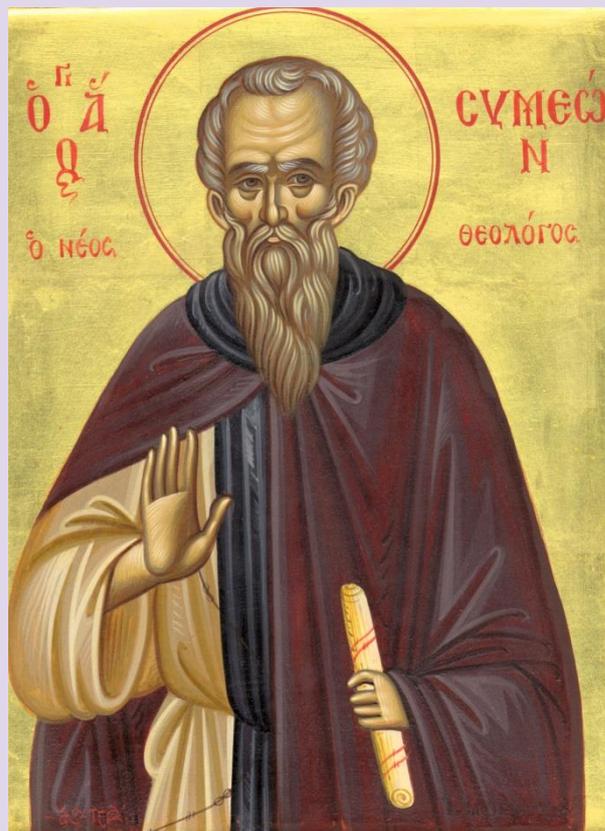


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*The Sight of God  
in the Theology of  
Saint Symeon the New  
Theologian*



*Theology for Today*  
Bucharest  
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(Doctoral Thesis)

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*Dedicated,*  
with all the love  
and  
gratitude,  
to Felicitous Ilie the seer of God,  
my ghostual Father,  
the highest mystic of the twentieth  
century.

The man who lived days on end in  
the glory of God and confessed to me  
about his ecstatic sights.

## Introduction

The present thesis is *an attempt of synthetic presentation* of the steadfast character and, in the same time, dynamic of experience and of orthodox thinking.

Any ghostual reality and theological subject must rethought, reactualised in the dimension of present, for as to be *an active factor* of dynamization of our personal life and communautaire.

But the theological actualization does not presuppose and *the dilution* of the Church's teaching, but its perception *at real parameters* of orthodox experience. For the ghostual experience is *the foundation* of the theological elaborations and the one keeps us in Church, as men with living faith and lucid, attentive at the changes of the world in which we live.

Being sustained in the frame of the discipline *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, at the section *Systematics*, our theme will be debated into a regime of research proper to the afferent discipline.

The theme of *the sight of God* will be presented *as component part* of personal soteriology, intending to put in evidence, into a systematic mode and concise, the contribution of Saint Symeon the New Theologian in this question.

We consider that the experience and the theology elaborated by the one who is

surnamed *the third theologian* of the Church are *a norm* and *a unlying guide* in our demarche.

The choosing of theme came from a *profound interior need*, from the desire to deepen the coordinates of the symeonian theology too little debated at academic level.

The knowledge of the experience and of the theology of Saint Symeon seems to us *an immense avail* for the theologians and our believers, as long as we confront, in direct mode, with the depersonalized consequences of secularization and of mondialization.

*As shield of protection* in the face of *the eroding* of conscience of ecclesial appurtenance and of the understanding of person and of interpersonal relations, Saint Symeon proposes us *a theology of experience*, in which God descends to man, showing him His glory, for as to raise on man at the level of Trinity, to open him to the trinitarian communion.

And this, for that Symeon sees on man as having his center of gravity *in God* and does not *in he himself*.

*The closure* in himself of the man, into a subjectivist perspective, cannot present a mystical experience, a personal experience with God, but for Symeon *the true relation* with God means *the communion of man with God*, in and through His glory, as *ecstatic sight*.

Enrolling *in the personalist lode* of the Fathers of the Orthodox Church, Saint Symeon the New Theologian keeps at a place *the interpersonal character and objective* of our relation with God.

