

# Christos Yannaras's View on the History of Western Theology from St. Augustine to Nietzsche

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes the anti-Western and radically anti-ecumenical theology of the Greek Orthodox thinker Christos Yannaras and his idea of gradual centuries-old deviation of Western theology from the authentic tradition of the early Church Fathers. The study touches upon such subjects as intellectual influences on the process of formation of Yannaras's thought, the role of the apophatic mystical tradition in Christian theology, and the basic roots of his radical anti-Scholasticism. The article also contains the detailed survey of Yannaras's analysis of Friedrich Nietzsche's 'God is dead'-concept as the natural final point of the Western intellectual discourse's degradation and dechristianization. There's also a set of counterarguments from Yannaras's opponents – Eastern Orthodox theologians Pantelis Kalaitzidis and Vasilios Makrides – who stand for dialogue, openness, ecumenical activity and inclusiveness of the modern Orthodox Church and reject any attempts of its intellectual self-isolation and solipsization.

**Key words:** anti-Westernism, apophaticism, Augustine, "death of God", Nietzsche, Orthodoxy, rationalism, scholasticism, Yannaras.

## Introduction

Christos Yannaras is often identified as a prominent modern thinker, whose interests are not strictly limited to theological issues, but they lie in the field of continental philosophy (in particular, existentialism) as well. Besides that, according to Aiden Nichols, Yannaras is "highly sensitive to the witness of literature and art."<sup>1</sup> That's why in view of a wide range of his interests and his deep involvement in every

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<sup>1</sup> Aiden Nichols, *Light from the East: Authors and Themes in Orthodox Theology* (London: Sheen & Ward, 1999), 181.

studied issue Yannaras is often reasonably regarded not only as “the most famous and controversial theological thinker in Greece,”<sup>2</sup> but also as “one of the most outstandingly creative voices in Orthodoxy today.”<sup>3</sup>

While studying philosophy in Bonn in 1964-1967, Yannaras was strongly affected by the ideas of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Later this crucial intellectual impact led to Yannaras’s fruitful attempts to create the holistic theological construction on the basis of V. Lossky’s neo-patristic theology and M. Heidegger’s metaphysics with the partial involvement of the continental philosophy’s conceptual apparatus. Regarding the main goal setting in Yannaras’s theological and philosophical researches that run like a red thread through all of his works one can mention two main strategic problems, which the Greek thinker tries to solve:

1. The distortion of the whole Eastern Orthodox theology caused by dry, sterile, and overly rationalized Western scholasticism that tends to schematize empirically accessible theological knowledge (without paying enough attention to the mystical knowledge of God).
2. The detrimental effect on the Greek Orthodox ethos of life from the most primitive forms of Western pietism that has paved its way to the core of some Orthodox brotherhoods in the middle of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup>

It’s obvious that what puts together both of these problems is hostile, destructive, alien to the true authentic Christianity, artificially introduced Western influence on the Orthodox way of life and thinking. Eventually, Yannaras’s main goal – explicitly or implicitly – was to find and eradicate the whole set of consequences from these hostile and poisonous Western injections into the true Body of Christ.

Since 1972 in the works of Yannaras one can trace the author’s obvious aim not only to go back to the natural authentic roots of Orthodoxy (the Fathers’ treatises), not only to emancipate the modern Hellenism and to cleanse it from various extra layers but also to actualize the basic Christian ideas in the context of modern challenges and to make them relevant to the philosophical agenda of the last decades of the twentieth century. However, it is necessary to avoid any unjustified simplifications while evaluating Yannaras’s methodology and goal setting, as well as it is hard not to notice the striking self-contradiction in the whole concept of the Greek theologian, insofar as his entire theological-philosophical system itself is not impervious to the Western influence. In his very first papers, Yannaras demonstrated the remarkable ecumenical openness and the tendency to evaluate positively the contribution to the theology of

<sup>2</sup> Julia Anna Lis, “Anti-Western Theology in Greece and Serbia Today” in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection, Dialogue*, edited by Andrii Krawchuk and Thomas Bremer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 160.

<sup>3</sup> D. F. Ford and R. Muers, *The Modern Theologians. An Introduction to Christian Theology since 1918* (Malden; Oxford; Carlton: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), 583.

