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ON THE UNITY OF HUMAN NATURE IN ORTHODOX ANTHROPOLOGY
The Ontologic Dimensions of the Image and the Likeness

Abstract: Gregory of Nyssa is one of the first authors who undertook the task of finalizing the anthropological deed of Basil the Great. In his celebrated homilies, known as *Hexameron*, he elaborates on the issue about man's creation, grounding his arguments on the Genesis book and interpreting the meaning and purpose of human life from an orthodox and hermeneutical point of view (Homilies X-XI). Man (Male and Female) was created in such a way so as to be a worshipper of God's three hypostases, without "dividing" this worship". Man was created by God in His image, because **man is created with soul, reason, autocracy and free will**. Gregory of Nyssa points out that man (man and woman) has the innate quality to be created by God's image, and the likeness is gained through our free will and choice to become similar to God. The power of this free will is dispersed among the entire humanity so as to come into operation through people in the battle to achieve likeness and subsequently God's retribution. Interpreting further the biblical excerpt from the Genesis book containing God's commandment "breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful", the Cappadocian theologian points out that man's reproduction is twofold – it is of the **body** and the of the **soul**.

St. Gregory also explains why man is a **microcosm**. He is erect and is distinguished from the irrational living creatures. He differs from them not only in his most perfect bodily organs, but also mainly in that he is not preoccupied only with the "earthly issues" and is focused high above on the heavenly values, where Jesus Christ the Lord is! According to the Greek author C. Yannaras, in the legacy related to the Holy Scripture, man is presented as created according to God's image, as well as a **personal creature**, because God is also established as a **personal being**. He mentions that what comprises God's divinity is His personal being, the triple nature of His personal hypostases forming the Divine being – the Divine nature or **essence** – in love, i.e. in non-commitment to any necessity (C. Yannaras 1996, 93). And man was endowed with being a person, a personality, i.e. with existing in this same way.

In his **analysis and synthesis** of the Fathers' interpretation of the issue about God's image, C. Yannaras claims that the Fathers' desire was not to exhaust the content of God's image in man, but to attain a **generalization** of the way in which man exists; in his opinion, God's image is revealed in the composite human hypostasis. And the human hypostasis is identified neither with the body, nor with the soul. Both the bodily and the psychical functions express, reveal and put the human hypostasis, what man **is**, in operation. In his desire to manifest the connection of the image with the likeness the same author characterises God's image in man as a **possibility** to identify man's existence with God's being as a **communion** (κοινωνία) **in love**.

The separation of the body and the soul at the moment of death is “against” nature to such a degree as the very death is, so the eventual and eternal survival of the soul is possible only if the whole person rises from the dead on the day of resurrection. The incarnated Logos with its redeeming death and resurrection like a new Adam gives the possibility to restore the harmony between soul and body so as to achieve the lost “image and likeness”.