Therefore, for him, the orthodox believer experiences *the uncreated grace and eternal of God*, without *to close* in himself and without *to tear* of the community of Church. And *the sight of God* is not *an escape* from time and nor can we *to force* the being as it to produce, but is *lift* of ours, by God, through His glory, for to fill us of the brightnesses of His glory, and for that this thing makes us to become *fervent believers* in the frame of the life of Church.

The fundamental consequence of God's sight is a life full of *dynamism*, of dedication in the service of Church, a continuous search to sanctify us the life, ie so many *positive attributes* for the life of Church and of society in which we unfold the existence.

Therefore, the choosing of the theme of face, we consider it *a gain* of everyone, an ecclesial gain, because the symeonian theology is *a continuous recourse at experience, equilibrium and fidelity towards the Tradition of the Church*.

Our work will be composed from three distinct chapters but which have interior links between them.

*The first chapter* will treat the problem of the biblical and patristic premises of man's deification and of the sight of God in the orthodox theology.

We will seek to present the fact that the seen world has a *rational foundation* and *ghostual*, for that is *the personal creation* of the divine Logos *through Whom all things are made* [πάντα δι' Αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, Jn. 1, 3, acc. GNT].

The rational and ghostual foundation of the world must be seen *in relation* with the existence of God's uncreated energies, which *penetrate* and *sustain all*, both the unseen existences but and on the seen.

For that the man *can impart of grace* in Church and the grace of God penetrates, in real mode, the being of the man, therefore we can speak, in the same time, about *the sight of God* and *deification*, both having internal link.

*The second chapter* will treat the theme of *the sight of God* at Saint Symeon the New Theologian and its implications in the personal salvation and it will be *the chapter of force* of our thesis.

In the frame of this chapter, after *an introduction* in the ecstatic terminology of Saint Symeon, we will present *the recordings* of the experience of God's sight with the triadology, the christology, the pneumatology, the ecclesiology, the sanctology and the eschatology. Step by step we will show *how advised* and *how*

*organic* is included Symeon in the teaching and the experience of the Church, for that his own experience *affirms* and does not *infirm* the theology of the Fathers.

As servant of the Holy Liturgy and of the Mysteries of the Church, as starets of monastery, as writer and theologian, as confessor of the orthodox faith and as man persecuted on unjust for the deepness of his theology and of his love for Church's Tradition and for the Saints of God, Saint Symeon proves, through deeds and words, that he is *the fulfiller* of his proper theology. Therefore he has remained as *an authentic landmark of life, experience and theology* for our Church.

*The third chapter* will have right the thematic theme the reception of *the theology of glory* in the orthodox space and of the importance of its assuming in the postmodern world.

Here we will debate *the theology of the sight of God* at the Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, beloved and our venerable theologian, considered, on right word, *the greatest theologian of the twentieth century*, alongside the theology of glory at Professor Vladimir Lossky, which was received *very warmly* in Occident for his patristic reactualizations in the domain of the mystical theology.

The last sequence of our work will vise *the condition of the man in postmodernity* and will be *a succinct*

*debate* on the mode in which can *salve* an orthodox believer, of diverse ideological traps, through the experience and the theology of the Church.

We give thanks to Father Professor Dumitru Popescu, our coordinating, for *the special attention* on which he has granted us and for *the real support* and *the vision of ensemble* on which he offered us.

Alongside of his Holiness and of his effective support, decisive in the systematization of the theological informations, we could elaborate this thesis, which we hope to be *of avail* to those who will consult it.

## 1. The Biblical and Patristic Premises of the Deification of the Man and of the Sight of God in the Orthodox Theology

For to understand into a clear mode, without dubieties, the theology of the sight of God at Saint Symeon the New Theologian, we believe that we must begin with a synthetic presentation of *the premises of the deification of the man*.

Because *the sight of God* appears in the divine-human process of deification as *a direct consequence and real* of it.

In the frame of the uninterrupted strivings of to cleanse us from passions, the sight of God is *a gift of God*, a descent of God to us for to raise us *at the impartation* of His divine life.

*The premises of the deification and of the sight of God* on which we will debate are the following:

1. The person of the divine Logos as *Creator and Pantocrator of the entire creation*.

2. *The rational and ghostual foundation of the seen world, which makes it to be „open towards God”<sup>1</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Christ, Church, Society* [*Hristos, Biserică, Societate*], Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1998, p. 124.