<sup>4</sup> Pantelis Kalaitzidis, “The Image of the West in Contemporary Greek Theology” in *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, edited by George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 151.

the first half of the twentieth century that had been made by J. Danielou, H. de Lubak, H. U. von Balthasar, Y. Congar, O. Rousseau, T. Merton etc.<sup>5</sup>

## Main part

In his main works that contain the core of his conceptual anti-Western system Yannaras focuses on the irreplaceable importance of the mystical (apophatic) component of the Christian theology and experience that shouldn't give up its positions in the face of the modern age's attempts to primitivize and narrow down the Christianity by the rationalistic reduction, intellectualization, and schematization:

The apophatic attitude leads Christian theology to use the language of poetry and images for the interpretation of dogmas much more than the language of conventional logic and schematic concepts. The conventional logic of everyday understanding can easily give man a false sense of a sure knowledge which, being won by the intellect, is already exhausted by it, completely possessed by it. While poetry, with the symbolisms and images which it uses, always exhibits a sense from within the words and beyond the words, a concept which corresponds more to common experiences of life and less to cerebral conceptions.<sup>6</sup>

Radical and uncompromisingly anti-ecumenical intellectual program of Christos Yannaras, which verges upon "anti-Western obsession,"<sup>7</sup> diametrically opposes East and West from the prospect of theological, historical, and cultural ethos that defines each of these civilizations.<sup>8</sup> While speaking about his rejection of Western intellectual tradition and "fundamental differences between the Greek East and the European West,"<sup>9</sup> Yannaras often uses overly emotional and pathetic rhetoric. The chapters of some of his books are named *The Western deviation*,<sup>10</sup> *Western propaganda*,<sup>11</sup> and *Ideological Catholicity*.<sup>12</sup>

Besides these representative labels, Yannaras's works contain rather bold and eloquent generalizations. Thus, in his opinion, the deviation of the collective West from awareness of the apophatic character of truth has not only provided the unjustified

<sup>5</sup> Kalaitzidis, "The Image of the West", 152.

<sup>6</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Elements of Faith: An Introduction to the Orthodox Theology*, translated by Keith Schram (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 17.

<sup>7</sup> Vasilios N. Makrides, "'The Barbarian West': A Form of Orthodox Christian Anti-Western Critique" in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection, Dialogue*, edited by Andrii Krawchuk and Thomas Bremer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 153.

<sup>8</sup> George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Orthodox Naming of the Other: A Postcolonial Approach" in *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, edited by George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 15.

<sup>9</sup> Christos Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God: Heidegger and the Areopagite*, edited by Andrew Louth, translated by Haralambos Ventis (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 16.

<sup>10</sup> Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 154-157.

<sup>11</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West: Hellenic Self-Identity in the Modern Age*, translated by Peter Chamberas and Norman Russell (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), 59-62.

<sup>12</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Against Religion: The Alienation of the Ecclesial Event*, translated by Norman Russell (Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2013), 151-163.

and unreasonable doctrinal changes in the Church's teaching but also "has transformed radically the course of human history."<sup>13</sup> Consequently, in the middle of the twentieth century many intellectuals began to perceive the term *apophaticism* as a paradox in philosophical circles and almost as a synonym for agnosticism in the field of theology.<sup>14</sup> That's why Yannaras states that in the twentieth century each search for ways of renewal of ancient Fathers' theological thought and "each deviation from prevailing rationalism is regarded as a turn towards agnosticism."<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, Yannaras is sure that such identification is not legitimate or justified:

Apophaticism is not to be identified with irrationalism, or indifference to the rules of logic in the formulation of knowledge.... Nor may apophaticism be confused with self-centered mysticism, the flight to private emotional certainties. The apophatic way or position presupposes the prior acceptance of the methods of philosophical epistemology – the acceptance, for instance, of both the way of affirmations and the way of denials – as potentialities for attaining knowledge. It is precisely the emphasis on the possibility of knowledge that sets apophaticism apart from any positivism about knowledge, that is to say, from any form of absolutizing of the rules or presuppositions needed for ascertaining the validity of any formulation of knowledge.<sup>16</sup>

The tragic events that caused an irreparable distortion of the authentic Christian theology – according to Yannaras – were the multistage invasions of the barbarians that had been shaking the Western Roman Empire since the end of the fourth century till the beginning of the sixth century AD. Even the further Christianization of these northern barbarian tribes couldn't help them to completely overcome their innate primitiveness and to become the actual sharers in the ecclesial event.<sup>17</sup> However, Yannaras is inclined to perceive the life and work of St. Augustine as the most important historical point of no return in the process of formalization and scholastization of Western theology. It was Augustine who for the first time in history neutralized the difference between the truth itself and the way of its verbal formulation and proclamation. Thus, human's *understanding* of this formulated concept of truth, human's *reception* of the whole body of arguments in favor of precisely this understanding of truth, in fact, was equalized with *possessing* the truth in its entirety. Such an approach didn't pay tribute to God's mystery and, to a certain extent, put Augustine aside for the Eastern Orthodox tradition of epistemological humility. According to Yannaras, this rationalization of truth led to devastating consequences not only in the field of theology but also in the realm of social ethics and political life. First of all, a strictly logical approach to understanding the truth and reduction of this process to pure rational analytical think-

<sup>13</sup> Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 154.

