God: “Man suffers from three disasters: from ignorance or lack of knowledge of truth and goodness; from sin as his internal state; and from his powerlessness before evil that surrounds him from all sides, especially death. Hence, to save the human race means to liberate it from these three calamities of life.”158 Finally, the author notes that it is necessary to keep in mind that despite its suitable receptivity the tripartite scheme of Christ’s ministry has only ‘relative significance:’ If it is difficult to fit the matters of great men into any specific framework, it is even more difficult and impossible to fit the redemptive work of Christ, which belongs to the God-Man and therefore is infinitely rich in its internal content, into some theological scheme of salvation.”159 Consequently, the scheme or formula of the triple ministry of Jesus Christ does not have the all-exhaustive value, but only relative, conditional meaning that facilitates the assimilation by man of the redemptive exploit accomplished by Christ. Being fully aware of limitations of the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ and of non-acceptance of the satisfaction theories, the three Russian authors justify an application of the threefold scheme within Orthodox soteriology solely for anagogic purposes. However, it is not always clear where the Orthodox teaching on *thesis* fits into this scheme.

As seen from the above, Orthodox authors who used the doctrine of the Threefold Office to interpret the divine economy\textsuperscript{160} had little choice but to follow the Western scheme of Christ’s triple ministry, which constituted the very basis of a Reformed theology teaching concerning the works of Christ as mediator between men and God. Consequently, these authors are limited in their description of the God-man’s redemptive work by the narrow number of only three ministries of Christ. It causes their unintended dependence on Western categories that are alien to Eastern Christian concepts, terminology, and teaching. Nonetheless, some authors strive to fit the scholastic doctrine into the Orthodox understanding of Christ’s mission and simultaneously to come to an agreement with the patristic teaching on theosis.

Chapter 3
Orthodox Authors in Agreement with Patristic Theology in Regards to the Doctrine

Although some Orthodox theologians were influenced by the West, the dominant tradition in Orthodoxy was in continuity with the early Church. Having considered a group of Orthodox authors influenced by Western concepts, my research can finally focus on the approaches of Orthodox dogmatists who are in agreement with the principles of Orthodox patristic theology. Taras Kurgansky, Georges Florovsky and Nikos Matsoukas are among the most independent from scholastic categories thinkers that deal with the doctrine under consideration. These authors are completely self-reliant and not influenced by each other.

Hieromonk Taras Kurgansky (1876 – 1904) was a gifted, brilliant talent who wielded an immense erudition from his childhood. He was the author of a series of critical articles in the

\textsuperscript{160} That is, the divine plan for salvation of the world or the extra-triune activity of God.
Moscow Theological Journal *Faith and the Church*. Kurgansky died in the 29th year of his life as superintendent of Zaikonospassky Religious School. His critical work *The Turning-Point in Ancient-Russian Theology* touches upon the doctrine of the Three Offices in the 4th chapter entitled *Features of the Western Theology of Incarnation*. Here, the author analyzes Western influences on the Orthodox theologies on the incarnation and the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ, which penetrated some Orthodox doctrinal editions.

Kurgansky argues that “although a universal teaching about the Divine person of Jesus Christ did not change fundamentally among denominations of the Western Christian community, it took a significant addition. Latin theologians introduced in dogmatic theology the doctrine of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King.” For the author, the significance of this Latin addition consists in its deviation from the spirit of patristic theology, which can be seen in its further development: “At first glance, this teaching does not bring anything new to the dogma of the union of two natures in one person, but only explains the meaning of various aspects of the life of Jesus Christ, and also determines the very denotation of the name ‘Christ’ in the *Confessio Fidei Christianae*.” The author claims that “this subdivision, completely unknown to the Holy Fathers, was unconsciously rewritten by the Kyjivan (Ukrainian) scholastics into Muscovite (Russian) Orthodox theology. Thus, the doctrine of the three ministries, Latin in origin, is also

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161 Initially it was entitled as *The Great-Russian and Little-Russian Theology of the XVI and XVII centuries*. Курганский, Тарасий. *Переломъ въ Древнерусскомъ Богословіи. Особенности Западнаго Богословія о Воплощеніи. Крутицкое Подворье. Общество Любителей Церковной Истории, Москва, 2003.* [http://www.roacbulgaria.org/contents/Tarasii_perelom.htm](http://www.roacbulgaria.org/contents/Tarasii_perelom.htm)

162 Here, both Protestant and Catholic theologies are understood as Latin on account of their common source – the Augustinian legacy.


164 That is, a methodological division into and viewing of Christ’s mission from three perspectives.
set out in Latin form in the *Orthodox Confession* of Peter Mohyla.”\footnote{Kyuranskiy, Tapaishy. *Ibid.*} Thus, the author considers the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ as a part of Latin scholastic soteriology.

Kurgansky finds the existence of the three famous people that had the same name as Christ,\footnote{That is, Joshua – a warrior, Jesus Sirach – a teacher, and Jeshua – the high priest.} as presented in the Latin form by Lavrenty Zizany in his *Great Catechesis* and by Peter Mohyla in his *Orthodox Confession*, to be “a purely accidental circumstance, [which was] interpreted in the spirit of the Latin innovations.”\footnote{Kyuranskiy, Tapaishy. *Ibid.*} The author argues that these two Kyjivan scholastics present “the great name of the Son of God and Divine incarnation as simple compound of the three types in one person that are so common in the history of the Jewish Kingdom of the time of decline.”\footnote{Ibid.} In this case, “Christ presents Himself as a priest of the bloody cult, as a king ruling by the power of the external might and, finally, as a prophet-teacher who is alien and aloof of any coercive authority; as the One who acts exclusively on free human conscience.”\footnote{Ibid.} Thus, Christ is acknowledged as the ‘spokesman’ of the three ministries, that is He is just a spokesman for the high-priestly, prophetic and royal offices. Hence, all of these forms of ministry are recognized as something ‘original and fundamental,’ i.e. they are seen as essential offices, without which Christ’s mission is inconceivable. The aforesaid prompts the author to be convinced that the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ is Latin in origin. He also finds the doctrine to be alien to the thought of the Holy Fathers.

