

Father Dumitru Stăniloae (1903–1993) and his Contribution to Theology

Recognitions and Commentaries

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This paper attempts to offer a general overview of the contribution of Father Dumitru Stăniloae to theology, emphasizing recognitions and commentaries (from throughout the entire spectrum of Christian theology) related to this topic. As promoter of the Patristic Tradition, Father Stăniloae successfully elaborated a form of neopatristic theology. His struggle against the scholastic typology, his promotion of Saint Gregory Palama's theology, his support of the spiritual approach to dogmas, the importance of the Philokalic theology, the role of the patristic exegesis and ascetic experience in the dogmatic development of Tradition are just a few aspects of this approach. The final section of the paper provides the perspective of understanding Father Stăniloae's theology as an open dimension to the entire cosmic reality.

Keywords: *Dumitru Stăniloae, Patristic Tradition, neopatristic theology, philokalic theology*

Introduction

The creative energy of Orthodox thought of the last one hundred years has surprised many western scholars¹. Orthodoxy should no longer be viewed as exclusively “eastern”² as it is no longer isolated from the West.³

Beyond any divisions history has enforced upon Europe, the feeling that we all belong to the same Christian heritage is becoming increasingly powerful. Thus, we should mention, that the origins of Christian theology are not only western, but also deeply rooted in the theological thought and Christian experience of the Orthodox East.⁴ This has ceased to be a mere

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¹Rowan Williams, “Eastern Orthodox Theology”, in: David F. Ford (ed), *The Modern Theologians. An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twenty Century*, Volume II, Oxford 1997, p. 168.

² Kallistos Ware, “Eastern Orthodox Theology”, in: Adrian Hastings (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, , Oxford University Press 2000, p. 186.

³ Reginald Michael French, *The Eastern Orthodox Church*, London 1961, p. 163.

⁴ Alexander Golubov, “Introduction: Spirituality in an Orthodox Perspective”, in: Dumitru