

# **The Centenary of the Romanian Patriarchy. Landmarks for a Century of Dogmatic Theology (1925-2025)**

The Centenary of the Romanian Patriarchate represents a moment of reflection on the life, mission and testimony of the Orthodox Church for a century in the service of the Romanian people and the values of ecumenical Orthodoxy. Among the ecclesiastical, missionary and cultural achievements of the Romanian Orthodox Church over a century, it is also appropriate to mention the achievements of Theology through the efforts of the hierarchs, priests and professors who have honestly illustrated Romanian Theology in the ecclesiastical, social, ecumenical and cultural context. As for the Romanian Orthodox theology it has developed and renewed over a century. Thus, over the course of a century (1925-2025) Romanian Orthodox Dogmatics has recorded the following achievements in terms of its renewal and development: 1) it has moved from translating Dogmatics textbooks from Russian and Greek theology to the elaboration of its own textbooks and specialized works in dogmatics; 2) there was a shift from the methods inspired by Western theology in the elaboration of Dogmatics – the polemical, historical, symbolic method – to the patristic method by which dogmas are deepened and understood in correspondence with the experience and Liturgy of the Church; 3) themes and contents inspired by Eastern spirituality, the thought and experience of the Fathers and especially the Philokalical thought and experience were assumed in the contents and structures of Orthodox Dogmatics; 4) great syntheses were achieved in Romanian Dogmatics with recourse to the thought of the Fathers, the experience and Liturgy of the Church, achieved by Saint Dumitru Stăniloae and the theologians Dumitru Popescu – dogmatic,

apologetic synthesis – Ion Bria – dogmatic synthesis, ecumenical theology; 5) a significant contribution was made to the ecumenical dialogue and to the paradigm shift in Dogmatics and Apologetics. In the context of ecumenical dialogue, the major dogmatic themes were addressed: triadology, Christology, ecclesiology and anthropology. The ecumenical dialogue of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century proved very beneficial for the mutual knowledge and deepening of the major Christian themes at the confluence with the agenda of modernity.

Among the works with content and impact for Romanian Dogmatics over the course of a century, we mention: 1931 and 1933 appeared the first translations from the Holy Gregory Palamas in the Yearbook of the Theological Academy in Sibiu through the effort of Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1935: the Congress of the Faculties of Orthodox Theology of Athens (1936) was prepared in Bucharest (1935), including the Program of the Congress of Athens was developed at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Bucharest under the presidency of Rev. Prof. Dr. Ioan Mihălcescu; in 1938 appears in Sibiu the work *Life and Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas* written by Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1942 appears in Arad the work of Saint Priest Martyr Ilarion Felea, *The Spirit of the Truth*, awarded by the Romanian Academy; 1943 appears in Sibiu the work *Jesus Christ, or Man's Restoration* written by Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1946 is published in Sibiu *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae vol. I, XIII + 404 p.; in 1947 is published in Sibiu *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, vol. II, Sibiu, XX + 285 p.; in 1948 is published in Sibiu *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, vol. III, XVI + 464 p.; vol. IV, VII + 327 p.; in 1958 is published in Bucharest the work *Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology*, 2 vol., 1008 p. (authors Nicolae Chițescu, Dumitru Stăniloae, Isidor Todoran and John Petreună); in 1976 appears in Bucharest *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae vol. V, 329 p.; in 1977 appears in Bucharest *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, vol. VI, 392 p., vol. VII, 527 p.; in 1978 Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae publishes in Bucharest *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, in three volumes, a book with an overwhelming influence in contemporary theology; in 1979 is published

in Bucharest *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae vol. VIII, 646 p.; in 1980 is published in Bucharest *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Staniloae volume IX, 645 pages; in 1981 appears in Bucharest *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Staniloae vol. X, 523 p.; in 1981 is published *The Orthodox Moral Theology for Theological Institutes*, volume III, that republishes *The Orthodox Spirituality* of Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1986 is published in Craiova the dogmatic-liturgical work *Spirituality and communion in Orthodox Liturgy* of Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1987 is published in Craiova the work *The Immortal Image of God* of Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1987 is published in Bucharest *The Faith Which We Confess*, written by Father Professor Ion Bria; in 1989 is published in Timișoara *The Contemporary Orthodox Theology* of the Father Professor Peter Rezuș, a work subjected to criticism by contemporary theologians; in 1989 is published in Bucharest the work *The Destiny of Orthodoxy* written by the father Professor Ion Bria; in 1991 is published in Craiova the work *Studies of Dogmatic Orthodox Theology* by Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1990 is published by Episcopia Romanului Publishing House *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae vol. XI, 698 pages; in 1991 appears in Bucharest *Philokalia*, translated by Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae vol. XII, 296 p.; in 1993 is published in Bucharest the work *The Holy Trinity: In the Beginning There Was Love* and *Jesus Christ the Light of the World and the Deifying of Man* by Saint Father Confessor Dumitru Stăniloae; in 1993 is published in Bucharest the work *Theology and culture*, awarded by the Romanian Academy, written by the Father Professor Dumitru Popescu; in 1996 is published in Bucharest the work *Orthodoxy and Contemporaneity* written by Father Professor Dumitru Popescu; in 1996 is published in Bucharest the work *Liturgy After Liturgy* written by Father Professor Ion Bria; in 1999 is published in Bucharest *The Treatise on Dogmatic and Ecumenical Theology* written by Father Professor Ion Bria; in 1999 is published in Bucharest *Christ, Church, Society* written by Father Professor Dumitru Popescu; in 2001 is published in Bucharest *The Man Without Roots* written by Father Professor Dumitru Popescu; in 2005 is published in Bucharest *Jesus Christ Pantokrator* written by Father Professor Dumitru Popescu; in

2009 is published in Bucharest the work *Theology and Spirituality*, written by His Eminence Daniel, Patriarch of Romanian Orthodox Church; in 2014 is published in the work *The Science of Salvation*, and in 2017 the work *The Orthodox Teaching About the Holy Icons* written by the same author. All these works highlight the beneficial changes achieved in the method, the deepening and the development of dogmatists in Romania. Of course, all these achievements are due on the one hand, to the rediscovery of the method and writings Fathers of the Church, of the *Philokalia* and experiential meaning of the Liturgy, and on the other hand of the tumultuous agenda of modern times that generated interrogations and answers to concrete problems of human being, communities and path of the Church and theology during a period of exacerbation of the autonomy of human being from God, Revelation and dogmas. To a large extent, the renewal in Romanian dogmatic we owe it to the Ecumenical context in which Romanian theologians interacted both with Russians, Greek, and Serbs orthodox theologians and with Western theologians, they themselves committed on the path of rediscovery the theological and experimental thinking of the Holy Fathers.

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