Key words: *Creation, Body, Soul, Unity, Image, Likeness, God, Hypostasis*

Gregory of Nyssa is one of the first authors who undertake the task of finalizing the anthropological deed of Basil the Great. In his celebrated homilies, known as *Hexameron*, he elaborates on the issue about man’s creation, grounding his arguments on the *Genesis* book and interpreting the meaning and purpose of human life from an orthodox and hermeneutical point of view (homilies X-XI). In his opinion, God endowed man with the greatest honour and dignity as compared to all of His other creations. When creating man, apart from the commandment common for the other creatures as well, God applied one well-considered decision of His. Gregory of Nyssa emphasises that the expression “to create man” reveals not only the eternal Father, but also his co-eternal Son: “That’s why he does not say “to create”, but “to create man”, so that we can comprehend the dominion, so as not to recognise only the eternal Father, but also the co-eternal Son and learn that the Father created through His Son and the Son created by the will of his Father and to glorify the Father in the Son, the Son in the Holy Spirit” (*Basil the Great. Hexameron. Tenth homily. On Man’s Creation. Gregory of Nyssa, 101*). Thus man was created in such a way so as to be a worshipper of God’s three hypostases, without “dividing” this worship. The Cappadocian Father analyses the expression “to create man according to our image and likeness”. Man was created by God in His image, because **man is created with soul, reason, autocracy and free will**. The expression “to create man according to our image and likeness”, he argues, means: “let us give him reason, to rule over the earthly things with the power of his soul”. And this power, which is power over fish, beasts, birds in the sky, all cattle, over the whole earth and all animals has **an ontically certified status**: “man acquired dominion and power from God, which is imprinted on mankind’s nature as permanent, unchanged and indivisible” (*Basil the Great. Hexameron. Tenth homily. On Man’s Creation. Gregory of Nyssa, 103*). Moreover, man was given the right of power over passions, which is something Gregory of Nyssa considers important. The author interprets the commandment “breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful” by saying that God willed “breed”, so as not to leave this creation unfinished, but willed “multiply”, so as to express the continuity concerning others replenishing the earth as well. Gregory of Nyssa points out that man (man and woman) has the innate quality to be created by God’s image, and the likeness is gained through our free will and choice to become similar to God. The power of this free will is dispersed among the entire humanity so as to come into operation through people in the battle to achieve likeness and subsequently God’s retribution. God’s likeness means, according to Gregory, adopting Christianity and observing Jesus Christ’s commandments and the good deeds.

The superiority of man’s creation over the rest of God’s creations is also emphasised by Gregory of Nyssa in Oration XI. In it he claims that man was given the greatest honour of being created by the very hands of God after a carefully considered and artistic creation out of earth. God created the inner man – the soul, and gave the human body shape, “because the moulding through clay deserves the creation of what it is according to the image” (*Basil the Great. Hexameron. On Man’s Creation. Gregory of Nyssa, 110*). For this reason, in the author’s view, man should glorify the Creator,

especially as he was created exactly to this purpose. The whole world, according to him, is a book that tells of the apocryphal God's glory and in which the invisible God's greatness echoes through the believers' hearts.

Interpreting further the biblical excerpt from the book *Genesis* containing God's commandment "breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful", the Cappadocian theologian points out that man's reproduction is twofold – it is of the **body** and the **soul**. The multiplication of the inner in man, this is the development of the virtues, God's likeness, which Apostle Paul also possessed; an example of such development are considered to be piety and the awaiting of the future, the daily advance in faith and benefaction, all qualities that Isaac acquired. And Isaac, according to Gregory of Nyssa, succeeded also in prudence, **justice**, manhood and wisdom, which are "in God's perfection and likeness". Moreover, God issues the commandment "breed" in order to preach the gospel of salvation before the entire world.

More of these interesting interpretations are offered also of what God willed: "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." (*Genesis*, 1:29-30). At the beginning God decided on fruit and vegetables as food for man and animals. This instruction was altered after the big cataclysm that occurred after man committed the great sins, when he was given the possibility to consume flesh (beasts) and meat. St. Gregory stresses the fact that concerning food man will achieve that state in his "future restoration" that he had already achieved. But when exactly will man return to his former state? This is what Gregory of Nyssa comments on this issue: "man will return to his former state when he abandons his cunning, this world full of worries and his soul's pursuit of worldly things, because when he denies all this, he will return to that behaviour, which he had in heaven, which was **unsusceptible to the passions of the flesh**, free, with the angels' food and communication with God" (*Basil the Great*, 1963, 111-112). Here, it is added that all this is not impressed on people so as to prevent them from using the foods "allowed" by God, but in order to glorify (yarn after) those times and that moderate life, as well as to make us comprehend that it was sin that caused this "present blatant diversity of food" and that man **dropped out of the real food** of paradise, because he **already does not see the tree of life** and does not nurture himself with its **beauty**. St. Gregory clarifies that even now, after man's fall, those willing to acquire heavenly life ought to distance themselves from the diversity of food and consume fruits and nuts (i.e. observe the Christian fast).