Further, Kurgansky holds that: “Although Christ is called somewhere the King or Hierarch, it is done so only in a figurative or rhetorical sense; or the words of Holy Scripture are merely
reiterated where Christ is called so.”\textsuperscript{171} The author is sure that the exceptional indication of the three mentioned names is not seen in any of the documents of universal patristic theology he examined: “The absence of such doctrine in strictly theological writings imposes a seal of some alienation from the patristic understanding of Christianity on the doctrine itself.”\textsuperscript{172} One can partially disagree at this point. As shown in the first chapter, Holy Fathers of both East and West do mention Christ’s offices. Nonetheless, His ministries are not limited by a particular number or confined exclusively by the said three offices. Likewise, Christ’s offices are elucidated in a figurative sense; they are not systematized and do not constitute a doctrinal concept.

According to Kurgansky, making the transition to the soil of the Bible, from where the very images of the three ministries are borrowed, makes one see that “the concepts of a High Priest, King and Prophet by no means are the only notions, through which the sacred writers define the high dignity of Christ.”\textsuperscript{173} The author prefers to call Christ “a wandering teacher as He really was according to the way of His earthly life and to the form of His relationship to people.”\textsuperscript{174} Thus, diverse epithets of Christ, such as: teacher, lord, life, redeemer, messiah, mediator, high priest, saviour, prophet, servant, glorified one, king, etc., cannot identify Jesus completely in a positive way but only in a relative way. For instance, the Apostle Paul calls Christ the ‘High Priest.’ But in contrast to Jewish high priests, he calls Him the ‘High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:1-10).’ It is obvious for the author that “such title of Christ is no

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{173} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
more than a simple comparison.”\textsuperscript{175} The use of comparison and continuous reference to the Hebrew Scripture characterizes Paul’s ministry to Christians of the Jewish background.

Kurgansky believes that in the opinion of Christians, the Old Testament high-priestly ministry was only a safety measure against Jews who were inclined to idolatry: “Sacrifices could not really change the sinful condition of the human soul. The prophet Isaiah attests to this fact (1:11,12,15) long before Christ. Besides, an opinion regarding unconditional necessity of bloody victims was alien to the Eastern Church until it came across related scholastic ideas.”\textsuperscript{176} The author is certain that with recognition of the unnecessariness of bloody sacrifices, the idea of the priestly ministry of Jesus Christ fades by itself.

Further, Kurgansky says: “The notion of ‘king,’ whose ministry is attributed by scholastics to Jesus Christ not as a picturesque comparison but as an essential property, suffers even from greater uncertainty and conditionality.”\textsuperscript{177} Indeed, Orthodox theology cannot accept Christ’s offices as His hypostatic properties\textsuperscript{178} for they belong to neither of His two natures. The author holds that from a biblical point of view a primordial, purely religious, and therefore strictly theocratic rule should be considered the ideal system of social life. That is, the Bible shows total indifference to the diverse forms of political life, whether a republican system (1 Macc. 8:13-16) or monarchy, for all of them have merely a temporary, earthly character: “As for the status of the earthly kings, there is probably only one thing common to them: the earthly nature of their

\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{177} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{178} Hypostatic properties of the God-man are of two natures: human and divine. Thus, it is common to human nature of Christ to experience hunger, thirst, and tiredness, to sleep, to suffer and to die. In its turn, the divine nature of Christ is characterized by God’s omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, goodness, mercy, holiness, sinlessness, etc.
authority. Long before Christ, the royal prophet David highlighted the earthly and hostile nature of authority of the pagan kings towards God (Ps. 2:2)."\(^79\) On the other hand, God surely manifested a greater condescension to the infirmities of the people by allowing the very existence of the ‘anointed one’ (i.e. king of the Jews) than allowing the ‘lesser evil,’ i.e. an establishment of the bloody sacrifices. God considered an establishment of the royal authority among the Chosen People to be almost apostasy (1 King. 8:6-9). Therefore, there is no reason to think that from a biblical point of view the royal authority is an absolute and final expression or form of political existence. Besides, Christ is called king in the Gospel either allegorically (e.g. John 1:49; 18:37), or in mockery, as by Roman soldiers and Pilate. This ideology suggests that it would be unthinkable for Christ to claim royal authority of earthly kings. Furthermore, Christ never laid claim to the royal office for His Kingdom is of a different nature.

According to Kurgansky, the idea of the prophetic ministry of Christ rests on the words of Deuteronomy (18:15):\(^80\) “It must be admitted that this ministry, being the highest of all kinds of biblical attitude towards people, can characterize the life and ministry of Christ most of all. But it is not possible to accept it entirely, for the prophetic ministry in the later sense is possible only during the abnormal current of social life, when ordinary organs of the spiritual authority do not perform their purpose.”\(^81\) Thus, mostly prophets (such as Moses and Samuel) were the high rank representatives and rulers of Israelites in the early period. However, they were replaced by high-priests (e.g., Eli of Shiloh) and kings (e.g., David) in the normal course of life of the later period. On the whole, there is no way to distinguish these types of ministry exclusively on biblical grounds: the three offices often intertwine and overlap. For instance, in the orthodox

\(^{79}\) Курганский, Тарасий. *Ibid.*

\(^{80}\) “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.”

\(^{81}\) Курганский, Тарасий. *Ibid.*
Office of Oblation, the first high priest Aaron belongs to the status of the prophets while King David is also counted in to the ranks of the prophets. Besides, it would be in disagreement with the history and the character of the Prophetic ministry, as portrayed in the sacred books, to limit it only by prediction of the future.

