



THE RATIONAL EXPRESSION OF THE SUPREME BEING IN KANTIAN THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY VERSUS THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PERSONAL GOD IN THEOLOGY

Associate Professor PhD. George Daniel PETROV,

“Ovidius” University of Constanta,

ROMANIA

Email: petrovgeorgedaniel@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

as the science of sciences, has tried, starting from what could be expressed rationally, to explain the existence or the possibility of man's knowledge of the existence of the Supreme Being, as designated by Immanuel Kant. The questions that can be raised are: can human reason grasp the transcendental meanings of the Supreme Being? Can philosophical reason be overcome by theological knowledge, as a result of experiencing the Personal God? The answer to these questions can only be expressed through an analysis of Kant's rational arguments alongside the mode of knowledge proposed by theology.

Keywords: Kant, theoretical philosophy, God, theology;

INTRODUCTION

For the German philosopher, expressing the idea of God starts from the rejection of any traditional meaning of this philosophical concept. The analysis of his work on this topic reveals a criticism directly expressed in the use of this concept in traditional metaphysics, Kant's desire being to highlight the limits of reason and implicitly the limits of the possibility of scientific knowledge.

The idea of God, or the Supreme Being as it is referred to in Kantian philosophy, is a central topic of his research, as he radically criticizes the way the Supreme Being is perceived in philosophical research. His critique focuses mainly on dogmatic metaphysics, metaphysics that consider God to be the absolute principle.

Immanuel Kant is therefore the philosopher who seeks to express the possibility of the existence of the supreme Being by denying any theological argument. Using the transcendental method, Kant expresses the limits of reason in understanding this concept, concluding that rationality cannot embrace the Idea of pure reason and cannot integrate it into certain patterns of knowledge, hence the limits of knowledge.

1. EXPRESSING THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE KANTIAN VIEW

When we examine Immanuel Kant's philosophy, we see that the central theme of the practical section of his philosophy is the Idea of God, while in the theoretical section he brings to the fore the Idea of pure reason. This pure reason is also referred to by Kant as the supreme Being, the latter being the necessary expression of an ideal, which may not exist in reality. Practically speaking, the idea of God refers to an ideal concept of existence, which might not exist in reality.

The idea of the supreme Being can be sketched at the level of reason as an unconditioned whole, and the object of this ideal relates imperatively only to reason and not



to experience. By referring eminently to reason, we speak of the supreme being as of *ens summum*, for human rationality cannot think of a being above the latter¹.

Everything that can be comprehended by reason exists in subordination to the Supreme Being. This relation, as Kant points out, cannot have an objective nature, but only a formal one, that of the idea in relation to the concept, hence again the idea that the supreme Being can exist only in intellect, not also in reality.

It follows from this formal character of the idea in relation to the concept that human rationality cannot know the existence of the supreme Being. Also, the possibility of the non-existence of the supreme Being in reality cannot be demonstrated argumentatively because of the limitation of reason. Thinking of the Supreme Being as the supreme reality inevitably leads to the idea of God in the sense of transcendental theology.

From the perspective of the analysis of Kantian theoretical philosophy, the Supreme Being is merely the ideal "in which the diversity of intuitions is fulfilled"², but she does not exist in reality, so she cannot influence the determination of things. Speculative thinking defines the Supreme Being first as a representation, then as an experienceable object of reality, and finally in her personified version as God. Kant totally rejects speculative thinking as a misrepresentation of the supreme Being, as she is not "the supreme condition of the determination of things"³.

The rationality of the human person builds its arguments of demonstration starting from what is contingent, looking for a cause that is a condition, naturally arriving at the cause that necessarily exists. This necessarily existing cause is defined by reason as "the original principle of all things"⁴.

a) The Ontological Argument in Kant's Philosophy

Although the concept of pure reason expresses by itself the necessity of the existence of a supreme being, yet it cannot be demonstrated, remaining at the level of an Idea. In Kant's thought, the ontological argument is based upon two characteristics by which it could be explained:

1. The expressing of the impossibility of proving the non-existence of the Supreme Being
2. The importance of using concrete examples in the demonstration

The German philosopher points out that such argumentation, which refers to certain categories of judgments, for example those of geometry, without appealing to concrete facts, can lead to erroneous conclusions. The principle of identity can therefore define an object as given, and the intellect, taking it as such, presents it as being necessary. It follows therefore that the supreme Being, if received by the intellect as a given, and therefore absolutely necessary, is conceived arbitrarily, and that She, the Being, does not exist in reality, but has a form only in the intellect that thinks her. The final conclusion of such a concept is that it can exist if it does not contradict itself. However, by the identity judgement it can be concluded that there is an imminent danger of contradiction when the predicate is suppressed. Suppression, on the other hand, of the subject naturally leads to the suppression of the predicate, and here there can be no question of contradiction, for the thing in itself does not exist.

