



Purification of Memory: A Study of Orthodox Theologians from a Catholic Perspective

Ambrose Mong

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"Although its various bodies boast a combined total of at least 300 million members, the Eastern Orthodox Church is widely perceived among members of other denominations to be an exotic branch of the faith, often shrouded in mysticism and misunderstanding that has been exacerbated by the longstanding Eastern-Western split. In 'Purification of Memory', Ambrose Mong casts light on the true nature of Orthodox theology, illuminating the thinking of eight distinguished modern Orthodox theologians who have made important contributions on topics as ecclesiology, ecumenism, Christology, and Mariology. Approaching the work of John Meyendorff, Nicholas Afanasiev, John Zizioulas, Georges Florovsky, Sergius Bulgakov, Vladimir Lossky, Nicolas Berdyaev, and Jaroslav Pelikan from an ecumenical standpoint, Mong deftly draws comparisons with the theology of their Roman Catholic counterparts to reveal points on which the two traditions have much more in common than either side will always admit. The author interweaves these comparisons with a fascinating exposition of the history of the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches to demonstrate decisively that in spite of the bitter mistrust dividing them, they share a common heritage which could, and should, serve as a basis for reunification. Before old wounds can mend, however, a healing process of forgetting, characterized by Pope John Paul II as a 'purification of memory', must take place to clear the path towards a long-awaited return to unity."

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