St. Gregory of Nyssa also elaborates on the words: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made". He reveals the fact that the figure 7 was not accidentally chosen by God to suspend His deeds, because it is present and is connected with many significant events from the *Bible* and Jesus Christ's life. The great Father of Orthodoxy emphasises the idea that the seventh day after the Creation is a model of the future Last Judgement during Christ's second advent, which he also calls "**the eight day**". "And on the eighth day He took a rest from all His deeds" are the concluding words, the title of this XI Homily. Here it is emphasised that the fear of reflecting upon the terrible events of the Last Judgement chases away the love of riches and fame from people's minds.

And the creation of man from earth and the realization of this truth restrains all evil passions and carnal desires "because, he who remembers that he exists as earth and will again decay in earth, he expels every onset of evil and this memory protects from every sin" (*Basil the Great*, 1963, 114-115). Besides, the theologian depicts the image of the rich and powerful, who are stooped to, praised and paid other worldly vanities. He advises his listeners to hold these things in contempt, because they are **earthly and temporary**.

Finally, he interprets the words “and God created man”, which reveal “the creative energy and the creation of all main properties, more internal, than external, whose structure, if you knew it, would be a great school for me as well, so as to explicate it, you would be astounded at God’s great wisdom, that, indeed, **man is a microcosm**, and those who honoured him with this name, acted correctly” (*Basil the Great, 1963, 115*). St. Gregory also explains why man is a microcosm. He is erect and is distinguished from the irrational living creatures. He differs from them not only in his most perfect bodily organs, but also mainly in that he is not preoccupied only with the “earthly issues” and is focused high above on the heavenly values, where Jesus Christ the Lord is! Gregory of Nyssa defines man, who is created by God, as the **most consummate** as compared to God’s image and likeness. The loss of the likeness is a great damage to man’s essence, but the possibility of its restoration exists as a **gift** for everybody who not only accepts Christianity, but also lives in harmony with Jesus Christ’s commandments. Man’s goal is to reach that state, when he was “communicating with God” and existed in close communion with Him, in commitment to Him. As J. Meyendorff points out, “the idea that the “existence” in God is a special human privilege is rendered in a different, but consistent way in the Greek patrological tradition. Irinaeus, for example, writes that man is composed of three elements: body, soul and spirit, while the Cappadocian Fathers talk about “pouring” of the Holy Spirit in man”. And John of Damascus says that God created man out of “**visible and invisible nature**” with His hands according to image and likeness, from the earth, after creating the body and endowing it with a rational and spiritual soul with His breath – what is called “God’s image”; because “according to the image” reveals **the spiritual autocratic nature**, whereas “according to the likeness” discloses the possibility of the development of virtues” (*John of Damascus, 1976, 151*). In his opinion, body and soul were created simultaneously, and not, as Origenes claims, one after the other.

According to the Greek author C. Yannaras, in the legacy related to the Holy Scripture, man is presented as created according to God’s image also as a **personal creature**, because God is also established as a **personal being**. He mentions that what comprises God’s divinity is His personal being, the triple nature of His personal hypostases forming the Divine being – the Divine nature or **essence** – in love, i.e. in non-commitment to any necessity (C. Yannaras 1996, 93). And man was endowed with being a person, a personality, i.e. with existing in this same way. Especially interesting is also his conclusion that the orthodox Fathers respected the rich, versatile meaning of the concept of the “soul”. Exactly for this reason they did not strive to define it thoroughly with one single type, which, in my opinion, is a fact manifesting the wealth of the Fathers’ reflections. These people, according to him, discovered both in man’s soul and body two mutually completing ways in which God’s image is revealed in man: the created man is a **hypostasis** (personality), a unity of **soul and body**, which in their turn are the energies with which the hypostasis is realized. The soul and the body disclose and show what man is, they are the activities, the manifestations, the functions of expressing the unique and non-identical and inimitable character of each concrete human hypostasis. For C. Yannaras both the soul and the body are not some inalterable essence, but **dynamically operational factors**, which form man. And the source, the reason for the existence of the human hypostasis is God Himself. The divine love for Him is what constitutes man as a hypostasis and attributes “ego” and identity to him, and not the very psychic and bodily functions. This is “his connection with God, the fact that God loves him with one erotic uniqueness: it urges **the non-existent** to become **existent** (*Rm 4:17*), creates and establishes man’s personal detachment. Man is a person, God’s image, because he exists as a **possible answer** to God’s erotic invitation. With his psycho-physical functions man acquires this possibility, responds positively or negatively to the Divine invitation and leads

his existence either in the direction of **life**, which is the connection with God, or in the direction of **death**, which is parting with Him. (C. Yannaras, 1996, 101).