<sup>14</sup> Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God*, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God*, 16.

<sup>16</sup> Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God*, 60.

<sup>17</sup> Kalaitzidis, "The Image of the West", 153.

ing caused the emergence and strengthening of such phenomena as moralism and political totalitarianism. In Yannaras's opinion, the intellectual origins of the latter can be exactly traced to Augustine's epistemological theory.<sup>18</sup>

One of the main stages in the process of raising Augustin as a key figure in the history of Western civilization was the striving of Charlemagne in the ninth century to create the second Roman Empire in the West, which would be completely different from the Hellenized East. Yannaras stresses that "the evidence of the historians is unanimous"<sup>19</sup> concerning the fact that this search for the totally different spiritual, cultural, and intellectual identity for Charlemagne's Empire has led to the canonization of Augustine as a nodal figure of the future Western civilization with his lack of knowledge of the Greek language and his arrogance about the Greek culture as a whole.<sup>20</sup>

At the same time, it is necessary to cite the opinion of Yannaras's opponents who are not inclined to agree with his radical anti-Western program and his view on Augustine's theology as an example of supposedly diametrically opposite way of theologizing than that of the Greek Fathers. According to A. Papanikolaou and G. Demacopoulos, before any agreement with Yannaras's ideas about the harmful influence of Augustine one should thoroughly consider two main questions:

1. Does Yannaras perceive Augustine "anachronistically through a hesychastic framework,"<sup>21</sup> while trying to compare two paradigms and not paying attention to the centuries that separate one from another?
2. Does he attribute to Augustine the theological epistemology and soteriology in their later and more refined Neo-Scholastic form?<sup>22</sup> Or may this form turn out to be artificially constructed and mockingly caricatured<sup>23</sup> with the aim of polemical exacerbation and accentuation of its most bright specific features?

Because of the hypothetical nature of these speculative suppositions, the only unambiguous answer hardly can be given. However, these counterarguments are not devoid of a rational core. Thus, they induce to perceive Yannaras's anti-Augustinianism with caution and restraint and to avoid an uncritical perception of such an approach.

Many centuries later after Augustine, it was the combination of the above factors that led to the schism between East and West in 1054. Quite predictably, Yannaras calls the Western theology of the subsequent period "the most radical, perhaps, historical falsification of Christianity"<sup>24</sup> that has resulted not only in the emergence of another fleeting heresy but also in the appearance of a completely new civilization. Afterwards, in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries, the continuous dominance of the scholastic

<sup>18</sup> Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 155.

<sup>19</sup> Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 155-156.

<sup>20</sup> Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, 20-23.

<sup>21</sup> George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Augustine and the Orthodox: "The West" in the East" in *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*, edited by George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (New York, Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008), 35.

<sup>22</sup> Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, "Augustine and the Orthodox", 35.

<sup>23</sup> Kalaitzidis, "The Image of the West", 155.

<sup>24</sup> Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 156.

discourse has fixed and carried on the regrettable process of the centuries-old alienation of Western theological ethos from the Christian East. And at this stage of his reflections, the Greek thinker makes a significant clarification and accuses the adherents of scholasticism of inconsistency. He marks that Western theologians returned to the ancient Greek ontology (the priority, which the conceptual understanding had of essence, to the essentialist, logical definition of existence), which the Greek Fathers had rejected, but, at the same time, they refused to accept the ancient Greek gnosiology, which had been adopted by the Greek Fathers.<sup>25</sup>

The Era of Enlightenment with its powerful anti-clerical ethos induces Yannaras to regard it as another proof of his own rightness and the total fallacy of the way, which the West has been following for centuries (though Vasilios Makrides – another prominent Greek theologian – considers the Age of Enlightenment to be a notable integral part of the Western intellectual tradition and its civilizational paradigm).<sup>26</sup> The Enlightenment's secular program and the further dechristianization of the Western world is a convincing caution for the Eastern Orthodox Church not to succumb to any attempts of a rationalistic reduction and not to step on thin ice of intellectualization and scholasticization of its own wide and polyphonic teaching, that is not obliged at all to squeeze itself into the rigid framework of strictly logical categories and artificial schematic constructions of a rationalistic discourse.

