

From Personhood to Panim

God's Immortal Image according to Father Stăniloae

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Abstract: According to Father Stăniloae, if God is transcendent, He is persona, and His personal character assures His transcendence. His persona transcends even His infinity. Likewise, the image of God in man lies essentially in the character of the person: every person becomes a new “eye” of spiritual transparency. The most adequate, expressive and communicative image of the supreme Image is the human being, or more precisely, the human face. Starting from the fact that personhood is no longer experienced as a mystery, Stăniloae turns to the Bible, which testifies that the face (*panim*) is the essence of a person. This biblical theology of God's shining face or presence (*panim*) is the key to understanding Father Stăniloae's eschatology and, by extension, his entire theology of the person. There is a dynamic and revelatory movement from the anthropological dimension of *eikon-tselem* (“image of God”) in his earlier studies, such as *God's Immortal Image*, to the later theology of personhood in Volume 6 of his *Dogmatics*, which is indebted to the biblical dimension of *prosōpon-panim* (the human “face” of Christ). Eternal bliss, according to him, will be the contemplation of the face of Christ; this is the “eternal perspective of deification” — the divine energies conceived in and radiated from the face of Christ.

Keywords: personhood, face-*panim*, *eikon-tselem*, image of God, Christology, eschatology

The Face is the 'Essence of a Person'. The Hebrew word *Panim* (פנים) as 'Face' or 'Presence'

THE WORD FACE IS ITSELF sometimes deeply significant for the Greek ascetic fathers (*Arsenius 27* and *Joseph of Panephysis 7*).¹ One thinks of the startling and evocative anecdote related in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* about Macarius the Great, which suggests that face-to-face contact provides a kind of solace to those suffering in Hell.² Abba Paul the Simple was reputed to have the gift of "seeing the state of each man's soul, just as we see their faces."³

The Hebrew word for "face" (פנים) is transliterated as *panim* (paw-neem) or *paneh*. As we will see in his eschatology, Father Stăniloae is very close to this biblical concept when he describes the person of the Savior as a judge.

In fact, the Hebrew word (פנים, *panim*) can communicate either face or presence: "*The capacity of people to physically reflect the glory of God in their bodies and particularly in the face has received little attention. It is true that the human body reveals God's amazing power. In this sense, the body is part of general*

¹ Augustine Casiday, *Reconstructing the Theology of Evagrius Ponticus: Beyond Heresy* (Cambridge University Press, New York 2013), 173.

² *Abba Macarius the Great*, 38: "Abba Macarius said, 'Walking in the desert one day, I found the skull of a dead man, lying on the ground. As I was moving it with my stick, the skull spoke to me. I said to it, 'Who are you?' The skull replied, 'I was high priest of the idols and of the pagans who dwelt in this place; but you are Macarius, the Spirit-bearer. Whenever you take pity on those who are in torments, and pray for them, they feel a little respite.' The old man said to him, 'What is this alleviation, and what is this torment?' He said to him, 'As far as the sky is removed from the earth, so great is the fire beneath us; we are ourselves standing in the midst of the fire, from the feet up to the head. It is not possible to see anyone face to face, but the face of one is fixed to the back of another. Yet when you pray for us, each of us can see the other's face a little. Such is our respite.'..."; in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers. The Alphabetical Collection*, Translated, with a foreword by Benedicta Ward, SLG, Preface by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, Cistercian Publications 59 (Kalamazoo, Michigan: The Institute of Cistercian Studies, Western Michigan University, 1975), 136–137. In rabbinic literature "When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He formed him (with two faces), front and back, as it is said, *Thou hast fashioned me in back and in front, and laid Thy hand upon me* (Ps. 139:5)... Another interpretation of *And Thou hast laid Thy hand upon me*: when Adam sinned, the Holy One, blessed be He, took away one of his faces", cf. Judah Goldin, trans., *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (2nd ed.; New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1983), 15.

³ *Abba Paul the Simple*, 1: "Blessed Abba Paul the Simple, the disciple of Abba Anthony, told the Fathers that which follows: One day he went to a monastery to visit it and to make himself useful to the brethren. After the customary conference, the brothers entered the holy church of God to perform the synaxis there, as usual. Blessed Paul looked carefully at each of those who entered the church observing the spiritual disposition with which they went to the synaxis, for he had received the grace from the Lord of seeing the state of each one's soul, just as we see their faces. When all had entered with sparkling eyes and shining faces, with each one's angel rejoicing over him, he said, 'I see one who is black and his whole body is dark; [...]. Shortly after the end of the synaxis, as everyone was coming out, Paul scrutinized each one, wanting to know in what state they were coming away. He saw that man, previously black and gloomy, coming out of the church with a shining face and white body, the demons accompanying him only at a distance, while his holy angel was following close to him, rejoicing greatly over him'" (*The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, 205–206).

revelation and 'an important form of God's self-disclosure'. But what about the human body's capacity for 'special' revelation as God's radiating glory? The lack of attention to this question is surprising given the vast amount of literature devoted to texts such as the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–9) and Paul's discussion of Moses's shining face (2 Cor. 3)."⁴ Their faces and bodies become vessels of the divine nature. The human body, and especially the face of a person, is able to communicate one's relationship with God. The Bible testifies that the face is the "essence of a person."⁵ A christophany is related to a theophany and when we read Exodus within the context of the entire Old Testament, the best theological term to describe YHWH's appearance as a man is "christophany."⁶ The human body is made in the image of God and was originally designed to embody holiness. We were designed, says Wenkel, to have a face-to-face relationship with God (אֵל-פָּנִים פָּנִים, panim el-panim, πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, prosōpon pros prosōpon).⁷ So, the ascetics have the capacity to physically reflect the glory and holiness of God when they meet him face to face, the way the human body can function as a vessel that reflects God's holiness and glory. The human body is capable of being a vessel in which rays of God's glory shine through. Therefore, the people of Israel would see the face (*panim*, פָּנִים) of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face (פָּנִים, *panim*) was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face (פָּנִים, *panim*) again, until he went in to speak with him (Exod. 34:34–35). What Moses' shining face actually looked like has been debated for some time.⁸ The Septuagint translation of Exodus 34:29 uses the vocabulary of glory (δοξάζω, *doxazō*) for the Hebrew verb "to send out rays of light" (קָרַן, *qaran*). So, Wenkel emphasize that one of the primary focal points

⁴ David H. Wenkel, *Shining Like the Sun. A Biblical Theology of Meeting God Face to Face* (Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2016), 3.

⁵ Nonna Vernon Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 7; and Charles A. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (AGJU 42; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 141, n. 59.

⁶ Wenkel, *Shining Like the Sun*, 8. For a critique of this position, see Andrew S. Malone, "The Invisibility of God: A Survey of a Misunderstood Phenomenon," *EQ* 79, no. 4 (2007): 311–29.

⁷ Wenkel, *Shining Like the Sun*, 21. In the first instance the people do not "know" (יָדַע) (what has happened to Moses (32:1). In the second instance Moses does not "know" (יָדַע) (that his face is shining (34:29). Lord has shown him his glory (34:5–7). His face was radiant (יָדַע) because of his speaking with him" [that is, with the Lord] 34:29). See, on this: Joshua M. Philpot, "Exodus 34:29–35 and Moses' Shining Face" *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 23, no. 1 (2013): 1–11, here 8.

⁸ Wenkel, *Shining Like the Sun*, 35–37. One of the strongest pieces of evidence for the fact that a face-to-face encounter with God will physically change a person's appearance is the textual unit of Exodus 34:29–32. Moses' face embodied the holiness and glory of YHWH. The glory on Moses' face was not only brilliant, but permanent. See, also: David H. Wenkel, "A New Reading of Anointing with Oil in James 5:14: Finding First-Century Common Ground in Moses' Glorious Face," *HBT* 35 (2013): 174; and Scott J. Hafemann, "The Glory and Veil of Moses in 2 Corinthians 3:7–14," in Gregory K. Beale (ed.), *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 296.

that the biblical authors used when referring to the body's ability to

communicate holiness is the face.

Father Stăniloae remembers a Romanian legend saying that in the beginning the earth was transparent, but Cain strove to cover it over so that the corpse of his brother Abel could no longer be seen in it.⁹ He says, “Adams wish to hide from the face of God and escape from communion with him cannot be completely realized, but to a certain extent, it has taken away the transparency that creation and our own being had for God and for that fullness of the riches and love that are possible among humans. In this way the human being has often attained a tormenting solitude like that of Cain.”¹⁰ Indeed, the guilt and shame cause Adam and Eve to hide themselves from the presence (פָּנִים, *panim*) of the Lord God among the trees of the garden (Gen. 3:8b). The word translated “presence” is the word for face. Thus, it is not just his spiritual presence they are hiding from but his physical presence as well – his literal “face.” They can no longer be “face to face” intimacy with God. Theologically, this view of Adam and Eve’s embodiment of a state of righteousness or sin, which Father Stăniloae also hold, reflects the biblical view of personhood.¹¹ *The important conclusion here is that their bodies reflect their relationship with God and they had to hide from his face.*¹²

The fallen face of Cain in the Garden of Eden illustrates the important role that the face plays in embodying sin. The human body, made in the image of God, is capable of bearing God’s special revelation in the form of his radiant holiness and glory. The Jewish philosopher Philo and the Christian theologian Origen both interpret Israel to mean “the one who

⁹ Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 2. The World*, 184.