3. *The uncreated divine energies, which spring from the being of God and which are „of the being-making and deifying works”<sup>2</sup> of the man.*

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<sup>2</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], ed. II, vol. 1, Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1996, p. 113.

## 1. 1. The Person of the Divine Logos and His Relation with the Creation and with the Man

The first verse of Scripture testifies the frame that „in beginning made [ἐποίησεν] God the heaven and the earth” [Gen. 1, 1, acc. LXX], in consequence, that the world has *a beginning*, it is not *eternal*, but its beginning stands in *the will of God* of to make/ of to create *the world unseen and seen*.

For that God *has created* the world, this cannot be *confused* with Him and nor is *a part* of Him<sup>3</sup>, but it was made by God οὐκ ἐξ [*from nothing*], according to II Maccab. 7, 28.

But the expression „from nothing” does not want to say that *the nothing* would be *a particular substance* from which God *would be molded* the world but that before as the entire existence *to be created* by God, it *did not exist* in fact.

Thus, the world being made by God *from nothing* and *in time*<sup>4</sup>, the creation proves, in fundamental mode, *dependent* of God, for that He is *the cause of its existence* and the One which keeps it in existence.

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<sup>3</sup> Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Iisus Hristos Pantocrator* [*Jesus Christ Pantocrator*], Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 2005, p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], second edition, vol. 1, ed. cit., p. 226.

The world is *theonomy*, dependent of God and not *autonomous*, independent towards Him. Of fact, „the world cannot become *autonomous*, because it has no *conscience* and nor *liberty* for to *break* its internal link with God”<sup>5</sup>.

We understand in what consists *the internal link* of creation with God, if we understand, in correct mode, Gen. 1, 2.

The expression: „and the Ghost of God bring upon water” [καὶ Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἐπέφερετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος] is the testimony of *uncombatable* of „the presence of the Ghost of God in creation”<sup>6</sup>.

For the orthodox exegesis, this *presence of the Ghost of God in creation* is translated through the fact, that the foundation world is an active one, is the light of God and that the uncreated energies are *the internal link* between God and His creation.

The creation of the man by God *after the face/ image/ icon of God* [κατ’ εἰκόνα Θεοῦ, Gen. 1, 27] and *the breath of life* [πνοήν ζωῆς], breathed over his face by God, these show on man as *living soul* [ψυχὴν ζῶσαν] [Gen. 2, 7] in his relation with Him.

God creates on man as *living soul*, ie He creates on man with a real possibility

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<sup>5</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Man Without Roots* [Omul fără rădăcini], coll. Alpha and Omega [Alfa și Omega], Pub. Nemira, Bucharest, 2001, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

of to open to his Creator, the men being, after the expression of Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, „souls *clothed* in bodies”<sup>7</sup>.

But God „made on man not only as *reason*, but as *reason clothed with flesh*”<sup>8</sup>, the body of the man being „a palpable rationality, concrete, special, in link with the palpable rationality, concrete of nature.

He represents the most complex system of plasticized rationality...[But, while] the body, as the plasticized rationality, ceases once with the death...the soul, of which presence gives to palpable rationality of the matter *the quality* of body proper-said, is a subjective rationality, conscious, exceeding all rationality and the passive sensibility of nature”<sup>9</sup>.

Hence we deduce that the man is the one who personalizes the matter into himself, which understands the difference between himself and the creation, which does not understand its internal rationality. He assumes his condition of *being with body*, which lives in the world and, in the same time, he assumes the

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<sup>7</sup> Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: the Light of the World and the Deifying of the Man* [*Iisus Hristos: lumina lumii și îndumnezeitorul omului*], edition tended by Monica Dumitrescu, Pub. Anastasia, Bucharest, 1993, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Idem, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], ed. II, vol. 1, ed. cit., p. 258.

understanding of the world, which does not have *conscience of self* and of its conscience is he himself.

The relation of the man with God implies *the assuming of the life in body* but and *the assuming* and *his care* towards the entire creation.

But, through sin, says the Father Professor Dumitru Popescu, „the man *failed to give* expression to his vocation, received from part of the Creator, of to transform the heaven and the earth in *Paradise*, and to raise he himself with the entire creation towards the immortality of the Aker, but he had fallen in the corruption of world, knowing a process of involution, which approached him of the beings inferior to him. [...]