Theosis as Synergy

The concepts employed in the Holy Scripture “God’s image and likeness in man” are presented by Gregory of Nyssa (*On the Creation of Man*) as non-synonymous and non-identical. Like the rest of the Cappadocian fathers he accepts that during the initial creation we were allowed to be born according to God’s image. On the other hand, owing to our free will we acquire the being of God’s likeness. His already presented interpretation of God’s image as reason, immortal soul, autocracy and free will and of God’s likeness as a daily, constant movement along the road of the blessed advance in the Christian faith in love, virtue and impassivity illustrated the particularism of these important theological terms. However, despite the fact that the concepts of God’s image and God’s likeness differ in their essence and mentally or theoretically are separated from each other, practically they are, according to the Cappadocians’ teachings, **interdependent and conditioned**. While God’s image in man contains the sign of a dogmatic datum and definiteness, God’s likeness in him is the basis and the beginning of the Christian ethics. Actually, the two of them refer to man’s essence: the former to his rational nature, the latter to the appeal to his moral perfection, to his perfection according to the image of the heavenly Father (Mt 5:48), to **divination** (I. Petev, T. Koev, D. Kirov, 1994, 466). O.P.Tsanana. *L’anthropologie de Basile le Grand*, 1970, p. 42).

In the Cappadocians’ anthropological doctrine the totality of qualities, the spiritual gifts and abilities constituting God’s image, are presented as a **condition** for the realization of the likeness, which is the task and goal in the life of each Christian. More precisely, they are the **basis** and the **means** to achieve likeness. God’s image in man affords the possibility not only of dominion over the earth, but also over the passions through the reason and the development of the moral virtues and serves as a method for the likening of man to God and for **deification**.

Gregory of Nyssa pays great attention to the **distinguishing qualities – the gifts** God bestowed on man, without forgetting to mention man’s distinction from the other irrational creatures in his most perfect bodily organs, in his soul and reason in which he discovers man’s essence.

A number of thinkers and interpreters of the orthodox patristic anthropology associate the body with God’s image in man (C. Yannaras, 1996, 88-89; I. Petev, T. Koev, D. Kirov, 1994, 467), basing their arguments on the doctrine about man as a unity of soul and body and on the truth about the acquisition of man’s physical image by Jesus Christ as a saviour of the composite human nature.

Away from Plato’s idea of the body as “**the soul’s prison**” and in the spirit of the biblical description of the human body as a “temple of the Holy Spirit”, the Cappadocians point out that the body is “a heavenly plant” that we have to take care of, simultaneously looking for the sublime things (O.P.Tsanana. *L’anthropologie de Basile le grand*, 1970, p.36).

In his analysis and synthesis of the Fathers’ interpretation of the issue about God’s image, C. Yannaras claims that this was not the fathers’ desire to exhaust the content of God’s image in man, but a **generalization** of the way in which man exists; in his opinion, God’s image is revealed in the composite human hypostasis. And the human hypostasis is identified neither with the body, nor with the soul. Both the bodily and psychical functions express, reveal and put the human hypostasis, what man **is**, in operation. In his desire to manifest the connection of the image with the likeness the same author characterises God’s

image in man **as a possibility** to identify man's existence with God's being as a **communion** (κοινωνία) **in love**. The realization of God's likeness is "freedom from all necessity" or "**freedom from the limitations of his created nature**", because man's nature is created. In the spirit of the Fathers' interpretation of the triunity as a three-hypostatical being of absolute love and freedom, the Greek author claims that God is God because he is a person, i.e. due to the fact that His being is entirely independent, even from His own nature or essence. He Himself as a person, i.e. freely, composes His own essence or nature, and it is not them (the essence or nature) which determine His being. He exists, because he freely desires to be, and this will is realized as love, as a triple communion. Exactly for this reason God is love, because (*IJn 4:16*) His very being is love. The appeal for such a life is not abstract. The live model is Jesus Christ: "A man of God's image means that every person can realize his existence like Jesus Christ, i.e. as a hypostasis similar to the hypostases of the triple Divinity, can realize life as love, i.e. as freedom, and not as a natural necessity, consequently as eternity and imperishability, in the same way as the life of the triple "ἀλληλοπεριχώρησις" and the triple communion (κοινωνία) is eternal and imperishable" (C. Yannaras, 1996, 94)