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure*, București, IRI, 1998, p.448.

² Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 449.

³ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 451.

⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 453.



This analysis applied to the supreme Being denotes an error of reasoning since the existence of the object of the concept is inserted by reason into the possible concept. The suppression of the concept leads to the suppression of its content, and therefore of the existence of the object, which would lead to a contradiction, since the supreme Being is considered by the intellect to be absolutely necessary.

The laws of knowledge require by themselves that the judgment of reason be synthetic. No such judgement can be made of the Supreme Being. There remains, therefore, the analytical judgment, but the latter is based upon thought and not upon experience.

Kant concludes that the Supreme Being can only be the subject of thought, but human reason cannot judge the existence of something without recourse to sensible intuition. So, Kant does not seek to argue for the non-existence of the Supreme Being on the grounds that arguing for it would generate confusion to the same degree as trying to prove her existence. According to the German thinker, proving the existence or non-existence of the supreme Being brings no benefit to knowledge "since the judgment about the existence of the supreme Being is in fact an analytical one, aiming only at the possibility of this concept"⁵.

b) The Cosmological Argument in Kantian Philosophy

The presentation of the cosmological argument in Kantian philosophy starts from the premise presented by Leibniz: "if something exists, there must also be an absolutely necessary being. But at least I do exist, so there must also exist an absolutely necessary being"⁶. The basis of this argument therefore belongs to the category of natural causality. This causality is defined by the idea that every phenomenon must imperatively have a cause that determines it, and this causality continues up to the absolutely necessary cause, a cause uncaused by anything outside itself. The cosmological argument, referring to the world, in the Kantian view, must omit the empirical qualities of the objects, and by this characteristic it differs from the physical-theological argument.

According to the cosmological argument, analysed from the perspective of the German philosopher, the supreme Being must be "completely determined by her concept"⁷, thus necessarily concluding her existence. Kant points out that this argument also turns out to be in error like the ontological one, being in fact another form of proof of the ontological one. The German philosopher does not take into account the necessary **experience** for this argument, considering it irrelevant in the demonstration of the existence of the supreme Being, since empirical data do not provide a clear, rational structure of the properties that determine the supreme Being. Kantian philosophy argues in this case also that the mentioned properties are only at the conceptual level and cannot be supported in the demonstration that must be made through the cosmological argument. Moreover, the use of the principle of causality is only applicable in the phenomenal realm, "in the demonstration of the existence of a being that transcends the empirical"⁸.

It follows from the above that the German philosopher, in the cosmological argument, admits the possibility of the existence of a supreme Being, but only at the level of thought, and he cannot achieve the demonstration of the fact that the supreme Being necessarily exists, because the limitation of reason reveals his inability to identify a concept with absolute necessity.

⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 461.

⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 463.

⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 463.

⁸ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 466.



c) The Physico-Theological Argument in Kant's Philosophy

In the philosophy of the great German thinker, the physico-theological argument is based upon determined experience. This argument starts from the fact that the phenomena of the given world are organised by a rational Principle. It follows from this that there is a cause of the given world as intelligence based on causality through freedom⁹. Starting from the present order in the organisation of the world, it is concluded that there is a rational cause. For the definition of this cause to be complete, it is imperative that it should hold everything in itself. Kant adds to this idea by noting that "superlatives of perfection are assumed by the observer in proportion to the size of the things observed"¹⁰, from which it follows that the relationship between that which is determined and the absolute of the supreme Being is achievable only on the empirical level.