Kurgansky maintains that “Generally the concepts of the high priest, king and prophet were divided as a result of the sinful life of Israel, and this division in no way can be considered legitimate.”\(^{182}\) In other words, the division of the said ministries and a clear distinction of their particular roles came as a result of Israel’s deviation from God. Prior to that, a prophet could fulfil the duties of a priest (e.g., Jeremiah and Ezekiel) while a king (e.g., David) and a high priest (e.g., Aaron) could act as prophets. Later, the main responsibilities of the High Priest and King became independent: religious cult was a domain of the former and earthly affairs in Israel – a domain of the latter. According to the author, “Christ, appearing to mankind as the Son of God, could not be either king, or priest, or a prophet in the true sense of these words. The most successful name of Christ, as the spiritual head of the Church established by Him, would be the name of Shepherd.”\(^{183}\) Thus, in the author’s opinion, the prophetic office was a purely pastoral service for it reminds one of the ministry of Christ – of the wandering teacher.

Finally, according to the bold statement of Taras Kurgansky “the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ, as it were, legitimates division of the Church life into secular life and admits the possibility of legitimate existence of the independent didactic origin.”\(^{184}\) With such a rigid outlook, the author basically says that the only legitimate didactic origin is the Church (not the

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\(^{182}\) Ibid.
\(^{183}\) Ibid.
\(^{184}\) Ibid.
world) and the only possible way of life is religious life (not secular). He worries that this doctrine may appear to justify the secular culture and downgrade Christianity from a stage of the ‘single independent essential principal of life’ to the ‘category of common cultural forces.’ What the author implies here is a theoretical possibility of the separation of the State and the Church from each other similarly to gradual splitting and final separation of the historic roles of kings (accountable only for the earthly affairs) and priests (exclusively in charge for the religious cult) in the later period of Israel’s history. The fall of the Russian Empire that followed shortly after the author’s death may better attest to his point. The political, social\(^\text{185}\) and religious disaster crowned by the Russian revolution of 1917 caused the subsequent separation of the Church from the State and the marginalization of religious life to the closed boundaries of one’s private life.

Protopresbyter Georges Florovsky (1893 – 1979) does not need much introduction being a prominent and globally known 20\(^{\text{th}}\) century Orthodox priest, theologian, and writer. He served as a Professor of Patristics at St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris and as Dean of St. Vladimir’s Seminary in Crestwood, NY. Reflecting on the high-priestly ministry of Christ, Florovsky points out that in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* the redeeming work of Christ is conveyed as the ministry of the High Priest. Jesus, as the High Priest, sacrificed His life for our sake but the sacrifice itself stems from the sacrificial power of love and is not merely an offering, but rather a dedication and consecration to God. By His death, Christ did not simply achieve legalistic absolution of sins but restoration and glorification of human nature. The Cross

\(^{185}\) Interestingly, a belief in connection of the doctrine of the Three Office of Christ with human society and the surrounding world is also shared in the West by Karl Muller, who says: “The three offices of prophet, priest, and king correspond to the needs of the moral education of man and of his connection with human society and the surrounding world.”

surpasses any kind of forensic notion of Christ’s sacrifice. Ultimately, His death was effective not as a death of the innocent Jesus, but as the death of the Incarnate Logos: “The death of the Cross is a sacrificial offering. And to offer a sacrifice does not mean only to surrender. Even from a merely moral point of view, the whole significance of sacrifice is not the denial itself, but the sacrificial power of love.”

The author considers a sacrifice not merely as an offering, but rather as a dedication, a consecration to God: “Christ gives Himself not only ‘for the remission of sins,’ but also for our glorification. He gives Himself not only for sinful humanity, but also for the Church: to cleanse and to hallow her, to make her holy, glorious and spotless (Eph. 5:25).”

Glorification or divinization (theosis) of human nature is the ultimate purpose of the Logos’ incarnation.

Florovsky accentuates not so much the High-Priestly ministry of Christ itself as the outcome of His redemptive work in whole. Thus, the author asserts that Christ’s death on the Cross is first of all the cleansing of human nature, a path of our restoration in the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Word, a washing of human infirmities and of mortality itself, a cleansing of all humanity in the Person of the ‘new Adam:’ “The Baptism of the Cross is, as it were, the cleansing of human nature, which is traveling the path of restoration in the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Word. This is a washing of human nature in the outpoured sacrificial blood of the Divine Lamb. And first of all, a washing of the body: not only a washing away of sins, but a washing away of human infirmities and of mortality itself.”

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187 Ibid. p. 132.
188 Ibid. p. 133.
Florovsky reflects on this washing as on the cleansing in preparation for the coming resurrection. This is a cleansing of all human nature, of all humanity in the Person of its new and mystical First-born, in the ‘Second Adam’ (Christ): “This is the baptism by blood of the whole Church. Further, the death of the Cross is the cleansing of the whole world. It is the baptism by blood of all creation, the cleansing of the Cosmos through the cleansing of the Microcosm.”189 The spiritual life of every Christian commences with Baptism, which is also considered the first step190 on the way of one’s personal purification.

In addition, Florovsky sees Christ’s death on the Cross as a liturgical sacrament: “The death of the Cross is a sacrament; it has not only a moral, but also a sacramental and liturgical meaning. It is the Passover of the New Testament. And its sacramental significance is revealed at the Last Supper.”191 Certainly, it may seem rather strange that the Eucharist should precede Calvary, and that in the Upper Room Christ Himself should give His body and His blood to the disciples: “However, the Last Supper was not merely a prophetic rite, just as the Eucharist is no mere symbolic remembrance. It is a true sacrament. For Christ who performs both is the High Priest of the New Testament.”192 The Eucharist itself is presented by the author as the sacrament of the transfiguration, the mysterious and sacramental ‘conversion:’ “The Eucharist is the sacrament of the Crucifixion, the broken Body and the Blood outpoured. And along with this it is also the sacrament of the transfiguration, the mysterious and sacramental conversion (μεταβολή) of the flesh into the glorious spiritual food. By offering His Body as food, He clearly showed that the sacrificial

189 Ibid. p. 134.
190 Orthodox hesychastic and neptic tradition discerns the three steps of one’s progress in spiritual life. Thus, one has to gradually attain: 1) purification, 2) illumination, and 3) glorification (theosis).
191 Florovsky, Georges. Ibid. p. 134.
192 Ibid. p. 135.
offering of the Lamb had already been accomplished. For the sacrificial body would not have been suitable for food if it were still animated."\textsuperscript{193} Thus, the author attests to Christ’s High Priestly ministry precisely in this sacramental meaning of the Last Supper, to which Calvary is directly linked.