¹⁰ Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 2. The World*, 185. The familiar stories of Cain and Abel reveal the character of post-Edenic humanity and the internalisation of transgression. Irenaeus is equally desirous to show that God actively worked to prevent Cain’s sin, as well as encourage him toward repentance after the fact. In this he is inspired by the specific wording of the Septuagintal text of Gen 4.7, which differs from the Masoretic. In the reading of the LXX: “οὐκ ἔαν ὀρθῶς προσενέγκης, ὀρθῶς δὲ μὴ διέλῃς, ἤμαρτες; ἡσύχασον· πρὸς σὲ ἡ ἀποστοροφὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις αὐτοῦ. But what has direct value on the consideration of God’s benevolence towards Cain is the Greek ἡσύχασον – ‘be at peace’ or ‘be calm’. There is no equivalent command in the Masoretic reading, but for Irenaeus this single word is at the centre of the verse’s theological meaning. Through it he discovers the divine reaction to the envy and malice in Cain’s heart. Irenaeus also employs the verb ἡσυχάζω at 3.19.3, of the Word as ‘quiescent in Christ during the temptation’ (Lamp, *PGL* 608). It is remarkable that Lampe nowhere notes the verb as present in the LXX of Genesis, nor does he mention Irenaeus’ important reading of it. The only other occasions of its usage cited in his lexicon, apart from a myriad of later texts on hesychasm and monastic contemplation, refer to tranquility of life as conducive to prayer; cf. Evagrius, *De oratione* 3; *Apothegmata* PG65:201C. cf., Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation* 198.

¹¹ John Wilkinson, “The Body in the Old Testament,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 63.3 (July–Sept. 1991): 195–210.

¹² Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 43.

sees God".¹³ Those who encounter God face to face are changed internally and externally. Body is capable of being a vessel in which rays of God's glory shine through. The human body can function as a vessel that reflects God's holiness and glory. The fallen face of Cain in the Garden of Eden illustrates the important role that the face plays in embodying sin. Cain embodied his sin in his face. The face of YHWH appears in the narrative as Cain went away "from the presence (or "face" [פָּנִים], panim) of the Lord" (Gen. 4:16).¹⁴ But the Lord questions Cain not just about his internal dispo-

¹³ C. T. R. Hayward, *Interpretations of the Name Israel in Ancient Judaism and Some Early Christian Writings: From Victorious Athlete to Heavenly Champion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 17. Cornelis den Hertog, *The Other Face of God. 'I Am that I Am' Reconsidered* (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012) 219: The participle *ho ʾon* in Exod. 3.14 refers only in general terms to the effective presence of God ('I am *the one who shows himself to be there*'). According to the beginning of the divine discourse in the six chapter of Exodus, says den Hertog, God appeared to the ancestors 'but my name *Kyrios* I did not disclose to them' (Exod. 6.3). The niph'al of *yd'*, 'to make oneself known', has been translated by *dēloō*, 'disclose'. Interestingly, this verb may mean 'reveal' (then the name itself is involved) but also 'explain' (then the meaning of the name is concerned). This discourse therefore seems to suggest that according to the translator "either the divine name has not yet been revealed or its meaning has still not been disclosed" (den Hertog, *The Other Face of God*, 201). For 'divine Face' interpretation see: Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1988), 329–334. He explains that the great priestly blessing in Num. 6: 23–27 concludes a cycle of priestly instructions to the people of Israel. It opens with an instruction to the Aaronids delivered by Moses, 'In this manner shall you bless the Israelites', and then proceeds with the blessing itself: (24) May YHWH bless you and protect you; (25) May YHWH brighten his countenance towards you and show you favour; (26) May YHWH raise his countenance towards you and give you peace. At the conclusion of this blessing, there is a final instruction: 'And when they shall put my name over the Israelites, I shall bless them' (v. 27). The same terminology in Ps. 67:1–2 leaves no reasonable doubt that its source is Num. 6: 24–26. In this instance, the psalmist opens his prayer with the invocation, 'May Elohim show us favour and bless us; may he brighten his countenance among us – *selah*' and the psalmist calls upon YHWH to 'raise over us the light of your presence (se-lāh). :סָלָה – 'it-tā-nū – אֶתְנוּ – pā-nāw – פָּנֵינוּ – yā-ʿêr – יֵאָר = *Selah upon us His face and cause to shine* in Ps. 67:1, pā-ne-kā – פָּנֵינוּ – hā-ʾî-rāh – הָאֵיירָה = *Make Your face Shine* in Ps. 31:16). These and other references to the Priestly Blessing in the Psalter and, particularly, the recurrence of similar language in the Psalter and many biblical genres, suggest that such imagery as 'shining the face' in favour, or 'raising the face' in beneficence, were widely diffused throughout the culture (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 330–331). Adam, 370, 372

¹⁴ Samuel E. Balentine, *The Hidden God: The Hiding of the Face of God in the Old Testament* (Oxford University Press, 1982) 45–80. Original word is סָתַר (the verb *sathar* or *saw-thar*, 'to hide, conceal [Genesis 4:14: וְהִיָּתִי נָע אֶסְתַּר וּמִפָּנֶיךָ אֶסְתַּר "and from your face I will be hidden, and I will be a fugitive"; Deuteronomy 31:17–18 and 32:20: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶסְתַּרְהָ פְּנֵי מִמֶּנּוּ "Then He said, I will hide My face"; Job 13:24: לָמָּה תִּסְתַּר פְּנֵיךָ מִי "Why do You hide Your face"]. Balentine challenges the common impression given by much of biblical scholarship that the hiddenness of God is not always to be understood as a manifestation of divine judgement in response to man's sinfulness. Particularly in the Psalms, God's hiding is a subject for lament and protest as innocent suppliants charge that they have done nothing to warrant divine abandonment. These implications of the lament concerning an inexplicable divine hiddenness have thus far received inadequate attention (Balentine,

sition of anger, but also about his fallen face: “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?” (Gen. 4:6).¹⁵

To this interpretation, father Stăniloae comes to add that the Absolute Himself has hidden its personal face from man. The image as inner impulse, as tendency toward God, and the features of it have remained but have been, in part, distorted, just as in a “*caricature the facial elements*” remain but are distorted. Thus, he says, “*the image as aspiration toward the absolute has been preserved, but the absolute has hidden its personal face from man, and consequently, the image in man has lost its luminous quality and its clarity*”.¹⁶

The Hidden God, 164–177). To Samuel E. Balentine, *Prayer In The Hebrew Bible. The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue* (Fortress Press, 1993) a text prayer is a vehicle for theological argument a “Two-way traffic between heaven and earth” (p. 48). For him, this is a bifurcation in theological studies and a matrix of the embedded tradition that itself generates and yields theology – this is the neglected of the subject “prayer” in the theology of the Hebrew Bible as the divine-human relationship, which is ‘fundamentally dialogical’ (225–246, 261–264) Gerald L. Schroeder, *The Hidden Face of God: How Science Reveals The Ultimate Truth* (New York: The Free Press, 2001) is an intriguing book that claims to find scientific support for theism. Much of Schroeder’s case for the hidden face of God consists of observations of the wonders of nature, “For most of my life I’ve felt a transcendence within nature, some spiritual rumbling” (p. 123).

¹⁵ Raanan Eichler, “When God Abandoned the Garden of Eden: A Forgotten Reading of Genesis 3:24”, *Vetus Testamentum* 65 (2015), 1–13. Eichler analyzes the biblical writer viewed “the fall of Man” and the ensuing relationship between humans and the divine. When Man and his wife disobeyed Yhwh and ate the forbidden fruit, their deed led not only to their expulsion from the garden but to Yhwh’s self-expulsion as well, to the “fall of God”, who decided that he would go whithersoever they went. This was to keep an eye on his unruly creations. The former point is reinforced in the Eden story itself, which speaks of Yhwh “walking about” in the garden and of Man and his wife hiding from him (3:8–10); the latter by the fact that Yhwh speaks on two separate occasions with Cain (4:6–7, 9–15). Yhwh too is now located outside the garden – Cain’s location as being “in the presence of” Yhwh (4:14, 16), a combination of שָׁכַן אִתּוֹ (“dwells with”) and שְׁכִינְתוֹ יָקָר [א], “the glory of his Immanence”. In this reading Yhwh continues to be overtly solicitous as well as wary of Man (see 3:21), going so far as to continue living with him in order to provide him with vital protection (Targumim is thus consonantly identical to the Masoretic Text but differs from it in the vocalization of the single word: the masoretic vocalization of this word is וַיִּשְׁכַּן, meaning “he caused to dwell” and targumic renderings is וַיִּשְׁכַּן, meaning “he dwelled”). The wording אֲשֶׁר יָקָר [א] שְׁכִינְתוֹ יָקָר, literally, “he caused the glory of his Immanence to dwell”, is simply the way in which the Targumim, which tend to avoid applying anthropomorphic language to the Deity, render “dwell” when the subject of the verb is God.

¹⁶ Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 2. The World*, 90. Image that has been weakened, although it is never totally lost. Hence Christ is said to have reestablished the image or to have found the image that was lost, but it is not said that he created it again. Paul Ladouceur, “The Experience of God as Light in the Orthodox Tradition”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 28:2 (2019), 165–185. The experience of God as interior or spiritual light, frequently called “Uncreated Light,” can be interpreted in different ways. The experience of the Divine Light is itself a *theosis*, we become bearers of Light. St. Paul employs these senses of light when he tells the Ephesians that “once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),” and he exhorts them to receive the light or truth of Christ: “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light” (Eph 5.8–9; 14).

Without the uncreated light of God, the human being and the world lack illumination. The divine light is not something impersonal, but truly real and personal through Christ. “Christ is the full light of the human being, a light that not only shows him the purpose for which he was created, but also gives him the power to move forward towards it.”¹⁷

Father Stăniloae goes on to say that the divine light that we see represents our union with God. Although spiritual in nature and not material, this light makes our body to becoming luminous as well, not only our soul: “The light from the resurrected body of Christ and from our body that will be resurrected as well as the one that shone forth from His body on Tabor and also the lesser one, that illuminates the face of the people that are purified and good – cannot be a physical light, although it is made known through the body as well. In order to understand this light we have to begin with the light that appears on the face of the good Christian, or with the halo that encircles the heads of the saints. The hesychasts see in their hearts Christ surrounded by this light. The light that surrounded Christ on Mount Tabor had this spiritual character which was visible only for the eyes of the three Apostles”.¹⁸ Therefore, the body of Christ, through the uncreated energies, gives us the possibility of having transfigured, deified bodies: “Our body will not cease to exist, but will become transparent and we will see unmediated through it God in His glory, because our body will be beyond the splitting in subjective and objective, the laws of nature, the passionate fight for overcoming nature and the fight that we do in order to protect ourselves from the others”.¹⁹

In Ps 67:1–2, 80:3 and 80:7 God’s shining face or presence (פניו) procures salvation (ישועה).²⁰ Also, we carry the Father’s light in the face (*prosōpon*) of Jesus Christ in earthen vessels (2 Chor. 4:4–7), that is, in our bodies, in order to know the glory of the Holy Spirit. Likeness means a radiation of the presence of God within man, a „reciprocal interiority”. In the saints this communion is expressed in the way God’s glory is reflected in their faces, in anticipation of the age to come. Father Stăniloae uses the language of light and glory to describe the image of God. The body shares the glory of the “Face/Image”. The model (archetype) represents the ontological content of the “face” (*eikon*). He considers that the Transfiguration of Christ human Face represented a prefigured image of *the transfigured, shining face of the Christian*: “His human nature was going to become, through the sacrifice, the environment of the divine light. (...) This light has a spiritual

¹⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: The Light of the World and the Deifier of the Human Being* [in Rom.], (Bucharest: Anastasia, 1993), 13.