For Kant, the recourse of the physico-theological argument to the foundations of the cosmological argument and implicitly to those of the ontological argument, as we have pointed out above, cannot demonstrate the existence of the necessary supreme Being, since it is still made up of transcendental concepts¹¹. The conclusion Kant reaches is that the existence of the Supreme Being can only be demonstrated by a synthetic judgment based upon forms of sensible intuition. It follows that the existence of the Supreme Being, in the view of Kantian philosophy, is only an ideal of pure reason.

d) Conclusions of Kantian thinking on the demonstration of the existence of the supreme Being and his reference to theology

The German philosopher, by the arguments presented so far, demonstrates, from the perspective of philosophical reason, that the existence of the necessary supreme Being is impossible to be asserted. However, he does not totally exclude the possibility of the existence of the Supreme Being in the form of the ideal of pure reason. According to speculative reason, he emphasises the importance of the existence of such a being for the foundation of unity, this Supreme Cause being, at the rational level, the universal organiser.

The problem that Kant points out is that reason transforms this formal principle into a hypostatic principle. It follows that "the ideal of human reason is a formal condition of thought, not a material and hypostatic condition of existence"¹².

Analysing the theological arguments, Kant systematizes them by presenting two main types of theology:

- a) Theology that emphasizes reason
- b) Theology that focuses on revelation

Depending on the various forms it may take, theology in Kant's view can be transcendental and natural. In the first form, the object is expressed by purely transcendental concepts, and in the second form, nature-related concepts are used.

Following this classification, Kant concludes that the necessary supreme Being can only be an ideal of speculative reason, and that the existence in reality of such a Being cannot be philosophically demonstrated. All predicates that strictly pertain to the transcendental sphere can only belong to transcendental theology. Kant's final view is that such transcendental theology adds nothing to knowledge, because God cannot be known through intellect.

⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 466.

¹⁰ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 467.

¹¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 476.

¹² Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure...*, p. 477.



2. EXPERIENCING THE PERSONAL GOD IN THEOLOGY

The human person is the dichotomous being constituted by God through a special act. Being by creation dichotomous, the human person cannot be defined by her rational side alone, but she remains at the same time a mystery.

Rationality will never be able to express the mystery, for it is the mystery of the crown of creation that actually explains rationality. Being limited, the reason can only capture small elements of the mystery of man, the mystery having as its first condition to be experienced and only afterwards to be explained by means of reason. The mystery, therefore, invites reason to participate in the discovery of God by experiencing his love, so that it can then create, as far as the intellect is able, the necessary information about the existence of God and the possibility of the human person to live in Him.

The balanced relationship between the rationality and spirituality of the human being has the benefit of excluding both what can be defined as total apophaticism and also the autonomy of reason. The correct application of this relationship has the effect of facilitating "the personal encounter between God and man, in a continuous dynamic towards eschaton"¹³.

There can be no confusion between the knowledge that philosophy speaks about and dogma, but neither can there be a separation of the two. Philosophy, by the strictly rational analysis it carries out, cancels the transcendence of faith and implicitly the revelation as a given. The dichotomy of the human nature cannot therefore be separated, making use of reason alone in the analysis, thus cancelling out the wholeness of man, for through his spiritual side he always tends towards the transcendence of God. Through its spiritual side, the matter of the body can know the possibility of being spiritualized. Man's soul, being interior to the body, can transfigure the latter, as Father Stăniloae pointed out in The Orthodox Theology about the mystery of transfigured matter. The matter and the soul of the human person cannot be thought of separately, as they are complementary elements belonging to the same reality. There can be no separation between these constitutive elements of man, but only a distinction.

For a correct understanding of anthropology, it is imperative to have recourse to what theology defines as the spiritual dimension, as it contains the demonstration of the possibility of the transfiguration of man in the light of the grace of Christ.¹⁴ Through the collaboration between reason and the spiritual dimension of the knowledge of God, the whole universe no longer presents itself as coming from nowhere and heading towards nowhere for, through its correct relation to the Creator, through the uncreated divine energies present in creation, both philosophy and theology actually present in one sense the aspiration towards absolute knowledge. This knowledge can be experienced in God, man always reaching out to Him, living in His personal love, God Himself being the Trinity of Persons. Thus, through his spiritual side, man goes beyond the limits imposed by reason, fulfilling his vocation to reach the state of deification through grace. Moreover, the world itself has a rational structure, a structure given by the Divine Reason present in it, through the uncreated divine energies, and this rational structure of the world requires to be discovered by man, in the cooperation of reason and spiritual experience.