Once again, Florovsky emphasizes the ontological consequences of the Incarnation and not the might or authority of Christ’s office as some external, self-sufficient tool in itself. Most important to the author is the fact that Christ’s death was a death within the Hypostasis of the Word, the death of the enhypostasized humanity. The death of the God-man overcame corruption and death, and ultimately brought us the resurrection: “His death was not the ‘wages of sin.’ And the main point is that this was a death within the Hypostasis of the Word, the death of the ‘enhypostasized’ humanity. In other words, though separated in death, the soul and the body remained still united through the Divinity of the Word, from which neither was ever estranged.”\textsuperscript{194} Following the author’s logic, the death of the enhypostasized humanity does not alter the ontological character of death, but changes its meaning: “This was an ‘incorr upt death,’ and therefore corruption and death were overcome in it, and in it begins the resurrection.”\textsuperscript{195}

Florovsky explores Christ’s royal ministry exclusively through the prism of the Cross as a means from which our original blessedness was restored. Here, the Cross symbolizes the Kingdom.\textsuperscript{196} Furthermore, it is a mystery of the Cross that brings us restoration and

\textsuperscript{193} \textit{Ibid}. p. 135.
\textsuperscript{194} \textit{Ibid}. pp. 136, 137.
\textsuperscript{195} \textit{Ibid}. p. 137.
\textsuperscript{196} As St. John Chrysostom says: “I call Him King, because I see Him crucified, for it is appropriate for a King to die for His subjects” [St. John Chrysostom, \textit{Crucem et Latroneum, h.I, M.G. XLIX}, p. 399].
renewal. During Christ’s descent into Hades humanity was called from corruption to pass into eternal life. This took place on Great and Holy Saturday: “The mystery of the resurrecting Cross is commemorated especially on Good Saturday. This is not only the eve of salvation. It is the very day of our salvation. This is the day of the Descent into Hades. And the Descent into Hades is already His Resurrection.”¹⁹⁷ In this new stage of incorruptibility Jesus’ body “has been transfigured into a state of glory. The soul of Christ descends into Hades, also inseparable from the Divinity, ‘even in Hades in the soul, as God,’ – the ‘deified soul’ (ψυχή τεθεωμένη) of Christ, as St. John of Damascus suggests.”¹⁹⁸ The author does not specifically focus on whether this descent belongs to the state of humiliation or to the state of exaltation. Neither does Florovsky review Christ’s prophetic ministry. In fact, he does not even explicitly mention an existence of Christ’s offices or speaks on their certain number. What really matters to him is what Jesus did for us by means of His Incarnation, the Cross and the Resurrection. That achievement is the possibility of our transfiguration, i.e. divinization.

Nikos Matsoukas (born in 1934) served at the Theological Faculty of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki as a Professor of Dogmatics and History of Philosophy for 42 years. He wrote extensive works, monographs and articles on theological and philosophical content. Prof. Matsoukas has a chapter on the three offices of Christ in his second volume of *Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology* that exposes Orthodox faith in comparison to Western Christianity. The author views the concept of the Three Offices of Christ through the history of the Chosen People as well as the liturgical and charismatic dimensions of the Church. His main point is that that the

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 139.
¹⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 140.
three offices of Christ are to be seen as a type of ‘fulfillment’ of the history of the Chosen People. Thus, the author establishes a connection between the past and present history.

According to Matsoukas, Christ, as incarnate Word, is not just the same disincarnate Word who was regularly found in the Patriarchs and the Prophets of Israel during the epiphanies (i.e. manifestations), but is: “the One who summarizes and unifies the whole quintessence of the history of the Chosen People in His person, where the three dignities basically dominated: the royal, prophetic and priestly. Anointing of the kings, prophets and priests bestowed on them the office of governance and guidance of people. However, these three offices of king, prophet and priest did not always coexist. But even when the three offices did coexist, self-evidently they were not in a wonderful agreement.”

Usually one office contradicted another. This fact alludes to imperfection of the offices themselves.

Matsoukas holds that the three dignities can serve the body (i.e. assembly) of the people only as charismatic functions: “In the person of the incarnate Word these three dignities, which He Himself guided in the history of Israel, are unbreakably joined as charismatic functions and assemble the body of the Church. The Church as a body of life, as a building of the ‘living stones’ (1 Pet. 2:5), cannot be understood without the royal, prophetic and priestly power and authority, – certainly, within liturgical and charismatic framework.”

According to the author’s unique interpretation of the three offices, “the royal authority is the power that realizes the actual task of creation and re-creation; the prophetic authority is the power of the word that causes the diversity and variety of created beings in a hierarchical body. The priestly authority is the power

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200 Ibid. p. 299.
that binds together the logical beings with God so that they refer to Him and thrive in their final course.”

This liturgical vision of the three ministries of Christ is much closer to Orthodox tradition that sees the Logos as both Creator and re-Creator of the world. In such a perspective, the three ministries are not seen as cabinet offices or official authorities bestowed upon Christ, but as His charismatic functions. It is natural to the God-man to heal, to forgive, to unite, to restore, etc. It is His charisma, not an ‘office.’

Thus, “Christ as King created foundations of the building of the ecclesiastical body; He crushed demonic forces, annihilated the disrupting power of death, created miracles and finally has risen Himself.” The author maintains that this triumph is a royal triumph: “It is the beginning of the re-shaping and transformative role of the very Church through the sacraments.” Finally, Christ as a single Mediator and Priest, unites creation with God, offering Himself as sacrifice. Anyhow, whenever He performs a work as a king – the prophet and priest are not absent because Christ has these three offices combined; the same happens as many times as He acts as a prophet and as a priest. On the other hand, “there is no any conflict of these charismatic dignities in His person, as one encounters it (i.e. the conflict) in the history of the Chosen People. This unity of dignities is dictated by the same hypostatic identity of Christ and, at the same time, by the very structure of the Church body.” Ultimately, that prompts the author to conclude that no work in the Church is understood solely as royal, prophetic or priestly.