Of course, the falling of the ancestors does not destroyed *the face* of God from man, because Adam continued to speak with God and after his falling in sin. But the face of God from man was altered progressive, until the man reached to confuse, in pantheistical mode, *the Creator* with *the creation* and to worship to the creature in the place of the Creator”<sup>10</sup>.

The oldtestamentary Revelation speaks to us about *God*, about *the Lord God*, about *the Lord* or about *the Ghost of God*<sup>11</sup>. But only once what the Logos of

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<sup>10</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Man Without Roots* [Omul fără rădăcini], op. cit., p. 69-70.

<sup>11</sup> Acc. LXX, the name of *God* appears of 1795 times in 1583 verses, the syntagma *the Lord God* appears

God incarnates, we find that God is *Trinity of persons*.

In the epiphanies of the Baptism [Mt. 3, 13-17, Mk. 1, 9-11, Lk. 3, 21-22] and of the Transfiguration of the Lord [Mt. 17, 1-8, Mk. 9, 2-8, Lk. 9, 28-36], we see that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are *the three persons of the Godhead* and that They are *our God*.

Our God is from eternity *Trinity*, but only the incarnated Son makes known to the men *the Trinity*, that God is *Trinity of persons*, because „Three are Those who confess in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and these Three are one” [I Jn. 5, 7, acc. GOC].

If Gen. 1, 1 speaks to us about God as about the *Creator of the world*, then Jn. 1, 1-3 reveals to us the report between the Father and the Son or between God and His Logos in the frame of the creation of the world and of the man:

„In beginning was the Word, and the Word was towards God, and God was the Word. This was in beginning towards God. All through This were made and nothing from what was made was not made without Him”, acc. GNT.

But connexing Jn. 1, 1-3 with the place from Gen. 1, 2, we observe that the Father makes the entire creation *through* the Son, but *into* the Ghost of God.

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of 566 times in 534 verses, the word *the Lord* of 3663 times in 3298 verses and the sintagma *the Ghost of God* of 15 times in 15 distinct verses.

Therefore, the Tradition of the Orthodox Church will talk about the Logos of God, about the Son, that about *the Creator of the world* and as about *the Pantocrator* of the entire creation<sup>12</sup>.

From lexical point of view, Παντοκράτωρ has the significance of *the All-Ruler* or of *the Almighty*<sup>13</sup>. But in the life and the orthodox theology, the greek word *Pantocrator* was understood as being *an equivalent of the All-Sustainer*, designating through this thing, that the Logos „is the One from Which come all, in Which are held all and in Which will show contained and lighted all, the Pantocrator, the Sustainer of all”<sup>14</sup>.

If the prime signification was pretaken in the heterodox theology and the Pantocrator was understood as remaining „closed into an inaccessible transcendence”<sup>15</sup>, the Pantocrator, in the orthodox tradition, as *the All-Sustainer*, was seen as the One what „fills with His presence both the Church but and the universe”<sup>16</sup> in its integrality.

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<sup>12</sup> The name *Pantocrator* in the LXX, accorded *the Lord God*, appears of 126 times in 121 verses.

<sup>13</sup> Acc. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, edited by G. W. H. Lampe, Pub. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1961, p. 1005.

<sup>14</sup> Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Jesus Christ Pantocrator [Iisus Hristos Pantocrator]*, Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 2005, p. 193-194.

<sup>15</sup> Dumitru Popescu, *Orthodoxy and Contemporaneity [Ortodoxie și contemporaneitate]*, Pub. Diogene, Bucharest, 1996, p. 196.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem.

The link of the Logos with His creation consists in that, that „exists...an inexhaustible common sense of the things, a sense which links them, a sense of indefinite wealth towards which the man forward. Their unique sense supreme is the divine Logos. In Him are the meanings of all.

Only This explains on all, only in Him the man finds the proper sense of his existence. Especially one who believes seizes this *supreme sense* through a general act of intuition, through his spirit”<sup>17</sup>.

The creation, being the work of the Logos of God, full of His energetic footprint, of His glory and of the rationality planted by Him in things, for to be understood we must resort at *Revelation* and at *the personal relation* with Him. As long as the senses of the things lead us at the creator Logos and our life finds the explanation only in Him, the creation is *a transparent medium* for His understanding. If the created things send us, through their senses, at the Creator of the world, then the creation is not and cannot be *a closed environment in itself*.