According to Yannaras, 'the death of God' that had been proclaimed by Friedrich Nietzsche, became the marker of a final and irreversible dechristianization of Western civilization. This famous Nietzsche's motto became something like a climax and a point of no return in the long process of Western theology's decline from the ancient Church's authentic orthodoxy. Besides, this nihilistic concept gave a person the ultimate freedom and "the maximum degree of sovereignty."<sup>27</sup> As Thomas Altizer wrote later in his major treatise, "the chaos lying upon our horizon is a nothingness evolving from the death of God, the tomb of the dead Creator."<sup>28</sup> No wonder, that Nietzsche himself, as a herald of the death of God, considered "every previous form of Western thinking to be a disguised form of theological thinking."<sup>29</sup> As for Yannaras, his concept of Western theology's gradual deviation from its basic roots is described by Julia Anna Lis (Ph.D. from the Theological Faculty in Münster, Germany) in the following terms:

Humanity should be studied as the image of God, rather than trying to understand God's nature by investigating man, as Western theology does, according to Yannaras.<sup>30</sup> The West reduces the knowledge of God to a purely

<sup>25</sup> Yannaras, *Elements of Faith*, 156-157.

<sup>26</sup> Makrides, "'The Barbarian West'", 153.

<sup>27</sup> Жорж Багай, *О Ницше* (Москва: Культурная революция, 2010), 335. [Georges Bataille, *About Nietzsche* (Moscow: Cultural Revolution, 2010), 335].

<sup>28</sup> Томас Альтицер, *Смерть Бога. Евангелие христианского атеизма* (Москва: «Канон+» РООИ «Реабилитация», 2010), 77. [Thomas Altizer, *The Death of God. The Gospel of Christian Atheism* (Moscow: "Canon+", "Rehabilitation", 2010), 77].

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>30</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Person und Eros. Eine Gegenüberstellung der Ontologie der griechischen Kirchenväter und der Existenzphilosophie des Westens* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 236-237.

intellectual process, which leads to a division between immanence and transcendence, the separation of religion from life, and ultimately to the “death of God” in Western thought.<sup>31</sup>

Christos Yannaras himself describes this decadent trajectory of Western theological thinking and its deliberate alienation from normative Christian theology as follows:

Nietzsche’s proclamation points out, indirectly but quite clearly, the fundamental ‘heresy’ – the deviation from the original fact of the Church – which constitutes the historical temptation of western Christianity: the quest to impose itself rationally and socially, finally the Church’s ‘religionization’, its transformation into a religion that satisfies individual needs for emotional and intellectual security, while also sustaining the practical moral interests of society. These divergences in the doctrine, worship, art and structure of the western Church from the undivided Church of the early centuries converge in the fundamental alienation of western ecclesiological self-consciousness and identity... Hence, the proclamation of the ‘death of God’ is revealed as the historical outcome that makes clear the whole theological development of western Christianity. The replacement of ecclesial experience with intellectual certainty prepares for rational argument over this certainty. Rationalism, freed from the metaphysical guarantees provided by scholasticism, assumes the role of the historical preparation for the dominance of an empiricism centered on the individual. And an empiricism centered on the individual is the ‘open door’ at which nihilism appears.<sup>32</sup>

Nietzsche’s vision of the ‘death of God’ and his concept of ‘revaluation of all values’ makes it possible to speak about his mad rage towards Christianity, for which the German philosopher didn’t see any place in the new post-Christian world.<sup>33</sup> It’s only necessary to add that in the opinion of Altizer, despite Nietzsche’s ironic contempt for Christianity, in a certain sense he can be considered even close to Augustine with his attitude towards the impending fall of the Roman Empire:

They both demanded to accept – and even to wish – each historical event. Augustine joyfully welcomed the end of the pagan world, and Nietzsche – the end of the Western world. At the same time, they both realized the inevitability of the completion of these worlds and perceived it as an absolutely redemptive event.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, Altizer to some extent implicitly admits the fairness of Yannaras’s point of view by making an important remark: the worldviews of Augustine and Nietzsche became possible only due to the end of those worlds, to which these thinkers had belonged.<sup>35</sup> And the event of the collapse of both mentioned cultural and civilizational

<sup>31</sup> Lis, “Anti-Western Theology”, 163.