¹⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: The Light of the World*, 122.

¹⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: The Light of the World*, 138

²⁰ On this subject see: David D. Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel. Divine presence and God’s people in the First Gospel*, Cambridge University Press 1996; Frederica Mathewes-Green, *The Jesus Prayer: The Ancient Desert Prayer that Tunes the Heart to God*, Orleans: Paraclete Press, 2009; Christopher Barina Kaiser, *Seeing the Lord’s Glory. Kyriocentric Visions and the Dilemma of Early Christology*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014.

quality although it springs forth from the material human figure, just as the light of goodness show itself on the face of the Christian and especially in the nimbus of saints".²¹ On these unveiled shining faces, the divine energy of 'Christ the Image and Glory of God' is being revealed. Here, father Stăniloae offers, quoting from Gregory Palamas, the example of Moses whose face sprang forth divine light. The vision of the divine light can be seen by the persons that are purified. Only through the uncreated light of God, "the world and the human being are fully illumined only through their Author who lies above them".²²

This biblical theology of God's shining face or presence (*panim*) is the key to understand the father Stăniloae's eschatology and, by extension, his entirely theology of person. There is a dynamic and revealing movement, from the anthropological dimension of *eikon-tselem* ('image of God') in his earlier study as *God's Immortal Image*, to the late theology of personhood as the Volume 6 of his *Dogmatics*, which is endoubted to the biblical dimension of *prosōpon-panim* (human 'face' of Christ).

2. God's Immortal Image and the Mystery of the Face: "No longer I" – "Suddenly" God's Face

The human *person* represents the Christianity's contribution to anthropology.²³ The key to the whole theology of Father Stăniloae is the person and the communion, because "in the communion between person and person lies the life of the person"²⁴ and the person cannot be conceived as a static reality, but in relation. At the beginning of volume six of his *Dogmatic*, father Stăniloae

²¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: The Light of the World*, 205.

²² Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: The Light of the World*, 6.

²³ Vladimir Lossky, "The Theological Notion of the Human Person" Chapter 6 of *In the Image and Likeness of God* (St Vladimir's Seminary Press: New York, 1974) 111–123; W. Pannenberg, "Person," in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, edited by K. Galling, 3rd ed. (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1961), 5:230–235; J.D. Zizioulas, "Personhood and Being," in Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997), 27–65; P. Ricoeur, "Meurt le personnalisme, revient la personne," in *Lectures 2: La contree des philosophes* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1992), 195–202, 198f.

²⁴ M. Păcurariu & Ioan I. Ică jr. (eds.) *Person and Communion* [in Rom.] (Sibiu: The Publishing House of the Archdiocese of Sibiu, 1993). Γεώργιος Α. Γάλιτης, „Π. Δημήτριος Στανιλοάε: Ευλαβικό Μνημόσυνο”, in *Αναπλάσις*, (Αυγουστος-Οκτώβριος 1994), 110. Gheorghios A. Galitis places Father Staniloae's theology in the "synthesis of the logic with the apophatic". Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Stăniloae, Dumitru (1903–1993)" in *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Orthodox Christianity* Edited by John Anthony McGuckin, Volume I (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2011) 582, says that "his life work is a labor of attempting to articulate an Orthodox dogmatic theology that is existentially relevant and not simply a set of propositional truths".

maintains that "Personhood²⁵ is no longer experienced as a mystery".²⁶ This is the reason why, in his eschatology, yearning to defend the mystery of the person, Father Stăniloae uses the biblical term "face" (of both God and man) in his theological description of the person. Also, at the end of his *Orthodox Spirituality*, we will find him, again, referring to the human face of Christ, in which will be concentrated all the energies of the divinity.

The relationship with God as Person, who as such cannot be defined being totally apophatic. Stăniloae stresses what Palamas did only up to some point: the *personal* feature of the uncreated energies. Thus, when speaking about the relation between God and His attributes, Staniloae argues that: "If God is transcendent, he is personal. Christian apophatic knowledge implies that God came down to meet man's capacity to grasp him as much as it

²⁵ Aristotle Papanikolaou, "From Sophia to Personhood: The Development of 20th Century Orthodox Trinitarian Theology" *Phronema*, Vol. 33(2), 2018, 1–20. To Nicholas Bamford, "Gregory Palamas' Energetic Approach to Person: Existential and Ontological Implications," *Studia Patristica* 48 (2010), 241–246 at 241–242, the juxtapositioning of personhood in neoplatonic study to the philosophical, for example of the incorporation of the existentialism of Heidegger as evidenced by Zizioulas and Yannaras, has led to 'new' ways of looking at 'person' and, also has led to the examination for the place of 'new' ontologies'. But in reply to a "theology of the relationship" developed through ontology's speculations of the person was the assertion of both Lossky, as well as Panagopoulos of meta-ontological and apophatic character of the person. See also: Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Divine Energies or Divine Personhood: Vladimir Lossky and John Zizioulas on conceiving the transcendent and immanent God" *Modern Theology* 19.3 (2003) 357–385. Ioannis Panagopoulos, "Ontología è theologia tou prosopou. He symbolè tês paterikês Triadologías stén katanoés tou anthropinou prosopou," *Sýnaxe* 13 (1985), 63–79 and 14 (1985), 35–47, questions the very possibility and legitimacy of developing an "ontology" of the person starting from the fourth century Greek patristic triadology. Not triadology, but only Christology is one that can lead to a 'theology' of the human person, because human nature is personal as divine-human. Not ontology, but theology reveals the truth of the person who is not an anthropological category, but the event of divine-human existence of man, a mode of liturgical existence which man receives it through Baptism in the Church. See, also, Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God. Trinity, Apophaticism, and Divine-Human Communion* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2006) 9–48.

²⁶ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 4/6. Therefore, all twentieth-century attempts to understand the person-nature relationship outside of the apophatic dimension or the mystery of the person, have suffered deviations. So, Zizioulas's strong advocacy of the priority of persons over substance in Cappadocian theology was criticized (Sarah Coakley Michel René Barnes, Lewis Ayres, David Brown, Lucian Turcescu, Aristotle Papanikolaou). Alan Torrance has attacked Zizioulas's 'personalist foundationalism' and 'personalist' ontology (Alan Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* (T&T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1996) 300, 289–290: „a foundational(ist) ontology of personhood together with attendant notions of personal freedom". Also, C. Gunton avoids the language of 'being as communion' in favor of 'person with relational particularity'. See, on this: Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clarke, 1993), 84–87; C. Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the Imago Dei," in *Persons, Divine and Human: King's College Essays in Theological Anthropology*, C. Gunton and C. Schwoebel (eds.) (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, Ltd. 1999), 47–61, 56.

also implies God's transcendence. God comes down through his energies while his personal character assures his transcendence. His person transcends even his infinity."²⁷ After all, the universe is ontologically grounded personally, that is, in a person, the person of Christ, the Logos. Otherness and communion coincide in Christ, and this conjunction triumphs over death.

He explores the 'mystery of the person' through the relationship between Self-Christ-Face. This biblical and philocalic relationship has also been explored by Olivier Clement, for which the Self is the image of Christ and "the interior expression of a face": "the Christian knows that the Self is the image of Christ and Christ is the faithful mirror who reflects the truth not only of creatures and objects, but also of the Self that is no longer an undifferentiated abyss but the interior expression of a face".²⁸ Regarding this *perichoresis* between Self and Christ, the Holy Apostle Paul says: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20).²⁹ Through the paramount intensity of Christ's

²⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God*, translated by Ioan Ioniță and Robert Barringer, vol. I, (Massachusetts: Holy Cross University Press, 1994), 102–103: "The being which remains beyond experience, which yet we sense to be the source of everything we experience, subsists in person. Subsisting as person, being is a living source of energies or of acts which are communicated to us. Hence, the apophatic has, as its ultimate basis, person; and thus even this apophaticism does not mean that God is wholly enclosed within Himself".

²⁸ Olivier Clement, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism: Texts from the Patristic Era with Commentary* (Hyde Park, New York: New City Press of the Focolare, 2017), 226. When Christ abides in the Christian mind, the face of the Christian emulates the Lord's face in the same way that the Christian's mind and body reflects the divine light. This is also a "highly visual epistemology", which reminds us of about the Evagrius Ponticus, *On Thoughts* 24, where he says that *it is also possible for you 'to form in your-self your Father's face'*. It appears that, for Evagrius, the face that is missing from the imperfect image is Christ's own face. According to Augustine Casiday, *Reconstructing the Theology of Evagrius Ponticus: Beyond Heresy* (Cambridge University Press, New York 2013) 181–183, Evagrius understands Christ to be the 'face of God and man' and, in the same time, Christ is associated with the 'kindred light' (*Skemmata*, 2) in Evagrian theology. Through true prayer, the monk becomes 'equal to the angels' (Lk 20.36), yearning to 'see the face of the Father who is in heaven' (Mt 18.10). Nonna Vernon Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010) 7, says that "The Bible testifies that the face is the "essence of a person". Christ is the Face of God because He is "the iconic revelation of God; Christ reveals God's face" [Col.1:15]. As we will see, there is a coincidence of the images of the light and the face into the orthodox spirituality of Father Stăniloae also. The starting point is Evagrius who is the first who aims to describe how the mind interacts with God through Christ. Explaining why the mental self-image lacks a face, Evagrius wrote: "Never having contemplated its own countenance [ὄψεως], the mind is incapable of forming it within itself" (*Thoughts* 25).