Saint Irenaeus of Lyon speaks, in the second christian century, about *the creator Logos* as being identical with *the*

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<sup>17</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], second edition, vol. 1, ed. cit., p. 239.

*savior Logos of the world:* „For that the Maker of all things, the Word of God, Which gave *face* from beginning the man, when the work of His hands *has weakened* through malice, This gave healing in many ways. And He has appointed a time in which to separate the members, which He made them and again another time when to restore the whole man in full mode, making himself, through Himself, perfect through His resurrection”<sup>18</sup>.

Precisely because we are His creation, the Logos was incarnate and became man like us, except sin, for that to restore us into Himself and to perfect us through His resurrection, through which He has deified our nature.

The same Father of the Church accentuates the fact that we are *created* by the Logos of God for that „He is the One through Which were founded all things, Which chose to make them, Which has beautified on all and Which keeps all. And when I speak of *all things*, I refer at ourselves and at our world. [...]

For not the Angels made us, nor give us these the form on which we have, nor made us after *the face of God* any heavenly Power, namely any [heavenly] Power very distant from the Father of all things.

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<sup>18</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* V, 12, 6, in coll. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*, edited by Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, volume 1, Oregon, 1996, p. 1114.

No one else made us, but only the Word of God. For that God does not need of these beings, for that *to create* the things which He Himself has established them, more beforehand, as to be made.

This would happen if He would not have His *hands* [ie on *the Son* and on *the Ghost* – our note]. But always are with Him the Word and the Wisdom, the Son and the Ghost, through Which and into Which, in free mode and immediately He made all the things about which He said, saying: *Let Us make man after the face and Our likeness* [Gen. 1, 26].

For He took from He Himself *the matter* of the created beings and *the model* of things which He made and *the beauty* of each thing in part of the world”<sup>19</sup>.

In consensus with the Scripture, is observed that Saint Irenaeus speaks of *the creation of the world* as about a work done *by* the Father *through* the Son *into* the Holy Ghost.

The creation is witnessed as *a direct work* of God and not as a work through the intermediation of heavenly Powers, which are not *uncreated beings* but *created* by Him.

In the fourth century, Saint Athanasius the Great, in *Κατὰ Ἑλλήνων* [*About Greeks*], also spoke about *the Creator of the world* as being *the Logos of God*:

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<sup>19</sup> Idem, IV, 20, 1, p. 1006-1007.

„And if the world was made through word and wisdom and knowledge, and all was adorned, is necessary then as He who leads and adorns it not to be other than the One is *the Word of God*”<sup>20</sup>.

And for to be perfectly understood by his readers, Saint Athanasius comes and makes clarifications about who is this *the Word of God*:

„I speak about *the Word of Himself* [Αὐτολόγον], living and work of God, of the One who is good and God. This is another than those created and than all creation. For He is of Him and He is the only Word of the good Father, Which adorned and lights all through His demeanor of care [προνοία].

Being the good Word of the good Father, This adorned all with ordeliness [th.n dia,taxin], uniting those who are some against others [contrary] and through this [working] the ornament of a unique harmony”<sup>21</sup>.

In the same apologetic work, Saint Athanasius the Great continues to speak to us about the Pantocrator of all creation, about the divine Logos, saying the following magisterial things:

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<sup>20</sup> Athanasius Theologus, Κατὰ Ἑλλήνων, 40, acc. TLG # 001 40. 19 – 001 40. 23/ Saint Athanasius the Great, *Word Against the Greeks* [Cuvânt împotriva elinilor], in coll. PSB [Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers], vol. 15, with greek translation, introduction and notes by Rev. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, Ed. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1987, p. 75-76.

<sup>21</sup> Idem, acc. TLG [Thesaurus Linguae Graecae] # 001 40. 29 – # 001 40. 38/ Idem, p. 76-77.

„For the Same Word almighty and all-perfect saint of the Father, dwelling and expanding His powers in all and everywhere and luminating on all the ones shown and on all the ones unseen, keeps them in Himself and gathers them, not leaving nothing empty of His power, but [being] through all and in all and in each in part, giving life to all and guarding them on each in part<sup>22</sup>. [...]

