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CORPUS AREOPAGITICUM AS A PROJECT
OF INTERTEXTUALITY

*The author is not a reliable interpreter of his work,
he often is less sure of what he had written than any of his attentive readers.*

He, as his reader, has to approach to his book from the outside...

There is no point to ask about the work the person who had finished it all...

So let them [pages] be interpreted by the person who is to judge them, – their reader.

Pavel Florensky, Roads and Crossroads (1922) ¹.

Das nenne ich den Mangel an Philologie:

einen Text als Text ablesen können,

ohne eine Interpretation dazwischen zu mengen...

Friedrich Nietzsche, Nachgelassene Fragmente (1888).

1. Cf. H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. 2nd, rev. ed. Transl. revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London, New York: Continuum, 1989), 191-192: 191 « Schleiermacher asserts that the aim is to understand a writer better than he understood himself... Since Schleiermacher others, including August Boeckh, Steinthal, and Dilthey, have repeated his formula in the same sense: “The philologist understands the speaker and poet better than he understands himself and better than his contemporaries understood him, for he brings clearly into consciousness what was actually, but only unconsciously, present in the other”... The artist who creates something is not the appointed interpreter of it. As an interpreter he has no automatic authority over the person who is simply receiving his work. »

INTERTEXTUALITY OF THE CORPUS AREOPAGITICUM
AS THE METHOD CHOSEN BY THE AUTHOR

This essay deals with intertextual nature of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* (CA) – the work composed between the 5th and 6th centuries AD in an attempt to combine philosophy of Neoplatonism and Christian theology. These writings were apparently written by some Greek-speaking Syrian, who received a Christian education, but acquired a thorough Neoplatonic training in Athens, and perhaps also in the Alexandrian school in the second half of the 5th century.

I will not address issues of the CA's authorship and *skopos*, focusing on the analysis of the techniques used by the author to construct the text, exploring the intertextual² strategy of the corpus.

While creating a text, a writer inevitably brings into it the semantic content of other texts (or contexts) belonging to the field of his attention. Moreover, in some cases (and this applies to the CA in full measure) the author initially and deliberately makes the text open to more than one interpretation, and thereby can program the reader to prefer one interpretation to another.

Needless to say, the positions of the author and the reader are fundamentally different in the space of the discourse, their contextual landscapes vary. The fact that the author and the reader always perceive the text against different contexts that shape horizons of their expectations³, is the foundation of hermeneutic freedom.

The influence of the contexts can be diverse and sophisticated. In many cases, intertextuality involves recontextualization, i.e. transfer and

2. The term « intertextuality » was introduced by Julia Kristeva: « Une découverte que Bakhtine est le premier à introduire dans la théorie littéraire : tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citation, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte. À la place de la notion d'intersubjectivité s'installe celle d'intertextualité », see J. Kristeva, *Σημειωτική. Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, Paris, 1969), p. 84-85 ; Eng. transl. J. Kristeva, *The Kristeva Reader*, Oxford, 1986, p. 37.

3. Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology*. Transl. by Dorion Cairns (The Hague, Boston, London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), p. 44 : « Every subjective process has a "horizon", which changes with the alteration of the nexus of consciousness to which the process belongs and with the alteration of the process itself from phase to phase... For example, there belongs to every external perception its reference from the "genuinely perceived" sides of the object of perception to the sides "also meant" not yet perceived, but only anticipated and... are "coming" now perceptually... Furthermore, the perception has horizons made up of other possibilities of perception, as perceptions that we could have, if we actively directed the course of perception otherwise: if, for example, we turned our eyes that way instead of this. »