

Foreword

By His All-Holiness

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

WE ARE SINCERELY DELIGHTED to respond to the request by Dr. Sotiris Mitralaxis to provide a foreword to the published edition of *Ever-Moving Repose: A Contemporary Reading of Maximus the Confessor's Theory of Time*, whose original format comprised the doctoral dissertation of the author.

It is a refreshing sign of our times that the church fathers, both of the East and West, have been explored and examined anew in scholarly circles in recent decades. St. Maximus the Confessor is a unique example among these classical giants inasmuch as his life spans East and West alike, while his writing straddles philosophy and theology. Indeed, more profoundly and more substantially, this scholar saint fought to overcome the distinction between theology and mystagogy, even as he sought to overcome divisions, among others, between intelligible and sensible, corruption and incorruptibility, material and spiritual, body and soul, as well as male and female. The human person, who is a microcosm of these contrasts, is called to serve as a mediator between heaven and earth in the cosmic liturgy that frames the entire universe.

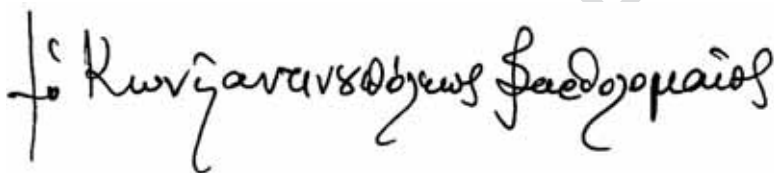
This book by Sotiris Mitralaxis focuses on other variations of these primal distinctions and philosophical dualities, namely between time and eternity as well as between mobility and stability. Indeed, it articulates the importance and impact of this monastic and mystic—both philologically and philosophically—in the medieval period, but also in modern thought, particularly in various representatives of contemporary Greek theology. In this way, this seventh-century ascetic confessor—who formulated theology with his blood and with his pen—is not approached as if from the ivory tower of dry scholasticism, but as the vibrant legacy of the faith once

delivered and entrusted to the holy people of God (see Jude 3) in the organic continuity of the living church.

For, by analyzing the powerful principles of beings (*logoi*), the author reconstructs the theory of time in St. Maximus and elevates the doctrine of deification (*theosis*) to the potential and mandate of human beings, created in the image of God, in order to transcend all “divisions, dualities, and distances” in the likeness of Jesus Christ. All of this reveals the motion of life and the meaning of humanity as a vivid, personal relationship—a voluntary, affirmative response to the divine call for communion.

It is our fervent prayer that the exceptional vision and extraordinary worldview of St. Maximus the Confessor will touch and transform the hearts of those who read this publication.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, September 5, 2016



✠ BARTHOLOMEW

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