²⁹ According to Pseudo-Macaire, *Oeuvres spirituelles (Homélie propre à la Collection III)*, ed. V. Desprez, SC 275 (1980) 258–260, "If you have this treasure in your earthen vessel [then] 'out of darkness a light shall shine', shone in your heart... if Christ made his home in your inner self... you became a temple of God and his Spirit dwells in you (ἐν πληροφορία πίστεως)... you received the experience (πεῖραν) of all these things through the activity (ἐνεργείας) in [your] heart" (III 28. 2. 2). Also, in E.M. 13. 15 he uses Hebrews 10:22 as one of the proof texts for the "fullest and energizing indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a pure heart". This association of *πληροφορία* with the full indwelling of God in the human heart or soul is the typical Ps.-Macarian use of this term, being "the epiphany of Christ" (II.1.2) by which we "becomes

presence within me, “I am able to experience the presence of all the others in me as subjects”.³⁰ In *God’s Immortal Image*, Staniloae speaks about the internal union between the human being and the divine uncreated light. He considers the human being as a “singular-dual” being. ‘We are a single person, yet, inside us, we possess the divine light. This is why during the vision of the divine light the person sees that the divine light seems to spring forth even from the inside’.³¹ But, it is the Holy Spirit who makes Christ a “subject in me”, experienced as “reciprocal interiority between me and Christ”.³² By means of the holy mysteries, Holy Spirit can imprint Christ on us, as the human person’s true model: “I experience as subjects in myself, the central, leading subject”³³, which is Christ, and therein lies the mystery

all light, all face and all eye” (II.1.2). For him, *πληροφορία* most often refers to the experience of achieved perfection. Only this macarian *πληροφορία* explains the following way in which father Stăniloae understands this „*perichoresis* between Self and Christ”. St. Gregory Palamas extended Christology in the area of Trinitarian theology, so Tabor light is the uncreated energy of Son, that “innate motion” or “active and essential movement of nature”. Perichoresis has for Gregory a dynamic character, manifesting the mystery of the Trinity’s energy. Thus, hypostases’ consubstantiality and mutual perichoresis would be impossible without this unique and same natural movement and without this essential energy. The energy does not exist in itself but into the essence through which it is manifested as being three-hypostatically.

³⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 74. Mixing (syr. *netmazzag*) language is used by Macarius to describe the presence of sin, of grace, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit. However, through this metaphor Macarius emphasizes especially how Christ becomes present in the soul as he was in the Incarnation. And through His presence we are being ‘mixed’, from within (ἐν ὑμῖν), with the light of the Trinity. Charles M. Stang, ‘The Two ‘I’s of Christ: Revisiting the Christological Controversy’ *Anglican Theological Review* 94, no. 3 (2012): 529–547.

³¹ Adrian Agachi, *The Neo-Palamite Synthesis of Father Dumitru Stăniloae* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 144–145: “However, only persons can attain deification and not the created realm in general, although Creation itself also participates in God”.

³² Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 74–75. Father Staniloae understood this “reciprocal interiority” through Palamite theology of uncreated light and deifying union. In this regard, Palamas himself interprets Leontius of Byzantium’ ἐνυπόστατος through Macarius’ uncreated light theology, leading further the maximian synthesis of the ‘enhypostatic illumination’ – Triade II.iii.29, in Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, edited with an introduction by John Meyendorff, translation by Nicholas Gendle, preface by Jaroslav Pelikan (Paulist Press: New Jersey, 1983), 84. The illuminating light (φωτισμός φῶς) is Christ (ὑποστατικὸν φῶς). He uses the macarian term of ‘ὑποστατικὸν φῶς’ (I.17.1.3), to show that the light (φωτισμός) is Christ, shining ‘substantially’ (ὑποστατικῶς) within all human person: ‘He Himself is deifying light’ (*Triads* III.i.16, 77). Christ shining forth, the saint becomes “all light”, being deified by uncreated light of His Spirit. See, on this, N. Tănase, “Shining Face’ as Hidden and Revealed Christology,’ *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Theologia Orthodoxa Journal* (UBBTO) 62, no. 1 (2017): 187–216.

³³ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 74/6. See my study „Asceticism for Society – Integrating Body, Soul and Society. In Searching of the ‘Real Self’ that Actually Is ‘Clothed with Christ’” in Flaut D., Hošková-Mayerová Š., Ispas C., Maturro F., Flaut C. (eds) *Decision Making in Social Sciences: Between Traditions and Innovations. Studies in Systems, Decision and Control*, vol 247 (Springer, 2020), 275–295 and C.

of the personhood for father Stăniloae. We receive not only the work of the Spirit, but also the work of Christ, who comes together with the Father and dwells in us. This actual inhabitation of Christ in us and our endless progress in Him is the main purpose of our deification which is our Christification.³⁴

Therefore, God's Immortal Image is Christ illuminating as image in all and, *with His light, He's the one who appears on the shining face of the good Christian*. Being influenced by Gregory Palamas (but not only, Macarius and Symeon likewise), Father Staniloae tried to present in this writing the main aspects of the human being as image of God. When he stresses the "luminous" character of the human being, Stăniloae argues that: *„The human being is a light that enlightens first himself from himself, but realises, in the last stand, that he is not the source of this illumination in the end. The human being illuminates himself but only while being in connection with other persons and the world. We can also say that he illuminates himself and illuminates the world as well up to a certain extent, as a light that springs forth from a luminous darkness. (...) The Absolute on which depend all is the supreme light and, in the same time, the darkness or the supreme mystery. (...) The human being is a singular-dual existence, which, on the one hand is revealed light, while on the other hand represents a spring of incomprehensible light”*.³⁵

Thus, the human being is also considered to consist of light and this light is concentrated within and upon the 'shining face' of man.³⁶ The object of Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 211–302.

³⁴ For more details consult Dumitru Stăniloae, 'The Word of God: Creator, Saviour and Restaurateur for all Time' [in Rom.], *Mitropolia Olteniei*, Nr.1 (1991), 7–19; Idem, 'The Christology of St. Maximus the Confessor' [in Rom.], *Ortodoxia*, Nr.3 (1988), 67–72; Idem, 'The Son and the Word of God Incarnate and Risen as Man: The Unifier of Creation in Himself for all Eternity' [in Rom.], *Mitropolia Olteniei*, Nr.4 (1987), 7–24.

³⁵ Dumitru Staniloae, *God's Immortal Image* [in Rom.], vol. I, (Bucharest: Crystal, 1995), 62.

³⁶ In rabbinic Judaism this is the main connotation of the concept of image of God. In early Second Temple Judaism the concept of image of God as physical resemblance to God. The imagery is the result of a juxtaposition of Gen 1:26 with Gen 2:7. See, on this, A. Goshen-Gottstein, "The Body as Image of God in Rabbinic Literature," *Harvard Theological Review* 87.2 (1994): 171–195, esp. 173–176 and for a critique of Gottstein's literal understanding of rabbinic references to Adam's body of light, see David H. Aaron, "Shedding Light on God's Body in Rabbinic Midrashim: Reflections on the Theory of a Luminous Adam," *Harvard Theological Review* 90 (1997): 299–314. Also, John R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism* (JSPSS1; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 178, emphasizes, "the image consists of physical similarity to God". The image is distinct from its prototype in its substance. Concerning the transmission of the likeness to God (bodily luminosity – *shekinah*, שכינה) from Adam to other humans or the whole humanity, the beauty of Adam the first was like the beauty of the *Divine Shekinah* (דיוקנא meaning "dwelling" or "one who dwells"). The Lord created mankind "in a facsimile of his own face". F.I. Andersen, '2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch', in J.H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Volume 1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985) 92–221, here 171: "The Lord with his own two hands created mankind; and in a facsimile of his own face. Small and great the Lord created. Whoever insults a person's face insults the face of the Lord; whoever treats a person's face with repugnance treats the face of the Lord with repugnance. Whoever treats with contempt the face of any person treats the face of the Lord with contempt. (2 En. 44:1–2 shorter

this particular illumination which receives light and “produces” light for others is not only our mind, but our body and our face, also. Therefore, says father Stăniloae, “*The most adequate, expressive, and communicative image of the supreme Image is the human being or the human face. This has been seen prophetically since the time of Old Testament. For through the human face, the supreme spirituality (or the form of the supreme spirituality) can be communicated. Only through the personal face of the human being – which expresses consciousness of oneself and all others, openness to and love for all, and the capacity to express one’s will and affirm oneself – can the divine personal spirituality be expressed in the most adequate manner. Only the human person is able to know God, especially in His inner being*”.³⁷ We notice here, another equivalence between face and person.

Divine Logos, the Son of God, because he is the ‘Image’ (‘Face’ for Clement, *Stromate*, 5, 6) of the Father, found the most adequate expression in the human face to communicate to us God’s inner life within a human framework. Thus, for father Stăniloae become so important to see “*God’s inner life in the face of Christ*”.³⁸ Christ gives us not only Mystery and Light, but also shares with us the Sonship of God. Therefore, “*Christ, by being a Person that remains at the same time divine and human is always in an action of communicating His infinity. He is always Light above any light and, furthermore, Mystery, always above the finite human [being], Christ is an infinite Mystery in what he communicates to us and infinite Mystery in what remains un-communicated to us. The more he reveals us the [divine] Light, the more His Mystery remains untouched. Christ is Light and unending Mystery in his human nature as well, because His human nature is one through which the Divine Person communicates with us*”.³⁹ Let’s keep in mind this equivalence between person and light.