[Because] the Wisdom of God, carrying the entire [universe] as on a *lyre*, and gathering the ones from air with the ones from earth and the ones from heavens with the ones from air and uniting thus *the entire* with *the parts* and leading them on all with the command and His will, constitutes a single universe and a unique ordeliness, beautiful and harmonious of it, He being *unmoved* through the power of the Father, but *moving them* on all the ones created by Himself, for each are of Him, through the will of the Father”<sup>23</sup>.

From the words of Saint Athanasius is observed that the divine Logos, as the One who created all things and the existent beings, do not leave them *of self*, autonomous, but He enlightens them and He supports them on all through His grace, uniting on all with Himself and

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<sup>22</sup> Idem, acc. TLG # 001 42. 1 – # 001 42. 7/ Idem, p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> Idem, acc. TLG # 001 42. 26 – # 001 42. 34/ Ibidem.

bringing them on all at the unity with Himself.

His presence in world through His grace draws the world at Himself, as One who exceeds all and is outside of all after His being, together with the Father and with the Holy Ghost.

Saint Maximus the Confessor will speak about the divine Logos in the terms of Church's Tradition, seeing in Himself *the supreme Reason* of the entire existence.

In *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* [Answers to Thalassius], Saint Maximus sees the fulfillment of all existence in the divine Logos, as One who has into Himself all the senses/ the reasons of the world.

Says this: Christ „showed into Himself *the end*, the one for which have received the ones created the distinct beginning of their existence.

Because for Christ or, better said, for *the mystery of Christ* [Χριστὸν μυστήριον] have received existence all centuries and all that are happening within the centuries, for He is the beginning and their end”<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Maximus Confessor Theologus, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 60, acc. TLG # 001 60. 46 – # 001 60. 51/ Saint Maximus the Confessor, *About Various Heavy Places from Divine Scripture or Answers to Thalassius* [Despre diverse locuri grele din Dumnezeiasca Scriptură sau Răspunsuri către Talasie], 60, în coll. FR [Romanian Philokalia], vol. 3, second edition, with translation, introduction and notes by Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th.

As creator and savior Logos of the world, Christ God is the One which gives stability into Himself those who grow in Him through virtues.

This thing tells us Saint Maximus in the same chapter cited anterior, when talking about the role of the revelation of humanity *of the mystery of Christ*:

„This, for as all the ones *which move after nature* to stand from the cause of nature of the One unmoved, through their move towards self and of the one to the other.

And so [each] to take the experience of knowledge from work, through the One into Which he was worthy to stay in unchangeable mode”<sup>25</sup>.

In the expression of Father Professor Dumitru Popescu, Saint Maximus the Confessor showed „that this *rational order* of creation is based on *the divine ideas* of all the things seen and unseen, which arise from Logos and return in Him as into *a unifying center* of theirs.

The unity of creation is based on the existence of a single Creator, the Father through His Logos, Which is *All-sustainer* or *Pantocrator*.

This is the principal motive for which on the highest vault of each orthodox dwelling guards the icon of

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Dumitru Stăniloae, Pub. Harisma [Charisma], Bucharest, 1994, p. 332.

<sup>25</sup> Idem, acc. TLG # 001 60. 56 – # 001 60. 60/ Ibidem.

Christ, the Pantocrator of the entire universe”<sup>26</sup>.

In conclusion, the existence of the person of the creator and savior Logos of the world is *the first premise of the deification of man and of the sight of God*, for that the One which creates on man, He embodies and deifies His human nature taken from the Ever-Virgin Mary.

He showed into Himself that the matter allows itself to be crossed by the glory of God, that there is no opposition between the sensible and intelligible in Christ<sup>27</sup>, but into Him we see „the glory of the Only-Begotten from the Father” [Jn. 1, 14, acc. GNT].

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<sup>26</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Jesus Christ Pantocrator [Iisus Hristos Pantocrator]*, op. cit, p. 12-13.

<sup>27</sup> Idem, p. 13.

## 1. 2. The Rational and Ghostual Foundation of the Seen World and its Interior Relation with the Salvation of Man and the Transfiguration of Creation

The second premise of our deification and of the sight of God has interior link with the prime, with the existence of the creator and savior Logos.

For that the One which created the world is the Logos of the Father, from this motive the cosmos and the man *are full of rationality*, and both the man and the cosmos have their existence and the remaining in existence *through* the work and His grace.

