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THE MEDIEVAL INTERPRETATION OF THE FACE:  
THE EXAMPLE OF OLD BULGARIAN LITERATURE

*(Summary)*

This article deals with a basic philosophical symbol – the face – that was held in considerable esteem through the Middle Ages, expressing as it does both human individuality and the purely spiritual essence of the individual. The topos of “seeing” and “eyes” – a favourite symbol of Neo-Platonism – are considered in connection with the face. The role of the face in the evolution of the model of sanctity has been studied on the basis of a number of *vitas* in Old Bulgarian literature, both originals and translations. Interpretation is targeted towards things like the mystical “face to face” view, seeing God only in the back (after Gregory of Nyssa’s *De Vita Moysis*) and the illumination of the faces a transition to the beyond (the transcendental), among others.