<sup>32</sup> Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God*, 46.

<sup>33</sup> Тарас Лютий, *Ніцше. Самоперевернення* (Київ: Темпора, 2017), 745. [Taras Lyuty, *Nietzsche. Self-Transcendence* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2017), 745].

<sup>34</sup> Альгицер, *Смерть Бога*, 192. [Altizer, *The Death of God*, 192].

<sup>35</sup> Альгицер, *Смерть Бога*, 193. [Altizer, *The Death of God*, 193].

formations Altizer calls “the apocalyptic end.”<sup>36</sup> This definition seems to be particularly pertinent in the case of Nietzsche’s philosophic revolution. Because after the ‘death of God’ as the one and only full-fledged Lawgiver, any attempts of making normative judgments about the categories of moral and immoral became senseless and hardly possible. Such judgments could no longer set any limits and restrain the infernal manifestations of human’s emancipated and autonomous egocentric self-will, as well as they lost their ability to prevent somebody’s destructive attempts to project onto the human community his or her subjective ideas of good and bad. Afterward, as a chain reaction to the ‘death of God’, there happened a quite natural and predictable radical anthropological reduction and an actual “self-annihilation”<sup>37</sup> of a human being, who automatically lost its high status and ceased to be a bearer of an image of Someone, Who no longer existed. The doors to chaos, terror, and incredible concentration of irrational evil in the twentieth century were opened.

Assessment of how successful Christos Yannaras has been in the process of implementation of his theological program one should begin from the observation of Pantelis Kalaitzidis, who is the director of the Volos Academy for Theological Studies (Volos, Greece). Dr. Kalaitzidis describes the internal inconsistency of Yannaras’s ideological system and the disparity between his views and the Biblical Revelation in the following words:

For Yannaras, it is not spiritual self-sufficiency, selfishness, lack of repentance, or conformity to the spirit and logic of “this world” (see Rom. 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:14), or “another law at war with the law of my mind,” as Paul says (Rom. 7:23), that excludes us from the Church, but rather the level of our given culture, indeed our cultural preconditions, for which we are nonetheless not personally responsible, in view of the national and cultural contingency of human birth. Nor does one’s personal response to Jesus Christ’s call, according to Yannaras, appear to be a matter of personal choice, free of necessity and the confines instituted by gender, race, and social or *cultural* preconceptions. In his view, even so personal a decision as one’s response to Christ’s call is inextricably intertwined with the cultural progress of our biological or spiritual forefathers and their traditions.<sup>38</sup>

These well-thought-out conclusions, drawn by Kalaitzidis, create the preconditions for his applying to Yannaras’s historical and anti-ecumenical theological models such bright generalizing concepts as “cultural totalitarianism” and “totalizing cultural predestinationism.”<sup>39</sup>

As a result, these and similar observations allow another distinguished contemporary researcher – Vasilios Makrides (University of Erfurt, Germany) – to evaluate Yannaras’s firm anti-Western convictions as “highly controversial and problematic

<sup>36</sup> Альтицер, *Смерть Бога*, 193. [Altizer, *The Death of God*, 193].

<sup>37</sup> Ronald E. Osborn. *Humanism and the Death of God: Searching for the Good After Darwin, Marx, and Nietzsche* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 58.

<sup>38</sup> Kalaitzidis, “The Image of the West”, 152-153.

<sup>39</sup> Kalaitzidis, “The Image of the West”, 153.

from numerous perspectives.”<sup>40</sup> In Makrides’s fair opinion, the whole body of Yannaras’s works “is certainly broad in scope, impressive, and worth reading.”<sup>41</sup> However, Makrides also sees in Yannaras’s theory of the “barbarian West” eloquent testimony of his attempts to uncritically idealize the Greek Orthodox past as an allegedly universal timeless pattern and a source of all answers to any possible requests and challenges. In return, Makrides points out that Yannaras doesn’t make the necessary distinction between Eastern and Western understanding of the historical process:

He undertakes romantic regressions to an idealized Greek Orthodox past, which serves as a model for future orientation. He sees this idealized past as normative, supplying solutions to current and future problems. While it may be considered a classical orientation by the Orthodox generally, it has less resonance in the Western world today, which views the past historically rather than normatively.<sup>42</sup>