Stăniloae goes further and argues that Christ “made Himself through the Incarnation the Light of the world, its meaning”.⁴⁰ He extends this discourse on the ‘luminosity’ of the believer which will be revealed during the Final Judgment, when “*All will want to see Christ illuminating as image in all, because all are illumined by Christ, which is luminous through all, because of the deeds they have worked. However, they all turn aside from the ones in which Christ does not radiate, because they have not helped through their deeds the ones near them to fill themselves during their lifetime with the light of Christ*”.⁴¹

What shines from us is the image of the Trinity, and this spiritual and uncreated light we shall receive it after the Final Judgment, when Christ will be all in all.⁴²

recension)”. Silviu Bunta, “The Likeness of the Image: Adamic motifs and תְּלֵמ (tselem) anthropology in Rabbinic Traditions about Jacob’s image enthroned in heaven”, *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, XXXVII, 1 (Brill NV, Leiden, 2006) 55–84.

³⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 6*, 110.

³⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 6*, 111.

³⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ. The Light of the World* [in Rom.], 76.

⁴⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ. The Light of the World* [in Rom.], 82

⁴¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: The Light of the World* [in Rom.], 114–115.

⁴² Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ. The Light of the World* [in Rom.], 118

3. Building a 'Face Christology' – the Sacramental Theology of Personhood as Face

To father Stăniloae, quoting St. Gregory Palamas, "the likeness of God is not simply the image of one of the persons of the Holy Trinity, but of the whole life-creating Trinity. The human person as image thus reflects in himself, in his spiritual structure and life, the inner Trinitarian life of the divinity".⁴³ In fact, says father Stăniloae, the fathers in general "make no distinction of content between person and nature. Person is only nature in its real existence.

Hypostasis is fundamental ontological reality. This emphasis leads to new logical terms: enpostatos and anypostatos. Father Stăniloae appreciates the baptism as an *enhypostasiation* in Christ, bringing to light our personal faces. For him OTHERNESS⁴⁴ MEANS ENHYPOSTASIATION in Christ.⁴⁵ The soteriological refunctioning of the biological hypostases in the new

⁴³ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 2. The World: Creation and Deification*, translated and edited by Ioan Ioniță and Robert Barringer, preface by Ion Bria (Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2000) 95/2

⁴⁴ Zizioulas confirms the essential importance of the concept of otherness and dedicates a whole chapter "On Being Other: Towards Ontology year of Otherness" in his work *Communion & Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 13–98. At Yannaras and to Zizioulas there is an absolutization and idealization of otherness, which, together with freedom, are two fundamental attributes of personhood. Alterity acquires value and meaning only in relation with relational factors: love, fellowship and, also, being/nature. Due to the fact that, at Yannaras, nature denies apriori the person as otherness (the ratio between person and nature is defined under the aspect of: priority, inclusion, transcendence or conflict). According to Nicholas Loudovikos, "Person instead of Grace and Dictated Otherness: John Zizioulas' final theological position," *Heythrop Journal* 52 (2011), 683–699, at 683, at both Zizioulas and Yannaras person identifies itself with grace. See: E. Russell, "Reconsidering Relational Anthropology: A Critical Assessment of John Zizioulas' Theological Anthropology," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 5 (2003), 168–186. Not ontology, but theology reveals the truth of the person who is not an anthropological category, but the event of divine-human existence of man, a mode of liturgical existence which man receives it through Baptism in the Church. Fathers have adopted the term *prosopon* in order to avoid recognizing in hypostasis the absolute ontological content. Greek Fathers created a new "meta-ontology".

⁴⁵ If it is possible to predicate three ἐνοῦσιοι hypostases in a single ousia, then two ἐνυπόστατοι natures in one hypostasis, surely it is also possible to predicate one ἐνούσιος, ἐνυπόστατος, ἐνυπαρκτός three-hypostatically energy, in one essence and in three hypostases. St. Gregory Palamas extended Christology in the area of Trinitarian theology. No energy is neither anhypostasized, nor having a hypostasis of its own. But energy as tri-hypostatic unity of the Godhead and common manifestation is due to the mutual habitation and perichoresis of the consubstantial hypostases. To St. Gregory Palamas God's activity or energy is not hypostasis, but in hypostasis, is not being, but in being, it's not self-subsistence, but subsistence in being or in hypostasis (ἐνούσιος, ἐνυπόστατος, ἐνυπαρκτός) [Cap. 122]. Therefore, the energies are understood as enhypostasized. The common energy characterizes the essence of the acting Hypostasis and it is the inexpressible revelation of Three-hypostatic Deity.

personal existence acquired through baptism is a „dynamic refunctioning“ (*eine kraftvolle Refunktionalisierung*).⁴⁶ “When a man is immersed in this water at baptism, he encounters Christ within it, or he is enhypostatized in Christ;⁴⁷ he is fully personalized within the Person of Christ and is filled by the energies of the Holy Spirit that shine forth from Christ”.⁴⁸ A person goes forth from baptism as a wholly new existence. He is not renewed in one respect only, but, according to Father Stăniloae, his very existence has become “other”, because, in a certain way, it has become enhypostasized in Christ.⁴⁹ The paradox, however, he emphasizes, is that the one baptized remains meanwhile the same subject he was before.⁵⁰

The formative principle here, says father Stăniloae, is a personalizing force – the very form of Christ is also being imprinted. So, in baptism the human being has received “the form of Christ within his own personal form” and “Christ has given him His own appearance”. In this sense he has already clothed himself with Christ from the time of his baptism: “The image of Christ is a genuine and luminous garment; it is Christ Himself. ‘For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ’ (Gal 3:27)”.⁵¹ The baptismal garment represents Christ, but it also represents us who have been clothed in a personal way with the image of Christ (Gal

⁴⁶ St. Maximus, *Questions to Thalassius* 61, (PG 90, 644D–645D) in *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, Selected Writings from St Maximus the Confessor, translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003), 131–143, characterized the deification as an “*enhypostatically enlightenment*”, thus emphasizing its uncreated character because subsistence in / through the eternal hypostasis of the Word.

⁴⁷ Benjamin Gleede, *The Development of the Term ἐνυπόστατος from Origen to John of Damascus*, *Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, Volume 113* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012) 131, 133, emphasizes that Leontius of Jerusalem elaborated the correspondence ἐνυπόστατον/ἐνούσιον in a way similar to Pamphilus by emphasizing the need for a terminologically unified approach to the trinitarian and Christological dogma. Not only makes the flesh insubstantial in the Logos, but also both natures coexist in the one hypostasis. Thus, both the Logos and the flesh can be subject of συν(εν)υπόστατος, συνοσίωσις, συνυφίστασθαι or συνπόστασις.

⁴⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5. The Sanctifying Mysteries*, translated and edited by Ioan Ioniță and Robert Barringer, foreword by Alkiviadis C. Calivas (Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2012) 31. Vasilios Karayiannis, *Maxime le Confesseur, Essence et Énergies de Dieu*, *Théologie Historique* 93 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1993), 48, analyzing the Maximian terminology, shows that for St. Maximus the term *enhypostaton* indicates what there is or what exists is one that participates to the essential and natural existence (*Opuscula Theologica et Polemica* 16, PG 91, 205B).

⁴⁹ The rapport between nature and hypostasis (or λόγος φύσεως and τρόπος ύπάρξεως) referred to by the term ἐνυπόστατος can thus be described correctly as insubstantiality. Antoine Lévy, *Le créé et l’incréé. Maxime le Confesseur et Thomas d’Aquin aux sources de la querelle palamienne* (Sorbonne: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2007), 307–308, 311, states that „entire Christological thought of Maximus highlights the subtle interplay between λόγος of nature and hypostatic τρόπος (the hypostatic subject of the rational energeia)“.

⁵⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 5*, 32.

⁵¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 5*, 42–43.

3:1). Hence St. Paul declares, “My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you” (Gal 4:19). If the baptized Christian continues in this state can say with St. Paul, “it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20). After insisting on the four aforesaid Galatian texts, he concludes: “St. Paul also speaks of these matters: of the increasingly clear impression of the image of Christ upon the baptized; of this process as bringing to light their genuine and personal faces from out of the obscurity of an undefined and formless generality, or from the disorder of the lower impulses. “But we all, with unveiled⁵² face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed⁵³ into the same image⁵⁴ from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor 3:18).⁵⁵ As we mirror more and more the image of Christ and thereby make our own personal image more and more distinct, we become increasingly luminous, for our image as person is the image of freedom, of conscience and responsiveness, and in these things the glory of the image of Christ as Person is reflected. The Fathers gave baptism the name “illumination.”⁵⁶ By this name, says Father Stăniloae, “they sought to bestow upon the human face a markedly personal and responsive character and an increasingly profound consciousness of

⁵² ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ (anakekalymmenō), Verb – Perfect Participle Middle or Passive – Dative Neuter Singular

⁵³ μεταμορφούμεθα (metamorphoumetha), Verb – Present Indicative Middle or Passive – 1st Person Plural

⁵⁴ εἰκόνα (eikona), Noun – Accusative Feminine Singular

⁵⁵ In Qumran texts we find also the idea of “Humanity as the Glory of God”. The Qumran community believed then, that it was their vocation to fulfil the responsibility originally given to Adam to embody God’s own Glory. Adam was created in the likeness of God’s Glory, being the theophanic presence of the light or of the perfect light of God’s presence. Adam is identified in some way with the Glory occupying God’s throne in Ezekiel 1. The identification is not absolute since Adam is only made *in* (ἐν) the likeness of God’s Glory. In the Greek version of 3 *Baruch* 4:16, Adam was clothed in the Glory of God before he fell, but he was “stripped of the Glory of God (τῆς δόξης θεοῦ ἐγυμνώθη)” probably implies he had previously *worn* the Glory. This kind of Adam theology lies behind Romans 1:23 and 3:23. An identification of the Glory of God with Adam’s form is probably also intended by the echo of Isaiah 6:1–3 in Genesis 1:26–28. See, on this: John Behr, “The Glory of God: A Living Human Being”, in Elie Ayroulet, ed., *Saint Irénée et l’Humanité Illuminée* (Paris: Cerf, 2018), 93–116; Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis, *All The Glory of Adam. Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Studies on the texts of the desert of Judah; Vol. 42; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002), 91–93; Alexander Golitzin, “Recovering the ‘Glory of Adam’: ‘Divine Light’ Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Ascetical Literature of Fourth-Century Syro-Mesopotamia” in J. R. Davila, *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St Andrews in 2001* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 275–308.