According to V. Loski, if in the church God created **all objective prerequisites**, all means to achieve **divination**, on our part, we should create **the necessary subjective prerequisites**, because the unity with God is realized through the "**synergy**" of man with **God**, or the "synergy" of the two wills – the divine and the human. In the "synergy" man assimilates God's gift. The Russian philosopher employs not only the various works of Isaac the Syrian, Macarius the Egyptian, Maximus the Confessor, Gregory of Nyssa, Symeon the New Theologian, John Climacus and Gregory Palamas, but also the elaborations of French authors, so as to raise the issues of this significant topic. He emphasises that the νοῦς, the spirit, the supreme part of the human being is a theoretical power, through which man aspires towards God. The spirit joins God with the gift of baptism and this introduces the gift into the heart – the centre of the human nature, which needs to be **deified**. The harmony between the spirit and the heart presupposes a continuous diligence of the will, of the "praxis". **Praxis** and **theory** are **indivisible** in Christian cognition (gnosis), which is the private and conscious experience of the spiritual truths. The practical life consists in the soul's catharsis. It is consciously directed by the νοῦς, the spiritual power, which will penetrate the heart and merge with it, concentrating the human being in the gift (V. Loski, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, Thessalonica, 1964, 240*). In the cited work the three stages of the road to union with God pointed out by Isaac the Syrian are also mentioned: **penance, catharsis and perfection**, i.e., "alteration of desires, liberation from the passions and acquisition of the perfect love, which is a fulfilment of the gift". "If penance is the beginning of this road," writes Loski "this does not mean that this is a transitional moment, a temporary stage. Indeed, it is not some stage, but a state, which should last forever, one continuous stand of those genuinely aspiring to the union with God" (*ibid, 241-242*). Therefore, according to the author: "... till the moment of death, penance is limited neither in terms of time, nor in deed" (*ibid, 242*). Besides, the unity with God cannot be realized beyond the prayer, because the prayer is a **private, intimate relationship of man and God**, and its fruit is God's love, which is nothing other than an acquired gift in the core of our existence.

Another aspect of the patrological theology is related to the role of the sacraments in man's **deification**: "The sacraments executed in the church are indispensable for the completeness of the blessed spiritual life. They are means for the sanctification of man through the Holy Spirit, they are the instrument of the blessing active in the church" (D. Kirov, *Introduction in Christian Anthropology, 1996, 130*). The issue of deification can be

completely solved only eschatologically.

Freedom and Redemption

According to Maximus the Confessor, by creating man, God “attributes” to him four of His own peculiarities: **being, eternity, goodness and wisdom**. The first two of them belong to man’s very essence, while the third and the fourth one are only offered to his free natural predisposition (*Maximus the Confessor, Chapter about Love, P.G 90 1024, BC*). In connection with this excerpt John Meyendorff writes that man’s natural partiality to God is not a **static fact**. In his opinion, it is a challenge and man is summoned to grow in the divine life. Besides, there is no opposition between freedom and Blessing in the Byzantine tradition: “the presence of divine qualities in man, of Blessing, which is part of his nature and completely makes him a man neither destroys his freedom, nor restricts his opportunity to achieve himself entirely through his own efforts. This presence rather ensures the necessary co-operation or synergy between God’s will and man’s choice, which makes the progress “from glory to glory” possible, as well as the assimilation of man by the Divine dignity, for which he was created” (John Meyendorff, 1995, 177).