The process of knowledge cannot be limited only by the reason used by philosophy, as man has the duty to make a balanced synthesis between the cataphatic and apophatic aspects of reality. These two aspects are found at every level of existence, the difference

¹³ Pr. Cristinel Ioja, *Rațiune și mistică în Teologia Ortodoxă*, Ed. Universității Aurel Vlaicu, Arad, 2008, p. 130.

¹⁴ Pr. Conf. Univ. Dr. Ștefan Buchiu, *Dogmă și Teologie*, vol. II, Editura Sigma, București, 2006, pp. 101-105.



between them being only in the depth and method of knowledge. Only in this way can knowledge bring real added value, giving up one-sided approaches, thus demonstrating existence not only through the "rational, analytical aspect, but above all in the theonomical, mystical, and mystery dimension."¹⁵

By applying this way of knowing, which encompasses both reason and the mystical experience through the soul, man will understand the correct way of relating both to God and to the universe. Limiting knowledge to reason alone implies a regression of the human nature, and man thereby becomes the self-centred, all-sufficient being who limits knowledge and truth to his own rational limitation.

Kant's philosophy, by its strict recourse to what can be demonstrated rationally, can only have a hint of the existence and mystery of God, but can never express the full truth, which is only proper to Revelation. From a theological perspective, authentic knowledge requires from the start the involvement in its process of all the potentialities of human nature.

a) Knowing God through experiencing interpersonal communion

Anthropological analysis shows, starting from the dichotomous structure of the human person, that in order to reach the knowledge of God, not of His being which remains totally unknowable to the human being, but through Revelation, it is imperative to experience interpersonal communion.

The act of the incarnation of the Logos results in the encounter between God's will to manifest himself personally and the cognitive structure of the human person, who possesses within himself all the aptitudes necessary for knowing the Creator¹⁶. This idea, taken from Saint John, emphasizes that the act of knowing God requires a state of communion with the Creator, a state human reason aspires to. For man to progress in knowledge, it is necessary to strengthen him through grace, without which the synergy between the Divine and the human cannot be achieved.¹⁷ The knowledge of God through personal experience is based upon the free and personal manifestation of God and the participation of the human person through reason and faith in this synergetic act.

The Kantian analysis presented above, due to rational limitation, turns God into an impersonal object, and knowledge cannot rise above the formal distinctions resulting from the categories that human reason achieves. This substantialist philosophy creates a rift between God and man in terms of both knowledge and the possibility of human beings to experience life in Him. Philosophy has not grasped in its analysis what theology defines as God's dynamic presence, through divine grace, in human persons and in the totality of the created.

Through His attributes, God actually descends into the mind of man, offering to reason through this descent the meanings of transcendence which have their source only in the divine being¹⁸. Through the divine attributes, the human being is called to experience life in God while still on earth, through uncreated divine energies. The fact that man is created by God means that he has the necessary attributes for apophatic perception of the Creator. "The attributes of God are the expression of the perception of the infinite through finite

¹⁵ Pr. Cristinel Ioja, *Rațiune și mistică...*, p. 317-318.

¹⁶ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Cunoașterea lui Dumnezeu la Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur*, în *Ortodoxia*, IX, 1957, 4, p. 563.

¹⁷ Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur, *Omilia a III-a. Despre necunoașterea lui Dumnezeu*, trad. de W.A. Prager, Editura Herald, București, 2004, p. 564.

¹⁸ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Cunoașterea lui Dumnezeu...*, p. 565.



concepts”¹⁹. Starting from the Divine attributes, the Persons of the Holy Trinity can be defined cataphatically, ”as eternal plenary existence, bearing within themselves the structure of the supreme interpersonal communion”²⁰.

The persons of the Holy Trinity and the uncreated divine grace are therefore by definition apophatic in nature, requiring *per se* the participation of human persons in living in God's love. It follows that knowledge of God has a personal character, since God defines Himself as the Trinity of Persons. The apophaticism of the Person is particularly important, as it is reconciled with the revelation of Self which is defined by apophaticism. ”The Persons of the Holy Trinity are free to reveal themselves, remaining precisely in the act of apophatic revelation”²¹.