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201 Ibid. p. 300.
202 Ibid. p. 300.
203 Ibid. p. 300.
204 Ibid. p. 301.
Matsoukas continues: “Christ unites in a definitive way the three offices in His person, and has taken them irrevocably from the body of Israel; this is obliged to be integrated into the Church.” Already Eusebius, linking the history of the Chosen People as an organic unity with the history of the Church, detects the three offices in the person of Christ, the only High Priest of all, the only King of all creation and the only Prophet. However, “none of the previous anointed ones, i.e. kings, prophets and priests possessed the ‘divinely inspired power,’ which Jesus has.” Eusebius, as an historian, sees in the whole course of events the stages that the body of the Church goes through: “The offices are structured differently in the new phase, where Christ is the head of the body. Therefore, Apostle Paul concludes in his Epistle to Hebrews, that the mediatory Jewish priesthood has been permanently replaced by the priesthood of Christ, who grants it as a gift to the structure of the Church body.” Thus, perfection of the three offices is finally realized in Christ.

According to Matsoukas, the power of the Jewish priesthood was temporary, so it could not continue the history into its new phase: “Melchizedek, the King of Salem, the priest of the Most High God, prefigures the very Christ. Therefore, the writer of the Epistle to Hebrews says, Melchizedek is superior to the Jewish priests; he is above the Jewish priesthood. He is the Word, discarnate in the Old Testament and incarnate in the period of the Church.” The connection of the history of Israel and of the Church, of the old priestly office and of the Christian priesthood is already done in the above Epistle. Besides, the author is altogether sure that the ensuing theology of the Fathers will extensively develop this issue, certainly not systematically but in the

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205 Ibid. p. 301.
206 Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 1.3 PG 20,72 B
209 Ibid. pp. 303, 304.
context of theology, Christology and ecclesiology: “The charismatic power of a king, prophet and priest is seen in the person of Christ in some unresolved unity. Thus, the incarnate Word is Himself the One who, as king, prophet and high priest, historically embodies the truth in the ongoing historic bed of the divine economy.”\(^{210}\) It is believed that priestly ministry has as a task to reconcile God and man. Thus, reconciliation was one of primary goals of the divine providence that truly took place in history.

It is evident to the author that new reconciliation of God and creation is realized with the incarnation of the Word: “In the relationship of this close historical proximity to man, the incarnate Word grants him vitalization and incorruptibility. After the conciliatory act of sacrifice, this provision is made by Christ the High Priest who at the same time as King has the power to realize an analogous task and educate humanity as a teacher.”\(^{211}\) So, following the author’s thought, the type of the history of Israel is “a hull, on which the history of revealing Christ as King, Prophet and High Priest is built.”\(^{212}\) Consequently, the kings, prophets and priests of Israel have one and a single referent, which is none other than Christ. Besides, the Law too has this reference towards the person and work of Christ.

This means that, “As the three offices were the hull of the history of Israel, so the Law constituted the living cursor of its course, the hull of the very relationship between God and people.”\(^{213}\) For this reason the Law is once again manifested in the person and work of Christ as fulfillment of life, as action and loving relationship. According to the author, “Orthodox

\(^{210}\) Ibid. pp. 304-305.
\(^{211}\) Ibid. p. 305.
\(^{212}\) Ibid. p. 305.
\(^{213}\) Ibid. pp. 305-306.
theology points this out with extreme persistence by stressing its basic principle that the type is
dynamically and eschatologically connected to the essence. 214 Thus, the Law as a type tends to
the fulfillment but simultaneously it is a cursor of a course towards fulfillment.

For Matsoukas, a type is not thinkable without an essential parallel. “So the type, such as the
anointed kings, prophets and priests of the Chosen People as well as the Law itself, was not nor
is something discarded and without relation to the new phase of evolution. Certainly, the type in
itself and in its bygone phase is not something stiff and exterior. It has to do with potential
advancement. The type becomes an essence inside dynamic advancement of the history of the
divine economy.” 215 The author summarizes: “Thus, the three offices of Christ are the ‘fulfilled’
type of history of the Chosen People. Type and truth belong to a single and dynamic course
towards integration of the history of the divine economy.” 216 In the case in point, Christ
encapsulates all the quintessence of the historic sense with the three offices and induces the
history to have some unwavering, new focus simultaneously as King, Prophet and the High
Priest.

The doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ is unbreakably linked with the concept of the sharing
of the faithful in His ministries. It is common both to Roman Catholic 217 and Eastern Orthodox

\[217\] The modern *Catechism of the Catholic Church* projects the three ministries of Christ on His People and
justly claims that, “The whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ and bears the
responsibilities for mission and service that flow from them.” However, being not completely independent from the
scholastic mentality, this edition also mentions certain ‘supernatural sense of faith’ of the People of God who shares
in Christ’s prophetic office and that all ‘rational Christians’ are recognized as members of this royal race and sharers
in Christ’s priestly office.
Protopresbyter Vasilios Kalliakmanis (born in 1957), a Professor of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology at the Department of Theology in the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, agrees with Nikos Matsoukas when he states that the three offices of Christ are perceived as charismatic functions of the Church. In particular, the author holds that “the three offices of Christ – of a king, of a high priest and of a prophet – declare that Christ is the source of might, therapy and instruction. Yet the might, therapy and instruction are not dissociated in the person of the incarnate Word, but are unbreakably joined as charismatic functions that construct the body of the Church.” Thus, the said ‘powers’ of the three offices are organically imbedded into the Church life.