In orthodox thinking the issue about the knowledge of God is connected with the partiality towards God. According to Gregory Palamas, God is not known only through one **purely intellectual process**, but when there is a **communion** with God (i.e. restored in his natural state). In order to achieve this state it is necessary to develop the virtues and overcome one’s own self. “We cannot accommodate God inside us or experienced God in purity, or merge with the pure light, if we do not go beyond, or rather above us” (John Meyendorff, 1995, 178). Maximus the Confessor agrees that the body and the soul **mutually complement each other** and cannot exist separately (*Maximus the Confessor; On the Various Issues P.G 91, 1109, CD*).

The Greek theologian Constantinos Zahos adds one more thing: “The relation of the soul to the body in man’s microcosm represents some analogy with God’s attitude towards His creation. Similarly to the way God sets the created in motion, the soul sets the body in motion; ... the connection of the rational part of human existence with the irrational one is a reflection of man’s connection with the sensory world – man represents a corresponding part of nature. But man continues, he carries within himself not only the elements or functions of the sensory world, but also the interpretations of the symbols comprising these functions. From the sensory types and the laws of operation of the irrational nature he collects the spiritual logoses of creatures and the virtuous ways of his life. And finally, with the ways of the virtuous and rational *logoi* of things, man embraces in himself the *logoi* and ways existing in everything. In this way he becomes “God’s world ... shining and grand with moral natural and divine constituent theorems” (*On Theology and the Incarnated Economy of God’s Son, P.G 90, 1161*).

Man represents the only creature possessing the possibilities of establishing contact with all the other creatures and for this reason he can be the centre around which the **unity and antidosis of the properties of the different parts of the creation** will be formed (*ibid*). The composite creation, sensory and spiritual, is characterised by Maximus the Confessor as a “macroantropos” on the basis of concentrating the created around man. And man is “a second world in great shortening” not only based on the possibility of the sensory and the spiritual, but mainly through the conclusion and communion of everything in God (*ibid*).

But, as John Meyendorff points out, the claim of Maximus the Confessor revealing **the organic unity of the body and soul in man**, initially directed against Origen’s idea of the precedence of souls, raises the issue of the survival of the soul after death. This survival is not denied, but it is not understood as a liberation of the body in the neo-Platonic sense

either. The separation of the body and the soul at the moment of death is “against” nature to such a degree as the very death is, so the eventual and eternal survival of the soul is possible only if the whole person raises from the dead on the day of resurrection.

This liquidation of the natural unity of body and soul does not begin, but ends with death, writes the Greek philosopher C. Yannaras, basing his argument on John Climacus words. **The disharmony** in this **unity** begins with the intervention of sinfulness, **with the degradation**, caused by **sinfulness**. And the polarity of man’s being is not between soul and body, but between what man is by essence and his unnatural change due to sinfulness (C. Yannaras, *The Metaphysics of the Body*, Athens, 1971, 67-68).

The orthodox Fathers teach us that after the Fall God’s image in man adopted some darkening and weakening but has not become completely extinct or disappeared. According to St. Athanasius the Fall had as its consequence the enveloping of the soul with the virus of sin, and after this fall it can return to the divine so as to preserve, through the removal of every alien element resting on the soul according to the image, i.e. God’s vision of the Logos and through it the vision of the Father (*Greek Patrology*; A. Theodorou . *The Doctrine of the Greek Church Fathers about the Theosis of Man up to John of Damascus*, Athens, 1956, 61).

On the contrary, the Greek orthodox thought about the likeness teaches us that it has been entirely lost. Man, as the Greek theologian A. Theodorou mentions, “... was a perishable clay image dressed in other clothes” (*ibid*, 62).

According to Maximus the Confessor “the wrong choice made by Adam brings about passion, corruption and mortality”, but not **hereditary guilt** (*On Various Issues of the Holy Scripture*, P.G 90, 408 BC). A. Theodorou emphasises the consequence of the Fall on the human body: death, corruption and decay, and gives prominence to the fact that man’s sinfulness deprived him entirely of the possibility to be immortal both by nature and gift. He also claims that the opinion of all Fathers, with the exception of that of Theodore of Mopsuestia, is that death was not a product of divine creation, it penetrated humanity after Adam’s fall, as a consequence of sin. Together with mortality, all other kinds of evil permeated the human nature: voluptuousness, nastiness and the savage chaos, the contamination of the νοῦς with disgraceful thoughts, the debasement of the will to life in sin (A. Theodorou, *The Doctrine of Man’s Theosis*, Athens, 1956).