This thing is one very important in the orthodox theology, fundamental, for that „the rationality of creation in Christ exceeds *the dilemma* between man and creation, showing that Christ, as creator and savior Logos, has not come to save only *the man*, but *the entire creation*.

*The salvation brought by Christ has a cosmic dimension. Beginning from Pentecost, the Church constitutes the mean through which Christ forwards with the man and the creation towards the heaven and the new earth of the God's Kingdom*<sup>28</sup>.

The fact that all creation is destined to the transfiguration tells us Rom. 8, 19,

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<sup>28</sup> Idem, p. 15-16.

21: „For the creation awaits with eagerness the discovery of the sons of God. [...] For and the creation itself will deliver/ release of the bondage of corruption into the liberty of glory of the sons of God” [acc. GNT and GOC].

With other words, when the Saints will be filled with glory and the creation, in its integrality, will be filled by the glory of God, for that through the body of Christ, on which deified it and with which He ascended at the right hand of the Father, comes to us all the brightness of God’s glory.

Speaking about the consequences of Christ’s resurrection in the life of the man and of the existence of the cosmos, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae writes in his *Dogmatics*:

„Through the resurrected body of Christ, irradiates, untrammelled, the power of the One who made this body incorruptible, leading on all those who will impart with Him at resurrection and incorruptibility, nay leading the entire creation at incorruptibility and at transparency, ie at the maximum transfiguration and comunicability between persons through the Ghost and at a total personalization of the cosmos, in Christ and in men; for that exists *an ontological continuity between the matter of the body and the matter of the cosmos*”<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică*]

On the basis of this *ontological link* between our body and the materiality of the cosmos is founded the future transfiguration of creation.

Rev. 21, 1 speaks to us about the sight of a „new heaven and new earth” [acc. GNT], ie about a heaven and an earth transfigured through the glory of God.

Philip. 3, 21 says that the Lord „will change at appearance the body of our humiliation after the body of His glory, through the work of His power and He will subdue to Himself all” [acc. GNT].

Because the creator Logos has created our body and the matter is *open* to His eternal irradiation, therefore we can deify us.

And for that through His grace we can cleanse us the soul and the body of passions, therefore we can see on God, if we will be „clean with the heart” [Mt. 5, 8, acc. GNT].

Discussing about what means for man and cosmos this *transfiguration of the body*, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae says:

„The body will not cease [to exist], but it will be *transparent*, that we will see through it, unmediated, on God into glory, being total ghostualised, all and all will belong to all, beyond the division in subjective and objective, beyond the

reasons of nature, of the passional fight for *to master* the nature and on others, seen as *exterior objects*, of the fight of each for to defend of others.

Single the resurrection opens us the perspective of escape the fatality of nature which leads at death, it opens a dignified plan of us and of our aspirations; and once with it, the perspective of a deeper sensibility and delicacy”<sup>30</sup>.

Our deification and the sight of the glory of God are, of fact, the ones which give us our statute of ghostualised beings in eternity. Once with the resurrection of the dead and the transfiguration of all creation begins *the mystic wedding* of the Son of God with His creation.

Speaking of this moment, Father Professor Dumitru Popescu writes in his *Dogmatics*: „the coming of Christ and the premaking of the world means a raising of it into *a new state*, transfigured by the Ghost, Which is in Christ. The Ghost will not work in hidden face in the world, but He will bring at sight the effect of His work.

The entire creation becomes pneumatic, incorruptible, deified, transparent through the light and the glory which arise from the being of the Trinity, as fullness of the uncreated energies. In its state of resurrection, the matter remains all matter, but matter fully transfigured.

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<sup>30</sup> Idem, p. 120-121.

The light of the resurrected body of Christ will fill the world and will overwhelm it.

This premaking of the creation in Ghost will confer the world an unspeakable beauty. The luminous face of Christ will light on all and on all.

The things will no longer appear as independent from the persons, but as medium of manifestation of the love of Christ and of the angelic and human persons, into a personalism of the perfect communion.

The face of the new world will be the result of the event of supreme power of the universal Pentecost, and the brightness from the Tabor will extend over the entire world as *generalized Tabor*<sup>31</sup>.