Paul Evdokimov (1901 – 1970), a well-known writer and lay theologian of Russian descent from France, was a Professor of Theology at St. Sergius’ Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris. He also clearly expresses the modern Orthodox position on this matter. Evdokimov speaks about the ‘ontological sacerdotal dignity’ of each baptized person and the ‘priestly being’ of every believer. He maintains that every Christian is a priest of the royal priesthood by virtue of one’s ‘sanctified being’ and is anointed by the Spirit in one’s ‘very being.’ “A priest of the royal priesthood (every believer) is one who participates in the Priesthood of Christ, not through his sacred functions but by virtue of his sanctified being. It is in view of this ontological sacerdotal dignity that each baptized

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http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/p123a9p2.htm

218 A Christian, who is anointed after Baptism, simultaneously becomes both a king, and a priest, and a prophet by grace. As a king, one reigns and dominates over one’s passions and over oneself by the grace of the Holy Spirit. As a priest, one offers oneself to the Lord as an acceptable sacrifice, as well as one’s all-willing obedience and devotion to Him. And as a prophet, one deals with the words of God and announces the will of God to other people.

Απειλή γιά την Ορθοδοξία Μας. Εκδόσεις Αδελφότης Θεολόγων «Ο Σωτήρ», 1997.
http://www.egolpion.net/41B498B0/el.aspx

person is sealed with the gifts, ‘anointed by the Spirit’ in his very being. Attention must be drawn to
the priestly being of every believer.” As for the prophetic dignity, it is seen by the author as
follows: “According to Scripture, a prophet is one who is aware of ‘the designs of God’ in the
world, one who interprets and announces the will of God, the inexorable advance of His grace.
This, then, is the prophetic dignity, to be someone who, by his life, by what is present within,
proclaims Him who is to come.” Thus, the ‘threelfold power’ of every believer prompts
Christians to become ‘chirsts’ by grace, so that they too are kings, priests, and prophets of heavenly
mysteries. In this way, the three dignities of Christ are applied to His followers who had been
previously installed members of the royal priesthood.

A remaining aspect that pertains to the teaching of the three ministries of Christ is a concept of His
descent into Hades that is usually attributed to the Royal Office of Christ. Metropolitan Hilarion
Alfeyev (born in 1966), head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church
Relations and leading Russian theologian, writer, and musical composer, maintains that the
teaching on Christ’s descent is an inseparable part of the dogmatic tradition of the Church.
According to the author, “belief in Christ’s descent into Hades and His preaching to the dead is not a
theologumenon, but belongs to the realm of general Church doctrine. The teaching that Christ
granted to all the possibility of salvation and opened for all the doors to paradise should also be
considered general Church doctrine.” According to this doctrine, all are called to salvation but
not everyone responds. Such an understanding radically differs from the doctrine of predestination

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221 Ibid. pp. 88, 90-92.
222 A private theological opinion.
formed in the Western Augustinian tradition. Alfeyev holds that after Christ’s descent, Sheol became a place of divine presence: “There seems to be enough grounds to argue, following Greek Orthodox theologian I. Karmires, that ‘according to the teaching of almost all the Eastern Fathers, the preaching of the Saviour was extended to all without exception and salvation was offered to all the souls who passed away from the beginning of time, whether Jews or Greeks, righteous or unrighteous’.” If we accept the point of view of those Western Church writers who maintain that Christ delivered only the Old Testament righteous, then Christ’s salutary action is reduced merely to the restoration of justice. However, Orthodox theology goes further and asserts that God will save us in a ‘scandalous’ way because God’s justice supersedes human logic and understanding.

Soteriological implications of the doctrine of Christ’s descent into Hades are of intrinsic importance to Alfeyev. If salvation is offered (certainly, not imposed) to a few righteous ones, then Jesus’ mission deals mainly with the reinforcement of juridical justice, Hades was injured only partially and Christ’s power is limited: “Unlike the West, Christian consciousness in the East admits the opportunity for salvation not only for those who believe during their lifetime but also for those who were not given to believe but pleased God with their good works.” Further the author points to the Damascene, according to whom, those who were not taught the true faith during their lifetime can come to believe when in Hades. In other words, those who live by the law of natural morality but do not share the true faith can hope, by virtue of their righteousness, that in a face-to-face encounter with God, they will recognize in Him the One they ‘ignorantly worshipped’ (Acts 17:23).

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226 Orthodox theology normally prefers an expression ‘a good exercise of free will’ to the concept of ‘good works’ that has a tint of moralism.
In addition, Alfeyev quotes Archpriest Serge Bulgakov who writes that “all events in the life of Christ, which happen in time, have timeless, abiding significance. Therefore, the so-called ‘preaching in Hades,’ which is the faith of the Church, is a revelation of Christ to those who in their earthly life could not see or know Christ.”228 In this way, damnation is extended only to those who were taught Christian faith but did not believe.

At this point Alfeyev summarizes that “as the last stage in Christ’s divine descent (κατάβασις) and self-emptying (κένωσις), His descent into Hades became the starting point of humanity’s ascent toward deification (θέωσις).”229 Thus, the concept of ‘preaching’ of Christ in Hades that confused those many authors, who follow a scholastic approach in Soteriology while writing on Christ’s royal office, is not a one-time action but an open opportunity. It is extended to all time for those who during their life on earth did not know Christ but meet Him in the afterlife. Whether during His descent into Hades Christ should be considered a King or a Preacher is of no importance to the author. The question at stake is the salvation of the person. Christ’s descent into Hades is seen as humanity’s ascent towards divinization.