The incarnated Logos with its redeeming death and resurrection like a new Adam gives the **possibility** to restore the harmony between soul and body so as to achieve the lost “image and likeness”. Athanasius the Great writes on this issue: “For this reason people received the gift to be called gods and God’s sons. In fact, first God resurrected His body and raised it in Himself. After that he resurrected the limbs of His body, bestowing it as a God with everything He Himself took as a human (A. Theodorou, 1956, 77). But sinfulness, according to Maximus the Confessor, is a **private act** accomplished when man misuses his freedom (“gnomic will”) and does not imitate God. The “gnomic will” is capable of directing man towards the good and “imitating God” in the effort to make man equalize his free will with his “natural will”, which is a “created dynamism”, according to the words of J.Meyendorff (J.Meyendorff, 1995, 182-183).

The beginning of this dynamic course of events for every person starts with **baptism**, with his birth from the Holy Spirit and water. The course of the theosis continues, in the opinion of Maximus the Confessor, through exercising, through the exertions of man’s free will with the synergy of the gift of the Holy Spirit and is perfected through the richness of the life in “Christ” (hieromonc Artemii Rantosavlievich, *The Mystery of Salvation according to Maximus the Confessor*, Athens, 1975, 197). A. Rantosavlievich also writes that the theosis as the closest union with God in man’s earthly

life reaches its peak in the Eucharist, where He administers Holy Communion to the body and blood of Christ, the human and God and this deifying energy flows through man - the microcosm in the entire world – the macrocosm.

The separation of the soul from the body is already a temporary state, according to C. Yannaras, who quotes Maximus the Confessor's words: "Death is only one turning point in the course of the cognition of God, a necessary "defeat of flesh" so that life can assimilate mortality" (*Maximus the Confessor, On Various Issues, P.G 90, 609 BC*). And according to the orthodox thought in this temporary state the souls anticipate the status they will acquire after the Last Judgement. In fact, the various individuals chose this status themselves, by their **own will**. The punished do not want and cannot see God. Hell becomes passivity and non-communion between God and the punished, but also between those, who deprived themselves of participation in God's gifts. Every person who loves God and the people is able to cure their traumas in advance with the deifying God's energy and in this way to communicate both with God and his brothers (N.Matsoukas, 1994, 250-251).

St. Maximus the Confessor says that on the last day all human individuals, the whole human nature will present itself unified with God, but while for the righteous the unity with God will be according to God's gift and therefore will represent one exceptional pleasure and heavenly satisfaction; for the sinners it will be a union outside the gift, one unexpressed infernal suffering (C. Yannaras, 1971, 242). John of Damascus writes: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead. Because there will be, really there will be resurrection of the dead. And having said resurrection, we mean bodily resurrection." (*John of Damascus. Correct Presentation of the Orthodox Faith, 1976, 445*). He defines resurrection as a new content of soul and body, where the body will already be **uncorrupted**. He defines the soul as "live essence, invisible for the bodily eyes by its own nature, rational and spiritual, unshaped, uses the body as an organ and endows it with life and enlargement, and feeling, and birth, without having another νοῦς on its territory, except its own as the purest place (because as the eyes are in the body, so is the νοῦς in the soul), autocratic, volitional and energetic, changeable, i.e. at will, because it is also created, it has taken all this as nature from the gift of its creator, from whom it also received its being and the way it is" (*ibid.*, 153). The soul is divided into **rational** and **irrational**. The irrational soul has two parts: one does not listen to the Logos and cannot be persuaded, whereas the rational one does the contrary. Palamas teaches that the soul is divided in three powers: **rational** (νοῦς), **angry** and **volitional**, claiming that if one of them is infected with sin and the other two participate in this infection and this enslavement, then the whole soul is distorted (prot. Chr. Anaxagorou, *Passions and God's Suffering according to Gregory Palamas, Orthodox Presence magazine, IV-IX, 1999, 122*).