⁵⁶ For the link between the primordial luminosity of Adam’s garments, baptismal garments and the luminosity of ascetic holy man, see: Samuel Rubenson, “Transformative Light and Luminous Traditions in Early Christian Mysticism and Monasticism,” *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* 90 (2014) 179–187. Rubenson brings us back to the Desert Fathers becoming fire and radiant light and, for him, the ascent to light is linked to a descent of light.

the eternal meaning of personal life and of its continuation, and also a consciousness of the eternal meaning of the whole of reality in God."⁵⁷

Chrismation inaugurates an "epiphany or manifestation of Christ"⁵⁸. This epiphany shows forth the light of the Spirit of Christ shining upon the baptized person's being. Through the holy mystery of chrismation, the believer himself becomes another Christ, becomes the likeness of Christ – which after all means the "Anointed" (*Christos*) – and hence he is also an anointed one, or a Christian (*christianos*). Following the example of the Lord, we too have Christ within us as we come up out of the water of baptism, although He is not yet visibly resting upon us. Hence the Spirit of Christ immediately descends upon us, or "shines forth from Christ within us"⁵⁹, this means that Christians devoted to Christ are living a perpetual Pentecost, a continuous participation in His Spirit.⁶⁰

Through chrismation the Holy Spirit penetrates and imprints Himself upon these physical members and organs, and on the spiritual powers on which they are founded; also, in the same way as the holy chrism, the Spirit abides in them as a pleasing fragrance. He imprints Himself as a seal not only on the outside [EXOTHEN] of these members but also on their interiors [ENDOTHEN].⁶¹ It is through the body that the Holy Spirit is communicated to him, and from Christ the Spirit shines forth upon our bodies.⁶²

"And if Christ is in you... also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who dwells in you" (Rom 8:10–11) we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18). In order to show that Christ is dwelling in our being through His Spirit, and Christ is revealed through the unveiled face of the baptized, father Stăniloae is quoting from this two texts above.⁶³

⁵⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5*, 45/5

⁵⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 5*, 60.

⁵⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 5*, 62.

⁶⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 5*, 64.

⁶¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 5*, 69. During the Transfiguration the Apostles, on Tabor, "saw the very grace of the Spirit who later came to dwell in them" (Tr., III, 3,9.). The light of grace "illuminated from without (ἐξωθεν) those who approached it with dignity and sent enlightenment to the soul through sensitive eyes; but today, since it is confused with us (ἀνακραθὲν ἡμῶν) and exists in us, it illuminates the soul from within (ἐνδοθεν)" (Tr., I, 3, 38). The opposition between knowledge coming from the outside (ἐξωθεν) – a human and purely symbolic knowledge – and the 'intellectual' knowledge which comes from within (ἐνδοθεν), says Meyendorff, is already found in Pseudo-Denys: 'This God does not move them towards the divine from outside (ἐξωθεν), but in an intelligible way by illuminating them from within (ἐνδοθεν) with the most divine will, thanks to a pure and immaterial light' (*Hier. Eccl.*, I, 4, PG III, 376B; trad. Gandillac, 249). See, also, Panayiotis Christou, "Double Knowledge According to Gregory Palamas", *Studia Patristica*, vol. 9 (Leuven: Peeters, 1966), 20–29.

⁶² Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5*, 71.

⁶³ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive*

Another statement of Father Stăniloae is coming to support my argument regarding his theology of Personhood as Face Christology. For him the Eucharist is very much like a human face: “The Eucharist is made up of numerous feelings, acts, and concerns that come from us to God, and from God to us. In this the Eucharist closely resembles a human face that as a result of this encounter has a complex design, made up of numberless lines that have their origin from us, from nature, and from above; these lines serve to turn this face outward, inward, or in the direction of heaven”⁶⁴ and “He effects an instant transformation of the Eucharistic bread into His body, which is an instrument for showing forth His own hypostasis and that of the Spirit.”⁶⁵

He abides within us in a real way and we become “fellow members of the same body” (σύσσωμα, Eph 3:6) with Christ and with one another. Through this intimacy and communication perfected in Him, we experience the states, feelings, and activities of Christ, and He experiences ours, penetrated and characterized by His own. “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20), said the Holy Apostle Paul. The union with the Lord in the Eucharist is a complete union precisely because He is no longer a worker in us only through the energy introduced into us by His Spirit but also through His body and His blood, imprinted upon our body and blood. Therefore, “we find ourselves subjects together with Christ of our body, become also His body, and of His body, become also our body”.⁶⁶

Manual for the Scholar, transl. By Archimandrite Jerome and Otilia Kloos, foreword by Alexander Golubov (Waymart, PA: St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2003), 199, says that the heart is the ontological *topos* of perceiving God’s presence in ourselves, meant to “be filled with divine light”. From the ‘endothen’ presence of the uncreated light of Christ, is radiating then ‘exothern’ upon the illuminated body and concentrating this light as “shining face”. Deified man is endowed with divine energies, which become his own energies. See, also, Marcin Podbielski, “The Face of the Soul, the Face of God: Maximus the Confessor and πρόσωπον,” in Sotiris Mitralaxis, Georgios Steiris, Marcin Podbielski, Sebastian Lalla (eds.), *Maximus the Confessor as a European Philosopher* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 193-228.

⁶⁴ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5*, 94.

⁶⁵ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5*, 92.

⁶⁶ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5*, 80–81.

We recall that for Palamas, man is in a certain sense higher than the angels, greater than them, created according to the image and likeness of God. Man’s corporeity indicates that he is more perfectly in the Image of God than the angels. The angels are given to be only reflections of light, but man is predestined to become God. A created incarnate spirit, man is placed between the spirituality of the angels and the carnal corporeality of this world. St. Gregory of Palamas saw in this situation the primacy of man over the angels. The angels are “the second lights”, reflecting the light of God. Saint Gregory Palamas, *The one Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, a critical edition, translation and study by Robert E. Sinkewicz, C.S.B. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute Of Mediaeval Studies, 1988) 126–127, Cap. 39: “*The intellectual and rational nature of the soul, alone possessing mind and word and life-giving spirit, has alone been created more in the image of God than the incorporeal angels*” [Ἡ νοερά καὶ λογικὴ φύσις τῆς ψυχῆς, μόνη νοῦν ἔχουσα καὶ λόγον καὶ πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν, μόνη καὶ τῶν ἀσωμάτων ἀγγέλων μάλλον κατ’ εἰκόνα τοῦ θεοῦ παρ’ αὐτοῦ δεδημιούργηται].

4. Eternal bliss – the contemplation of the face of Christ. The breath of the Spirit and the eternal value of all human faces

E. After the Fall, says Father Stăniloae, the breath of the Spirit “no longer blows freely within them”, because now they are “only flesh instead of life itself.”⁶⁷ Saints, instead, are those who have incorporated the Spirit and they as subjects arrive at a supreme intimacy with the Spirit. The Spirit does not affirm Himself in the human person through the category of “Thou,” like Christ, but through the category of “I,” in order to strengthen the “I” of the human person as an “I” who loves Christ.⁶⁸ There begins a *kenosis* of the Spirit, who descends to our level in order to raise us up to the level of being Christ’s partners. The Spirit is not a hypostasis with a distinct human nature, which means that He is not incarnate as we are or as Christ is, and therefore there is nothing that hinders Him from “infusing”⁶⁹ Himself as hypostasis into our hypostases, becoming a sort of hypostasis of our persons”.⁷⁰ This makes Him even closer to us. This intimacy between the

⁶⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 5. The Sanctifying Mysteries*, translated and edited by Ioan Ioniță and Robert Barringer, foreword by Alkiviadis C. Calivas (Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2012) 27, 29. Thus, the Lord clothed Adam and Eve not with garments of skins but with garments of glory. ‘Garments of light (‘ō r)’ refers to the clothes of the first man, which were like a torch [shedding radiance], broad at the bottom and narrow at the top. See, Alexander Toepel, “When Did Adam Wear the Garments of Light?,” *JJS* 61 [2010]: 62–71. The homophony between עור (“skins”) and אור (“light”) was, also, exploited, interpreting the luminous garment as the gift of the Holy Spirit, lost in Eden, recovered in Christian baptism, and brought to full expression in the eschaton.

⁶⁸ By the indwelling of Father and Son in the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος and through the *πεῖρα* of the glory, shared by the body also, we become “children of light”, divinized (ἀποθεοῦται). This means becoming ‘one spirit’ with the Lord. A saint is a person who has been sanctified in his inner self (κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον; Coll. II, Hom. 17. 13). For ‘dwelling language’, says Stewart *Working the Earth of the Heart*, 224.

⁶⁹ In a special way the human being was created in the beginning by the will of the Father, according to the image of the Son and in the Son, and through the breath (*infusing*) of the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2; 2:6). Irenaeus’ interpretation of the breath of life in Gen 2:7 is only properly understood within the economy of salvation and the vivifying Spirit of 1 Cor 15:45. He employs Adam and Christ as paradigms for the qualitative distinction between the breath in Gen 2:7 and vivifying Spirit in 1 Cor 15:45. The breath of life given to Adam (and by extension to all humanity) is provisional and temporary, abandoning the body after death. The Spirit, which follows after the breath, is eternal and permanent. Following the logic of 1 Cor 15:45, the first Adam is animated or rational, while the second Adam is spiritual (πνευματοφόρος – spirit bearer, a pneumatological being). As a result the animating breath lost its strength and requires the vivification of the Spirit through adoption. Stephen O. Presley, *The Intertextual Reception of Genesis 1–3 in Irenaeus of Lyons* (Leiden: Brill 2015) 146; John Behr, *Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000) 535; M.C. Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation. The cosmic Christ and the saga of redemption* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 71.

⁷⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 4*, 100–101.