In the knowledge of God, it is more important to analyse the apophaticism of the Persons of the Holy Trinity than the apophaticism of the divine being, for the being opens herself to knowledge through the Person, through the uncreated divine energy that the human person can perceive. Thus, ”the Being that remains beyond experience, but we can nevertheless feel her as the source of all that we experience, subsists in the Person”²². It follows that all acts of the divine Persons, through uncreated energies, are experienceable by human persons. Therefore, in the process of knowing God, philosophical reason is not enough, for apophatic knowledge has the Person as its foundation.

Divine Being cannot be approached strictly rationally, as Kantian philosophy attempts to, for this can only mean introducing an obvious separation between Being and Person. The theological knowledge of God is based upon the dialogue between human persons and the Divine Persons, thus on the real, sincere dialogue between man and God.

b) Knowing God through Asceticism and Mysticism

This form of knowledge aims at the union by grace of man with God, and man's knowledge of God resulting from this mystical union is impossible to be expressed within the limits imposed by the reason of philosophy. The advancement of the human person with the help of divine grace towards the state of deification is possible through asceticism. The work of the ascetic exercises brings with it the confirmation of the mystical experience, a life which the sure reason, deprived of the spiritual elements, cannot experience and understand.

The human person's journey towards deification by grace has three stages: purification, enlightenment, and perfection. Only through the fulfilment of these stages can one speak of experiencing life in Christ at the highest level, certainly within the limits of human nature.²³

The experience of this way of living by the human person shows that the specificity of knowing God through asceticism and mysticism is based upon the mystery of the Holy Trinity. This is why Father Stăniloae affirms that this form of knowledge ”does not rationalize the Mystery of God..., it does not keep God distant from us, nor does it lead us to merge with Him....”²⁴.

¹⁹ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Cunoașterea lui Dumnezeu...*, p. 566.

²⁰ Pr. Ștefan Buchiu, *Cunoașterea apofatică în gândirea părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae*, Ed. Basilica, București, 2013, p. 68.

²¹ Pr. Ștefan Buchiu, *Cunoașterea apofatică...*, p. 85.

²² Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, Vol. I, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1978, p.123.

²³ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Morală Ortodoxă*, Vol. III, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1981, p. 31.

²⁴ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Morală...*, p. 31.



The elements of knowledge through asceticism and mysticism are called virtues, and they change the human person in a real, ontological way. Every virtue freely and consciously practised by man represents a step forward on the path of perfection leading to the experience of life in Christ. Humility, for example, "is a giant leap towards knowledge..., it is the awareness that divine infinity pervades everything and everyone around us"²⁵.

Once in a state of purification, man lives a life in Christ through contemplation, going beyond the limits imposed by philosophical reason. In this state man no longer lives for himself but, through selfless love, acquires a new vision of the world, knowing the real meaning of all that is created, and this knowledge "is the first prerequisite for the knowledge of God"²⁶.

The second premise of knowledge according to the ascetical-mystical analysis consists in man's reception of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This denotes that the human person has reached the state of enlightenment. Now the knowledge of God is achieved not through reason, but through the power of the Holy Spirit as the Person of the Holy Trinity. This kind of knowledge means "the knowledge of the mind returned to its spirit from the dispersion of the surface..., all things become transparent to the one who knows in the spirit"²⁷.

The knowledge of reality beyond the materiality of the world, subjected to strictly rational analysis, is based upon spiritual experience, the direct, free, and conscious participation of the human person in the life in God, through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the work of the Holy Spirit cannot be excluded from the process of knowledge, for through the act of supernatural revelation, the Holy Spirit gives man the divine grace necessary for deification, and thus for experiencing life in God. Therefore, the knowledge of God is achieved through the Holy Spirit, but this knowledge imperatively requires man to come out of the state of sin. Submission to sin means threatening the soul and subjecting it to matter, and such a soul, subject to sin, cannot raise himself, by grace, to the knowledge that is above nature.

True ascetic-mystical knowledge of God can only be achieved through the process of man's purification, and without this process assumed by man, all knowledge is strictly limited to rational possibilities. It is through asceticism and mysticism that the "encounter in love with the Personal God really takes place"²⁸.