The Sex in the Orthodox Enlightenment

The biblical account of God's creation and God's image imprinted on it states that it was given to the two sexes created by Him: "So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (*Gen 1:28*). The orthodox idea about the sexes neither denies, nor condemns sexual intercourse within marriage. The Church **blesses** this marriage and accepts it as one of the seven ecclesiastical sacraments. In the ascetic writings the model of God's love of man and the human love of God is often sought in the forms of the healthy human love (Eros), sexual love including: "The **Eros** of people's bodies has become a model of the love of God (John Climacus). A confirmation of this approach towards the natural communication between spouses occurs in the entire written orthodox sermon from the books of the New Testament, through the Fathers' works to the latest publications of various theologians.

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Стиљанос Еродоту

О ЈЕДИНСТВУ ЉУДСКЕ ПРИРОДЕ У ПРАВОСЛАВНОЈ АНТРОПОЛОГИЈИ

Свети Григорије Ниски је један од првих писаца који је машио задатка да заврши антрополошко дело Светог Василија Великог. У својим прослављеним хомилијама, познатим под именом *Шестоднев*, он обрађује теме које се тичу човековог стварања, заснивајући своју аргументацију на књизи Постања и тумачећи смисао и сврху људског живота са православне и херменеутичке тачке гледишта (Хомилије X-XI). Човек (мушкарац и жена) је створен је на начин да служи трима Божанским ипостасима, без „раздвајања“ ове службе. Човек је створен од Бога по његовој икони, јер је **створен са душом, разумом, власти над собом и слободном вољом**. Свети Григорије Ниски указује да човек (човек и жена) имају урођену особину да су створени по Божијој икони, и да подобије задобијају кроз слободну вољу и избор да постану слични Богу. Моћ слободне воље раширена је кроз целокупно човечанство да би руководила људе у борби да достигну подобије и Божију награду. Даље тумачећи извод из књиге Постања који се тиче Божије заповести „рађајте се и множите се, и напуните земљу, и владајте њом“ кападокијски богослов указује да је људско умножавање двоструко – и **телом** и **душом**.

Свети Григорије такође објашњава зашто је човек **микрокозам**. Он је уздигнут над и различит од неразумних живих бића. Он се разликује од њих не само својим савршеним телесним органима, већ у многоструку и тиме што он није окупиран „земаљским стварима“, и зато што је усмерен на горе према небеским вредностима, где је Исус Христос господар. Према грчком аутору Х. Јанарасу, у завештању које се тиче Светог Писма, човек је представљен према икони Божијој, као **личност** јер је и сам Бог установљен на **личносном постојању**. Он помиње да оно на шта се односи божанство Бога је Његово личносно постојање, трострука природа Његове личносне ипостаси чини Божанско биће – Божанска природа или **суштина** – у љубави тј. у неподвргавању било каквој нужности (Х. Јанарас 1996, 93). И човек је обдарен личносним постојањем, т.ј. постојањем на исти начин.

У својој **анализи** и **синтези** Светоотачког тумачења питања иконе Божије, Х. Јанарас тврди да је жеља Отаца није била да до краја развију садржај Божије иконе у човеку, већ да досегну **општу слику** о начину на који човек постоји. Према његовом мишљењу, икона Божија се открива у сложеној људској ипостаси. И људска ипостас није поистовећена ни са телом, ни са душом. И телесне и душевне способности изражавају, откривају и представљају људску ипостас, оно што човек јесте по својој могућности. У жељи да изрази везу иконе са подобием исти аутор карактерише икону Божију у човеку као могућност поистовећења људског постојања са Божијим постојањем које је на начин **заједнице** (κοινωνία) **у љубави**.

Одвајање тела од душе у моменту смрти је „противприродна“ у истој мери колико и сама смрт, тако да је евентуални и вечни опстанак душе могућ само уколико сама личност устане из мртвих на дан васкрсења. Оваплоћени Логос својим искупљењем смрти и васкрсењем попут новог Адама пружа **могућност** да се обнови сагласје између душе и тела да би се поново задобили изгубљени „икона и подобие“.

