

Cristinel Ioja, *O istorie a Dogmaticii în teologia ortodoxă română* [A History of Dogmatics in Romanian Orthodox Theology] vol. 2, Pro Universitaria, Bucharest, 2013, 622 p.

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This book is part of a planned trilogy that presents “a history of dogmatics in Romanian Orthodox theology”, as indicated by the title. This second volume covers the period from the beginning of theological seminary education in Romania until the establishment of communism, i.e. from the beginning of the 19th century until 1945.

The author, professor at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Arad, begins with an overview of Orthodox dogmatic theology during this period. Unfortunately, the rediscovery of the patristic spirituality of the Philokalia in Paisianism did not have any impact upon the crystallization of Orthodox dogmatics in Russia, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. This was also characteristic of the teaching of dogmatics in Romania (see page 44 and following), first in seminaries and later in institutes, academies and faculties of theology; regardless of type of institution, theological education was marked by “abstraction”, and characterized by dogmatic rationalism and liturgical formalism (pages 141–144).

A radical change occurred only in the first half of the 20th century. This change is generally thought to have originated with the call to “return to the Fathers” launched by the theologian from the Russian emigration, Georges V. Florovsky (1893–1979), at The First Congress of the Faculties of Theology in Athens (1936). However, the author shows that, in fact, “the return to the Fathers was decided in Bucharest”, during a meeting of delegates representing faculties of theology from the Orthodox world. The delegates approved the program of the future congress in Athens, while also mentioning topics which were to be addressed by G. Florovsky in his essays (he was not present in Bucharest). Therefore, the author wonders: “Would it seem audacious to suggest that other scholars have urged people to return to the Fathers, before Georges Florovsky did?” (page 147). Moreover, some Romanian scholars, such as Ioan G. Savin, have questioned Florovsky’s thesis of “pseudomorphosis” in a manner which is strikingly similar to that of other modern scholars (see, for example, Dorothea Wendebourg, “Pseudomorphosis” – ein theologisches

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