Spirit and the human person who believes makes the spiritual person feel the Spirit not as a "Thou"; rather, every time he says "I," he hears the Spirit saying in him His own "I." His "I" has become the "I" of the Spirit, and the "I" of the Spirit has become his "I," in a perfect unity without confusion. They are two interpenetrated 'I's and every one feels that his "I" is penetrated by the "I's of others because the same "I" of the Spirit is present

"Even in this world there is an interpenetration of persons"⁷¹, but none is confused with the others. I have my own ontological definition, but I am not separated from others and from the world. I am in others, and they are in me. This "expresses the total absorption of your person ('face' in original) in the other and of the other's in you,"⁷² The mutual discovery of subjects is a work of love. If in the time of prayer the mind sees itself directly and God only indirectly, from the moment that it is carried off from itself it sees God directly, and it no longer knows itself. This is the experience of love in moments of ecstasy: I no longer see myself, but only you; in the horizon of my sight you take the place of my ego. "In fact the divine light is considered

'It is 'enhypostatic', not because it possesses a hypostasis of its own, but because the Spirit 'sends it out into the hypostasis of another', in which it is indeed contemplated. It is then properly called 'enhypostatic', in that it is not contemplated by itself, nor in essence, but in hypostasis' (Tr. III.i.9, 71). As well as meaning 'what exists in another hypostasis', enhypostatic can also mean 'what really exists', that which is genuine or authentic, e.g., of our real adoption as sons by the grace of the Holy Spirit (Tr. III.i.27).

⁷¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 166. For father Stăniloae perichoresis or 'interpenetration of persons' and has a dynamic character, manifesting the mystery of the energy of Trinity. Like St. Gregory Palamas, Father Stăniloae also, extended Christology in the area of Trinitarian theology, so Tabor light is the uncreated energy of Son, that 'innate motion' or 'active and essential movement of nature'. Thus, hypostases' consubstantiality and mutual perichoresis would be impossible without this unique and same natural movement and without this essential energy. According to Amphiloque Radovic, *Le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité selon saint Grégoire de Palamas* (Paris: Cerf, 2012) 170, "nature is the one which is moved by energy, hypostasis is the one who moves, and movement is the energy". For a discussion on the Trinitarian contribution of Gregory Palamas see M. Edmund Hussey, 'The Palamite Trinitarian Models', *SVTQ*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1972), 83–89. For father Stăniloae's further insights on this theme see: Dumitru Stăniloae, 'The Holy Trinity and the Creation of the World from Nothing in Time' (II) [in Rom.], *Mitropolia Olteniei*, Nr.3 (1987), 28–47; Idem, 'The Holy Trinity and the Creation of the World from Nothing in Time' (1) [in Rom.], *Mitropolia Olteniei*, Nr.2 (1987), 41–69; Idem, 'The Holy Trinity: The Creator, Saviour and Eternal Goal of all Believers' [in Rom.], *Ortodoxia*, Nr.2 (1986), 14–42; Idem, 'The Holy Trinity, Structure of Supreme Love' [in Rom.], *Studii Teologice*, Vol.22 (1970), 333–355, reprinted in *Theology and the Church*, translated by Robert Barringer (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980), 73–108; Dumitru Stăniloae, 'Trinitarian Relations and the Life of the Church', *Ortodoxia*, Vol. 16 (1964), 503–525, reprinted in *Theology and the Church*, translated by Robert Barringer (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980), 11–44.

⁷² Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality. A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a definitive Manual for the Scholar*, translated from the original romanian by archimandrite Jerome (Newville) and Otilia Kloos, foreword by Alexander Golubov (St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2003), 320–321.

as being a reflex of the loving face of God or of the faces which love each other or love us, of the Holy Trinity. Where light is seen, God is no longer covered with a shadow; His presence is no longer just supposed, but He has uncovered His face, which radiates light".⁷³

The union of the mind with the divine light which it sees this fills it and makes it light. "Whoever looks at a light which is shining from the face of a loved one is also filled with it. The light and brilliance from the face of the beloved also reaches the face of the one who loves, and envelops both in a common light and joy".⁷⁴ So the mind doesn't only see the divine light beyond itself, but also within.

The face of the Word that shone like the sun is the characteristic hiddenness of his being. The face of Christ issued radiance and revealed God and the apostles realized that God is a *person* (*prosopon* – which means both "face" and "person"). In contrast to "name" Christology, "wisdom" Christology, and "glory" Christology, Bogdan G. Bucur notes that "face" Christology, one of the early building blocks for emerging Christian doctrine, never become a major player, but was replaced by more precise vocabulary shaped by the Christological controversies of the third and fourth centuries.⁷⁵

At the end of the ages, in eschatological life, Christ's luminous face will illumine all persons and all things. Here, father Stăniloae equates again the Face with Person: "Only this face, only this Person, is seen by all, because they feel that it is this Person upon whom their eternal existence depends".⁷⁶

The light of Christ's face has thus become visibly transparent in his face. The fundamental otherness of the other is to see Him through the human face, first in Himself then in all those in whom Christ takes up His dwelling. According to father Stăniloae "God affirmed, through the human face He gave to His Son, the eternal value of all human faces."⁷⁷ After God Himself

⁷³ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality*, 332.

⁷⁴ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality*, 334.

⁷⁵ Bogdan G. Bucur, "The Divine Face and the Angels of the face: Jewish Apocalyptic Themes in Early Christology and Pneumatology", in Robert J. Daly (ed.), *Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity*, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, 2009, 143–153. Bucur outlines the occurrence of "face" Christology in Clement of Alexandria, Aphrahat the Persian sage, and in the seven spirits of the book of revelation. The "shining face" theology as luminous metamorphosis of a visionary has experienced three great challenges: the anthropomorphic controversy, iconoclastic debate and the hesychast dispute. See, on this, N. Tănase, „'Shining Face' as Hidden and Revealed Christology" *UBBTO* 62, no. 1 (2017): 187-216.

⁷⁶ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 184.

⁷⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 28. According to Jewish sources, the image of God (*tselem*) was especially reflected in the radiance of Adam's face (*panim*). Jarl Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord. Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985) 94; Jarl Fossum, *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995) 14–39, for here 16 ("Light Adam" or "Light-Man") and 20, n. 30 (the word for 'light' in the LXX is *phōs*, which significantly also means 'man': τὸ φῶς, 'light')

became man He “have made the face of His uncreated hypostasis out of the human face” and “through the fact that the Son of God Himself took on a human face, God became visible as a Person, making His divinity visible through His humanity, although distinct from it”.⁷⁸ Only the Words Incarnation made God’s mystery and infinite light transparent through the human face. Through the Incarnation God Himself made His face out of the human face and gave the fruit of the tree of life – that is, from Himself (Rev 22:2) – to all faces that enter inwardly into communion with His face. Because “the human face in general has in itself the capacity to become the visible⁷⁹ image of God” that it shows that the “Son of God is the model for the human image and that God also has an image, a form of manifestation according to which the human face is created”.⁸⁰ “Christ’s face is filled with the divine transcendence” and “Through the relative transcendence of Christ’s face, God’s absolute transcendence is visible”.⁸¹

To father Stăniloae “The light of Christ’s face” is “the light of the Person”.⁸² This is another important text in which he appropriates the triptych Face-Person-Light: “From Christ’s human face, which is the medium through which the endless understanding and goodness of the divine Person shines

and ὁ φῶς, 'man').

⁷⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 105.

⁷⁹ Moses’ glory is associated with being created in the image of God, stating that God created man in his own image. The understanding of Moses’ face restoring the original luminous *tselem* (Gen 1:27), that Adam had prior to the fall, is also expressed in parallel with the radiant *panim* of the prophet. Linda Belleville, *Reflections of Glory: Paul’s Polemical Use of the Moses-Doxa Tradition in 2 Corinthians 3.1–18* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 65; A. Goshen Gottstein, “The Body as Image of God in Rabbinic Literature,” *HTR* 87 (1994): 183.

⁸⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 106.PANIM

⁸¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 6*, 106.

⁸² The glory of Adam’s body and the glory of Moses’ face were creatively juxtaposed in 4Q504. A. Orlov, “Vested with Adam’s Glory: Moses as the Luminous Counterpart of Adam in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Macarian Homilies,” *Christian Orient* 4.10 (2006): 498–513, says that, the luminous face of the prophet serves in this text as an alternative to the lost luminosity of Adam and as a new symbol of God’s glory once again manifested in the human body. Thus, as Andrei A. Orlov, *The Glory of the Invisible God. Two Powers in Heaven Traditions and Early Christology* (New York: T&T Clark, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019) 124, demonstrated, in early Mosaic, Enochic, and Jacobite traditions *tselem* is often used interchangeably with *panim*. Also, in Matthew’s and Luke’s transfiguration account, Jesus’ luminous face was indeed understood as his *iqonin*. Although scholars have attempted to interpret the symbolism of Jesus’ luminous face through the biblical imagery of Moses’ incandescent visage (Exod 34:29–30), says Orlov, “another important theophanic trend, which speaks about the deity’s *Panim*, remains neglected”. The creative interchange between *panim* and *tselem* symbolism will develop a very important influence on Christian theophany. The application of “image” terminology to Moses’ story here has profound anthropological significance, since Moses’ luminosity becomes envisioned as a restoration of Adam’s original *tselem*. The splendor of the *iqonin* of his face shone because of the splendor of the Glory of the Shekinah of the Lord.

forth, the light that will overwhelm everything".⁸³ He who is now invisible to all and dwells in light will then be revealed to all as He is, and will fill all things with His light. Christ's luminous face will illumine all persons and all things: "The eternal light of which the good will partake is a look and a call that Christ addresses to every one of them, just as the darkness in which the others are left is a turning of His face from every one of them, or His face dismissing them of their own accord. At the same time he who experiences Christ's face turning toward him as an eternal light, eternally inexhaustible, sees himself in everything that Christ finds good in him, but he also sees the others who are enveloped in the same light. On the other hand, the feeling of all that their destiny has been sealed for eternity, without any possibility of change, is interpreted as their experience of the supreme authority of Him who judges from a very high imperial throne. His throne is not only big, but also "white," because it is the throne from which judgments that are unstained by any interest, flattery, or bribe are decided. The overwhelming authority that radiates from the face of the Judge is so great that "from His presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them" (Rev 20:11). Earth and sky are purely and simply seen no more, on account of the authority radiating from this face, which keeps all humans focusing their gaze upon it. It seems that there is nothing else except this face, or everything is included in it. Only this face, only this Person, is seen by all, because they feel that it is this Person upon whom their eternal existence depends."⁸⁴

At that time we will see the image of every human person in Christ: "in every human person we will see a ray of Christ's face".⁸⁵ Influenced by the palamite theology, Father Stăniloae points out: "He is the 'light' in person".⁸⁶ The Spirit is the hypostasized energy found in the Son,⁸⁷ who thus dwells within us, and by whom we are reconfigured (ἀναμορφούμενοι) in conformity with the living word of God.