Conclusion

Based on the reviewed sources, it is apparent that the Orthodox position on Christ’s redemptive mission was largely influenced by the doctrine of the Threefold Office of Christ as presented by various Western thinkers with a use of Latin scholastic concepts and terminology. Later, these ideas were introduced into the Orthodox Church doctrinal manuals of many 16 - 18th century

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authors. Diverse and multiple ministries of Christ, each one of which was separately mentioned in the Scriptures, were for the first time joined together by Eusebius and limited to the three particular functions. Eventually, Calvin presented them as the three offices of Christ. In the later medieval ages, Swiss and mainly German Protestant theologians in the spirit of scholasticism processed the teaching on Christ’s offices. The doctrine was periodically modified and systematized by the followers of the Reformed theology. As for the Orthodox stance on the said concept, the Eastern patristic tradition had not extensively dealt with it until it explicitly appeared in the West. Both the early theologies of the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ and their further developments in the West were reflected in Catechisms and dogmatic manuals of Orthodox authors (such as: Zizany, Mohyla, and many other composers of westernized Catechisms). Thus, a number of Orthodox thinkers (e.g., Voulgaris, Makrakis, Papadopoulos, Aghiorougissis, Theodorou, Frangopoulos, Kavadas) would not even question compliance of this doctrine with Orthodox theology. As a result, it became common to include the topic of the Three Offices of Christ in Orthodox dogmatics and Catechisms. Other authors (such as: Androutos, Trembelas, Karmiris, Tselengidis, Malinovski, Bulgakov, Pomazansky, Sarychev) accepted the doctrine with certain remarks and corrections. Only a few authors (such as: Matsoukas, Kalliakmanis, Evdokimov, Florovsky, Alfeyev) interpreted the threefold scheme or its aspects exclusively through the prism of the Orthodox perspective, having completely rejected a scholastic approach to it. Lastly, the doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ was entirely discarded by Kurgansky.

With such a variety of positions and the lack of an explicit conciliar decree on it, the concept of the Three Offices seems to be a ‘minor issue’ and its presence in the Orthodox dogmatic theology
is not ubiquitous. Presently, the topic of the Threefold Office of Christ served the purpose of reconciling Orthodox and Reformed positions on soteriology through inter-Christian dialogue. Nevertheless, there is still not a unified position on the said concept among Orthodox theologians who usually deal with ‘major points of disagreement’ between Christian denominations. Having examined the diversity of opinions on the three offices of Christ among Orthodox authors, it is apparent that from the Orthodox perspective the unique position of Nikos Matsoukas has managed to best integrate the concept of the threefold office within Orthodox soteriology and to interpret it in the spirit of the Eastern patristic tradition. Meanwhile, the somewhat rigid and uncompromising position of Taras Kurgansky has successfully exposed the scholastic influences on the said concept and has pointed out what the doctrine should not be. Consequently, although there is no one single ‘pronounced’ approach to the doctrine within Orthodoxy, the most accepted approach to it is the position of Nikos Matsoukas.

The doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ is closely related to the Latin concept of Jesus’ sacrifice. Therefore, it presents certain theological complications. Western scholastic theology understood sacrifice quite differently from patristic thought and looked at it as a valid means of liberation from sin. This effectively means that the concepts of sacrifice and satisfaction received the power of changelessness and absoluteness. According to Kurgansky, acceptance of

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230 “5. According to the Nicene Creed it was “for us and for our salvation” that the eternal Son of God became flesh, lived, died and rose again. The ontological ground of our salvation is the hypostatic or personal union of the Word and flesh, or divine and human natures, in Jesus Christ. Conversely, the hypostatic union is worked out in the economy of salvation. The New Testament presents this economy in terms of the three offices (“triplex munus”) of prophet, priest and king. This threefold office continues its activity in the Church. Each of these offices provides a particular model – witness, sacrifice, service – for the restoration of the divine image in humanity through participation in Christ. At the same time each office points us to the deity of Christ who is eternal Word, Son and Wisdom of God. All three offices thus show the unity of true historical humanity and true eternal deity in the person of Jesus Christ, and also how the divine calling should be exercised in all aspects of our lives from birth to death.” Orthodox-Reformed Dialogue, Agreed Statement on Christology. Limassol, Cyprus, January 1994 http://www.warc.ch/dt/erl1/15.html
such a judicial view on the redemptive work of Christ and of the “juridical truth” is naturally related to the scholastic teachings on satisfaction required by divine justice, the Three Offices of Christ and the teaching on the seven sacraments. The same author holds that an opinion on the unconditional indispensability of bloody sacrifices, which is traceable to Jewish sources, results in an idea of necessity of Jesus’ sacrifice to God the Father as a definitive form of our salvation and, therefore, a necessity of His High-Priestly Office. Consequently, the idea of the High-Priestly Office of Christ vanishes on its own if there is no need of sacrifice. In general, the Orthodox tradition did talk about Christ’s sacrifice. To this end, it employed a symbolic language to make it easier to be comprehended by people, to whom the concepts from daily life (such as: ransom and sacrifice) were all too well understood. St. Paul had the same goal when He spoke of Christ as our High Priest (Heb. 7:27, 8:6, etc.). To date, the Orthodox tradition continues to present Jesus as the Crucified Love sacrificing His life for our sake but it does not consider the sacrifice as an absolute precondition for salvation.

The doctrine of the Three Offices of Christ oversimplified the divine truths of Jesus’ manifold ministry by literal interpretations of certain allegorical patristic and scriptural expressions. The concepts of a High Priest, King and Prophet are by no means the only notions through which the Scriptures define the activity and dignity of the God-man. Christ, appearing to mankind as the Son of God, could not be simply a King, or a Priest, or a Prophet in the literal sense of these

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231 “In addition to this practical significance in the life of Western Christianity, the teaching of seven sacraments naturally follows the [erroneous] teaching about the ‘three offices’ of the Lord, the ‘satisfaction of divine justice’ and ‘juridical truth’ which is supposedly manifested in the life of the Lord.” Kurgansky, Taras. The False Teaching About the “Seven Sacraments.” Canadian Orthodox Publishing House, Sacraments or Holy Mysteries. A Return to an Orthodox Christian Mentality. Synaxis Press. Dewdney, BC 2006. p. 17.

Nowhere in the Gospels does Christ call Himself directly the Prophet, Priest and King but rather asserts: “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Jesus also implies that He is a Teacher. He prohibits to the disciples to be called ‘Rabbi’ or ‘teacher’ because there is only one teacher – Christ. Moreover, the Apostles present Him as the One who built the Church, as her Arch-shepherd and the Bridegroom. In the opinion of Taras Kurgansky, the title of Shepherd fits Jesus most of all for during His earthly life Christ mainly taught and provided for the needs of the people as a shepherd cares for one’s flock. Nevertheless, His titles are many. In separate, they convey and emphasize His particular function within the divine economy.