As for Yannaras’s ongoing efforts to prove the unattainable superiority of the Greek theological tradition in relation to the Latin West, Makrides stresses that this “compensation mechanism”<sup>43</sup> can be considered a way to avoid the meaningful discussion about the objectively existing problems in Orthodoxy itself. Moreover, in the context of contemporary postmodern discourse, where the plurality of ideas and interpretations is normalized, any claim to having the monopoly of an exceptional vision of reality can hardly be taken into account as a relevant intellectual program. Therefore, according to Julia Anna Lis, it seems to be obvious, that Yannaras’s deliberate contrasting of two patterns of Christian theology and accentuated aggravation of their contradictory features cannot be considered a constructive strategy in the contemporary world, for “as long as the conceptual dichotomies of East versus West or “true, Orthodox” Europe versus “decadent, secular” Europe persist, they will remain obstacles to dialogue and integration.”<sup>44</sup>

Finally, Vasilios Makrides makes a remark about the intrusive and almost pathological quasi-messianism of Yannaras, which manifests itself in attempts to save the West from imminent catastrophe and close decline. Instead of this, in Makrides’s opinion, “the West today neither wants to be saved nor needs such self-declared saviors.”<sup>45</sup> It is also worth mentioning that the West itself is well aware of all those problems, weaknesses and mistakes, that are inherent in it at this stage of its historical development. That’s why today we can hear from many Western public intellectuals – theologians, philosophers, sociologists – not only the usual triumphal and instructive rhetoric concerning the representatives of the Eastern European civilization but also an honest self-critical recognition of the existence of those problems that need to be solved in the Western world.

<sup>40</sup> Makrides, “The Barbarian West”, 153.

<sup>41</sup> Makrides, “The Barbarian West”, 153.

<sup>42</sup> Makrides, “The Barbarian West”, 153-154.

<sup>43</sup> Makrides, “The Barbarian West”, 154.

<sup>44</sup> Lis, “Anti-Western Theology”, 165.

<sup>45</sup> Makrides, “The Barbarian West”, 154.

## Conclusion

In general, it looks like opponents of Yannaras have developed no less powerful arsenal of rather convincing counterarguments than the Greek thinker himself during many fruitful decades of his intensive theological and philosophical work. And it is difficult to disagree with the above conclusions of his critiques, because such theological models, which are based upon an ecumenoclasm and an overconfident “axiological ranking of cultures”<sup>46</sup> (with the constant putting the Greeks in the first place), make an unacceptable reduction of Christianity as universal, supracultural and supraethnic phenomenon. The anti-Western and anti-ecumenical conceptual system of Christos Yannaras can be regarded as a typical example of an ideologically driven intellectual project with deliberate polemical exacerbation, which is contrary to Bible-based Christianity. Being founded by the Orthodox thinker, this doctrine to a large extent intoxicates the Body of Christ, tries to reduce Christianity to a level of another ethnocentric ideology or cultural form, puts Greek exclusivism higher than multicultural ecumenical inclusiveness with its interpretation of plurality as a gift rather than damnation, as well as it belittles the role of Incarnation and profanes the mystery of God’s Church as the gathering of representatives of all cultures, all peoples and all intellectual traditions.

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<sup>46</sup> Makrides, “The Barbarian West”, 153.

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## Погляд Христоса Яннараса на історію західної теології від св. Августина до Ніцше

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Анотація: У статті аналізується антизахідне і радикально антиєкуменічне богослов'я грецького православного мислителя Христоса Яннараса та його ідея поступового багатовікового відхилення західного богослов'я від автентичної традиції раннях Отців

Церкви. У дослідженні порушуються такі питання, як інтелектуальні впливи на процес формування думки Яннараса, роль апофатичної містичної традиції в християнському богослов'ї, а також основні корені його радикального антисхоластичного світогляду. Стаття також містить детальний огляд аналізу Яннарасом концепції Фрідріха Ніцше "Бог помер" як закономірної фінальної точки деградації та дехристиянізації західного інтелектуального дискурсу. Наводиться також низка контраргументів опонентів Яннараса – православних богословів Пантеліса Калайцідіса та Васіліоса Макрідеса, які виступають за діалог, відкритість, екуменічну активність та інклюзивність сучасної Православної Церкви і відкидають будь-які спроби її інтелектуальної самоізоляції та соліпсизації.

Ключові слова: антизахідництво, апофатизм, Августин, "смерть Бога", Ніцше, православ'я, раціоналізм, схоластика, Яннарас.

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