⁸³ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 6*, 154.

⁸⁴ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 6*, 184. There is a strikingly resembles the statement in 2 Enoch where God's Panim is understood as his entire extent. Francis Andersen, "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by J. H. Charlesworth, 1.91–221, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1983–1985) 1.136–1.138: "I saw the view of the face of the Lord, like iron made burning hot in a fire and brought out, and it emits sparks and is incandescent... and I fell down flat and did obeisance to the Lord. And the Lord, with his own mouth, said to me, 'Be brave, Enoch! Don't be frightened! Stand up, and stand in front of my face forever.'"

⁸⁵ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 6*, 189. Regarding the place of the divine light of Christ in divine cult see, also, D. Stăniloae, 'The Significance of the Divine Light in the Spirituality and the Cult of the Orthodox Church' [in Rom.], *Orthodoxia*, (1976), 3–4, 433–446.

⁸⁶ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, Volume 3. The Person of Jesus Christ as God and Savior*, translated and edited by Ioan Ioniță, foreword by His Beatitude Daniel Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, introduction by Andrew Louth (Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011) 91.

⁸⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 3*, 98.

“The supreme Person will be visible through all, and all persons will see each other through all”.⁸⁸ There will no longer be seen a nature that makes the person difficult to be perceived. We will see God “face to face,” but we will also see each other “face to face,” not veiled.⁸⁹ The body will not cease to exist, but it will be transparent because through it we will see directly God in glory⁹⁰, being completely spiritualized. “Subjects will directly experience each other reciprocally”⁹¹, being filled with spirituality and looking into each other’s eyes, this will make subjects no longer exterior to each other, but reciprocally inside one another.

Conclusion

“The divine energies are nothing but the rays of the divine essence, shining from the three divine Persons. And from the time that the Word of God took flesh, these rays have been shining through His human face”.⁹² Thus, says father Stăniloae, final deification will consist of a contemplation and a living of all the divine values and “energies conceived in and radiated from, the face of Christ”, according to the supreme measure of man. But by this, in the face of each man, by the *logoi* and the energies gathered in him, the *logoi* and the energies of the Logos will be reflected luminously. So, “Eternal bliss will be the contemplation of the face of Christ”.⁹³ According to him, this is the ‘eternal perspective of deification’.

Through the transparence of Christ’s body we now see with the unveiled face the unrestricted and eternal glory to which man was raised in Him.

⁸⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God. Volume 3*, 147.

⁸⁹ Cornelis den Hertog, *The Other Face of God. ‘I Am that I Am’ Reconsidered* (Hebrew Bible Monographs, 32, Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012), 34–35, refers to Genesis 32. Here, Jacob struggles with a mysterious ‘man’ during the night. At the end of the struggle Jacob asks this person to bless him (v. 27). The question, ‘Why do you ask for my name?’ is followed by the statement: ‘It [is] *pel’i*’ (v. 18). The last word is best taken as a description of something transcending human power and knowledge and as such astonishing (‘wonderful’; see esp. Ps. 139.6; also Judg. 13.19). In all probability this word does not qualify the name (in Hebrew: *šēm*) in question, but the person involved: ‘I have seen God face to face and my life was saved’ (v. 31; the use of *‘elohîm* without object marker and without article may suggest some uncertainty about the identity of the other person but this seems to be cleared away by the phrase *pānîm ‘el pānîm*, ‘face to face’).

⁹⁰ Therefore, here “glory” and “face” seem to be used interchangeably. He makes clear that this is certainly a matter of *kabod-panim*’s presence of God and its rendering as ‘the Present One’. *The Real acquires, as it were, a human face*, the personal and anthropomorphic character of God, through his ‘incarnation’. This is the reinterpretation of the divine name Yhwh, by deriving it from *‘Ehye*, a first-person verb form. Indeed, to the Ps-Clementine Homilies and Clement of Alexandria and for Irenaeus or Tertullian, the Face of God is the Son. In this way, he is linking the abiding mystery of “I am”, the theology of “divine energies” and “Face theophany” a theophany that both reveals and conceals

⁹¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 6*, 152.

⁹² Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality*, 374.

⁹³ Revelation 22:4 in Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality*, 374.

Thus it is also mirrored in us (2 Cor 3:18). He presents in Himself to the Father all who believe in Him; They are seen in Him by the Father, but He also has them inscribed in His eternal memory, and the Father sees them in His memory. At the same time, “the Father sees Christ imprinted in them in His state of sacrifice and Resurrection”.⁹⁴ Thus, “the Father sees in Christ’s face⁹⁵ all those who believe in Him, because on His face is reflected Christ’s thought about everyone, and in the face of every believer the Father sees Christ imprinted”.⁹⁶ He sees Christ advancing in the transformation of every believer after His image until He takes him to His state of resurrection.

By virtue of the second coming of Christ our God, says father Stăniloae, the sons of God must be revealed and their beauty appear fully as what in truth they are. So, it is written: ‘Then the righteous will shine like the sun’ [Mt 13:43]. Therefore, the human person will rise up with the body. But if it is difficult to define the form of the new world, it is even more difficult to define the form of resurrected bodies. “We always find ourselves before a pneumatic, apophatic order... clothed in glory (1 Cor 15:42–52)”.⁹⁷ In this way He brings the final “yes” on its behalf and shows that ‘God can appear in the world in all His radiance... through the complete revelation of Jesus at His Second Coming’.⁹⁸

According to father Stăniloae, “within the fabric of nature every person takes his place as a new “eye” of spiritual transparence”.⁹⁹ Through these

⁹⁴ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 3*, 145.

⁹⁵ From In seeing you I saw the Face of God, IB In seeing you, I see the face of My Son... here an anthropomorphic controversy may be introduced.

⁹⁶ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 3*, 146. Here, in my opinion, father Stăniloae interprets the 2 Cor 3:18, where Paul anticipates the believer’s metamorphosis: “all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed (μεταμορφούμεθα) into the same image from one degree of glory to another (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν); for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.” According to A. Fitzmyer, SJ. “Glory Reflected on the Face of Christ (2 Cor 3:7–4:6) and a Palestinian Jewish Motif” *Theological Studies* 42.4 (1981) 630–644, this sublime theology of the glory of the creator-God reflected on the face of Christ makes him declare that “Paul’s mode of argumentation has sometimes been called ‘rabbinic logic’, and has been compared loosely to the principle of *gēzērāh šāwāh* or ‘inference by analogy’” (Fitzmyer, “Glory Reflected on the Face of Christ” 634, 638). Paul alludes to Gen 1:3, as he paraphrases, ‘Let light shine out of darkness’, and refers to the creator as the source of the *doxa* that shines on the face of Christ is thus the *eikōn*, the “likeness” of the creator, and in turn reflects the same *doxa* on the faces of those who turn to him, with unveiled faces. As one ray of glory after another is thus reflected first on the face of Christ and then on the face of the Christian. All this comes from the glory of the Father, who first brought forth light from darkness. The intermediary is now Christ, the image of the Father, the creator-God (Fitzmyer, “Glory Reflected on the Face of Christ” 643). See, also, William R. Baker, “Did the Glory of Moses’ face Fade? A Reexamination of *καρταγέω* in 2 Corinthians 3:7–18” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10.1 (2000) 1–15; Susan Grove Eastman, *Paul and the Person: Reframing Paul’s Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2017) 85–108.

⁹⁷ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 6*, 162.

⁹⁸ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 6*, 136.

⁹⁹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 2*, 80.

“eyes” the incarnate God is at work deepening and enlarging this transparency until it reaches its fulfillment through resurrection. Also, he explains that “the material eye that sees is a mystery, as is the word that a man speaks, being a combination of sound and sense, the filling of sound with sense. Also a mystery is the face of the human being, matter illuminated by thought and feeling”.¹⁰⁰ The fire shine forth from the eyes of the Lord. “If the world was created by means of His word, now it is transformed through the light of the face and eyes in which God clothed Himself”. In this, he claims, “the superiority of the person vis-a-vis nature is affirmed, as is the latter's dependence on the former. From the words and face of any person there radiates a superior power, due to the spirit. So much more does a power radiate from the Lord's face”.¹⁰¹

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¹⁰⁰ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 5*, 3.

¹⁰¹ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Experience of God. Volume 6*, 150. For Nicholas Bamford, „Gregory Palamas' Energetic Approach to Person: Existential and Ontological Implications,” *Studia Patristica* 48 (2010), 241–246 at 241–242 and 246, it is unclear yet the relationship of Palamite categories to the discourse of ‘person’ in contemporary Orthodox theology. To Bamford, „the juxtapositioning of personhood in neopatristic study to the philosophical” (for example of the incorporation of the existentialism of Heidegger as evidenced by Zizioulas and Yannaras), has led to ‘new’ ways of looking at ‘person’ by re-addressing the Fathers through a synthesising of the relationality of Heidegger, Buber and Macmurray through existentialism. This in turn has led to the examination for the place of ‘new’ ontologies’, evidenced in the model offered by Zizioulas. See Paul Collins, *Trinitarian Theology West and East: Karl Barth, the Cappadocian Fathers, and John Zizioulas*, (Oxford: University Press, 2001). There are many important scholars who, also, have analysed the use of Aristotle and other significant philosophers by Gregory Palamas. See for example: Stavros Yangazoglou, ‘Philosophy and Theology: The Demonstrative Method in the Theology of Saint Gregory Palamas’, *GOTR*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (1996), 1–18 and Leonidas Contos, ‘The Essence-Energies Structure of Saint Gregory Palamas with a Brief Examination of its Patristic Foundation’, *GOTR*, Vol. 12 (1967), 283–294.

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