At the outset, the beliefs of the early Church concerning the salvation of humanity were that salvation was achieved in the incarnation of God the Son who became fully human and is known ever since as the God-man Jesus Christ, who was born, died, resurrected and ascended to Heaven for our sake. This was done according to the plan of divine economy or “atonening work.” Therefore, it cannot be limited by only three or any other number of dignities. Consequently, the saving mission of Christ obscured by metaphorical phrases and expressed in juridical terminology cannot be satisfactorily described due to its ineffable nature.

233 Ibid.
235 As Robert Sherman notes, “Christ’s earthly and heavenly ministry is multiple. The early Church firmly maintained only one orthodox understanding of Christ’s person – Christ as fully human and fully divine. However, the early Church never insisted upon one orthodox understanding of Christ’s work. This was a wise move. There is only one Jesus and He is who He is. However, biblical revelation speaks of Christ’s atoning work in a variety of different ways. Privileging one understanding over another diminishes, rather than honours, the multi-faceted glory of God’s atoning work in Christ through the Spirit.”
The three ministries of Christ can be also presented as charismatic functions, which was done by Nikos Matsoukas. In essence, the three offices of Christ declare that He is the source of might, therapy and instruction. The might, therapy and instruction are not dissociated in the person of the incarnate Word, but are unbreakably joined as charismatic functions that construct the body of the Church.\(^{236}\) Besides, no activity of the Church is understood solely as royal or prophetic or priestly. Thus, the three dignities that the Logos Himself guided in the history of Israel are unbreakably joined as charismatic functions and unite the body of the Church in the Person of the incarnate Word.\(^{237}\) In this way, the three offices are seen not merely as self-sufficient and autonomous dignities or original and fundamental entities, but as charismatic functions that realize the actual task of creation and re-creation, create the diversity and variety of created beings in a hierarchical body yet unite human beings with God.\(^{238}\) These functions continue to act in the Church, which is the new Israel. However, it is only when all three offices intertwine and overlap, that they show the unity of true historical humanity and the true eternal deity in the person of Jesus Christ.

Finally, the idea of the three offices of Christ can also be rendered through the concept of type and prototype. Here, the offices are perceived as types of the future archetype. Thus, a type (i.e. prophetic, high-priestly and royal ministries of ancient Israel) is dynamically and eschatologically connected to an essence or prototype (i.e. Christ as fulfillment of the three ministries). In other words, a type is not conceivable without an essential parallel. So the type, such as the anointed kings, prophets and priests of the Chosen People, as well as the Law itself,


\(^{237}\) Ματσούκας, Νίκος. Δογματική και Συμβολική Θεολογία Α’. Εισαγωγή στη Θεολογική Γνωσιολογία. Τα τρία αξίωματα τού Χριστού. Εκδόσεις Πουρναρά. Θεσσαλονίκη, 2000. pp. 299-301.

\(^{238}\) Ibid. p. 299.
is not discarded but has a relation to the new stage of evolution (i.e. the New Covenant in Christ). The type becomes an essence inside the dynamic unfolding of the history of the divine economy. Here, typology points to the essence of truth. Type and truth belong to a unitary and dynamic course towards integration of the history of divine economy. Thus, the three offices of Christ are to be seen as a type of “fulfillment” of the history of the Chosen People. In the opinion of Nikos Matsoukas, this means that Christ simultaneously as King, Prophet and the High Priest encapsulates all the quintessence of the historic sense with the three offices and induces the history to have some unwavering, new focus.

Meanwhile, the concept of the Three Offices of Christ as understood in the West is inseparable from the scholastic approach to the doctrine of salvation. An eloquently systematized and methodically structured rationalistic composition of the said doctrine facilitates unnecessary complexity in the understanding of Christ’s “expiatory” work and supports the “satisfaction” theory. Therefore, it cannot properly represent the Orthodox stance on the matter of our salvation unless its acceptance is conditioned by allegorical understanding and placed within the context of an Orthodox theology of theosis.

The future study of the doctrine may find fruitful soil in the domain of liturgics and iconography. As is known, any alterations in theology are followed by changes in worship. Thus, the newer attempts in theology are eventually reflected in iconography. This includes a description of the

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240 Ibid. p. 308.
redemptive mission of Christ. According to Archimandrite Job Gecha,\(^{241}\) unlike the later interpretation, which explains the heavenly worship in earthly terms, the ancient interpretation used to reveal the Liturgy from the heavenly perspective: “The late Byzantine iconography attests to it beginning from the 14\(^{th}\) century, where one can find such portrayals as Christ the High Priest arrayed in the hierarchical vestments (dalmatic and mitre) or the so called iconographical cycle of the ‘Divine Liturgy’ where, except Christ the High Priest, angels are portrayed in the deaconical vestments celebrating earthly Divine Liturgy. Instead of this, the ancient Liturgy strived to follow the heavenly service when the ecclesiastical gathering on earth tried to liken to the uninterrupted doxology of angels in the Heavenly Kingdom.”\(^{242}\) The same takes place in theology when earthly concepts are applied to heavenly realities. Theology in Orthodoxy is inseparable from worship, which constitutes the focal point of the Orthodox faith. Hence, it could be a great asset for a future study to investigate the concept of the Three Offices of Christ through the prism of Orthodox liturgics and iconography. The liturgical tradition of the early Church is granted unconditional and indisputable authority within Orthodoxy and is considered a highly significant source of its doctrine. Canonical icons (holy images) thus can transmit the proper interpretation of Orthodox doctrines by the Holy Tradition of the Church to manifest the dynamic and living ‘proper faith’ (ορθοδοξία), a faith which leads to theosis of the person and eternal life.

\(^{241}\) A Canadian theologian of Ukrainian origin (born in 1974), a former Dean of St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris, a present Professor of Liturgical Theology at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Orthodox theology in Chambesy, Switzerland and the Catholic Institute of Paris, France.

\(^{242}\) Геча, Іов. Поминаючи Друге і Славне Нове Пришестя. ВІСНИК, липень 2011. рр. 22-23.
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