Through prayer, man goes beyond the materiality of the world, beyond intellectual knowledge, and thus reaches an apophatic state, the prerequisite for the encounter between creature and uncreated light. "It is an apophaticism experienced in an existential way of the presence of God"²⁹. Through prayer and faith, man's knowledge does not remain at the stage of "rational exercise, nor at an impersonal pantheistic absolute in the Neoplatonic sense, but believes in the Personal God"³⁰.

The apophatic knowledge that man can attain through asceticism and mysticism, going beyond the limits of reason, can be defined as "an ecstasy of inner silence, a total cessation of thought before the divine mystery"³¹. The finality of such knowledge is achieved

²⁵ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Morală...*, p. 31

²⁶ Pr. Ștefan Buchiu, *Cunoașterea apofatică...*, p. 192.

²⁷ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Morală...*, p. 162.

²⁸ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos, lumina lumii și îndumnezeitorul omului*, Editura Anastasia, București, 1993, p. 132.

²⁹ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Morală...*, p. 200.

³⁰ Sfântul Grigorie Palama, *Despre sfânta lumina*, în *Filocalia*, vol. VII, trad. de Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1977, p. 341.

³¹ Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Morală...*, p. 211.



by seeing God in the light. Here God's closeness to man is ineffable, the latter experiencing the Creator's love in a real way, experiencing it as a power through which man overcomes the limits of his being and participates in the life in God. Therefore, love is the highest degree of knowledge of God, it is the power through which the perfect approach between the divine and the human takes place.

CONCLUSIONS

From all the above we can conclude that man has a dichotomous structure by nature, and this structure cannot be divided even in the process of knowledge. If Kantian theoretical philosophy aimed at demonstrating that the Supreme Being is in fact an ideal concept of existence, but which in reality may not exist, theology relates to God in a personalistic way, i.e. the human person relates to her Creator, who is the Trinity of Persons. Basically, in Kantian philosophy, the supreme Being, because she cannot be grasped by reason and implicitly by philosophical demonstration, it leads to the denial of her existence. Kant's attempt to penetrate the transcendent mystery of God by rational demonstration alone has proved to reach a wrong conclusion, in the sense that if rationally, using the intellect, we cannot build up a demonstration of the existence of the supreme Being, it does not mean that God does not really exist.

The theological demonstration, which starts from the dichotomy of the human being, proves that the transformation of God into an impersonal power is the premise of the loss, in the philosophy of the German thinker, of the very subject of the demonstration. The existence of a Personal God experienced through theological means brings a plus to knowledge, not only because God, through the act of Revelation, makes Himself knowable to human nature, but also because man, having emerged from the bonds of materiality, can easily overcome the limitation caused by reason, thus experiencing the live in the love of God through uncreated divine grace.

Thus theology, by expressing the nature of the person and by its asceticism and mysticism, demonstrates man's ability to raise himself to a transcendent knowledge of God, where He is the absolute love the crown of His creation naturally strives for.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Buchiu, Pr. Conf. Univ. Dr. Ștefan, Dogmă și Teologie, vol. II, Editura Sigma, București, 2006
- [2] Buchiu, Pr. Ștefan, Cunoașterea apofatică în gândirea părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. Basilica, București, 2013
- [3] Immanuel Kant, Critica rațiunii pure, București, IRI, 1998
- [4] Ioan, Sfântul Gură de Aur, Omilia a III-a. Despre necunoașterea lui Dumnezeu, trad. de W.A. Prager, Editura Herald, București, 2004
- [5] Ioja, Pr. Cristinel, Rațiune și mistică în Teologia Ortodoxă, Editura Universității Aurel Vlaicu, Arad, 2008
- [6] Palama, Sfântul Grigorie, Despre sfânta lumina, în Filocalia, vol. VII, trad. de Pr. Dumitru Stăniloae, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1977
- [7] Stăniloae Pr. Dumitru, Teologia Morală Ortodoxă, Vol. III, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1981
- [8] Stăniloae, Pr. Dumitru, Cunoașterea lui Dumnezeu la Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur, în Ortodoxia, IX, 1957, 4
- [9] Stăniloae, Pr. Dumitru, Iisus Hristos, lumina lumii și îndumnezeitorul omului, Editura Anastasia, București, 1993
- [10] Stăniloae, Pr. Dumitru, Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă, Vol. I, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1978