But the matter can be deified for that „is not *amorphous uniformity* but *plasticized rationality*, which can be transfigured by the power of the Ghost”<sup>32</sup>.

Saint Maximus the Confessor, speaking in *Ambigua* about the creation and the role of man, says that „the man was made by God, from His goodness, from soul and body, for that the rational and mental soul given him, being after the face of the One who made him, through desire and through his entire love, to tend with strength and from all

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<sup>31</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Jesus Christ Pantocrator [Iisus Hristos Pantocrator]*, op. cit, p. 419-420.

<sup>32</sup> Idem, p. 420.

the power towards God and towards the knowledge of Him and to deify through likeness”<sup>33</sup>.

The dynamism of the relation of faithfulness and love between man and God represents just the advancement of the man towards the likeness with his Creator.

For that the human body is always personalized by its soul, through the grace of God, just therefore we can be „mystically guided, in unspeakable face and unknown, towards the power and the glory of God, by all creation uncontainable”<sup>34</sup>.

But we can speak about *the salvation* or *the deification* of man in Orthodoxy for that we do not separate, in this synergic work, on *man* from *nature*<sup>35</sup>.

If we separate on man from cosmos, we can no longer explain how it occurs, in fact, the deification of man, which is a personal reality.

For, said Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, „the entire nature is destined to *the glory* of which will impart the people in the Kingdom of Heavens and still from now it refeels of the quietness

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<sup>33</sup> Saint Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, with translation from greek, introduction and notes by Rev. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1983, p. 93.

<sup>34</sup> Idem, p. 158.

<sup>35</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], second edition, vol. 1, ed. cit., p. 223.

and of the light which irradiate from the holy man.

The glory of Christ on Tabor *has covered* and the nature. But it can remain *hidden* for the eyes and the feeling of many and the nature can be demeaned and affected of the wickedness of some of the people.

At its row, the nature can be the environment through which the man who believes, receives the divine grace or the uncreated energies beneficial, but and the place through which are exercised over him influences, which push at evil"<sup>36</sup>.

Thus, the cosmos is destined to be filled with the glory of God and, likewise, and the man is destined to be *an irradiated environment* by the glory of God and from which to irradiate, then, this.

But the rationality of the cosmos and of human nature can be perverted, as long as we infest, with our passions, our proper nature and the environment in which we live.

We can personalize the environment in which we live through our ghostual irradiation, after how we can, all alike of easy, to vitiate it through our passions or to vitiate the relations on which we have with other neighbors of our.

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<sup>36</sup> Idem, p. 224.

From here returns and „our responsibility to the nature given by God...as a duty of to use the resources *with sparing* and does not alter through pollution. This thing protects us and it of passions and of the searching of an infinite satisfaction in world”<sup>37</sup>.

Discussing the problem of the existent relations between *the reasons of the things* and *the human reason*, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae talks about the creation of the things as about „*plasticisations* and *sensiblenesses* of His reasons”<sup>38</sup>, of the divine Logos.

The reporting of the man towards the reasons planted by God in things must be a gnosiological one, for that God „created on man with *an adequate reason*”<sup>39</sup> for the knowledge of the world.

Because he observes the fact that the things created by God have and *rationality* and *elasticity*<sup>40</sup>, therefore our theologian says: „All is rational in things and in the component energies, as and between them”<sup>41</sup>.

However, *the rationality of the world* is not *a reality closed in itself* but „is for man and it culminates in man, [and] not the man is for the rationality of the world”<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> Idem, p. 226.

<sup>38</sup> Idem, p. 240.

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>40</sup> Idem, p. 241.

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem.

But *the reasons of the things* have, for Father Stăniloae, a double importance in the life of the man, bodily and ghostual in the same time, for that they are „*of avail* of the man for to maintain biological, but [they have]...and...the scope *to enhance spiritual* [on man] through the knowledge of the meanings and of the conformity increasingly higher of them with him and *of the last sense* of their, which is *God*”<sup>43</sup>.

In their ghostual sense, the reasons of the things „are seen as *mean* of God’s love, so of the dialogue of God with us and of the dialogue between us”<sup>44</sup>.

Thus, in the perspective of the knowledge of God, *the deification of man* is the reality into which discovers us unsuspected of vast virtualities of the matter of our body but and of the spirituality of our soul.

The sight of the glory of God is, on the one hand, *a filling* of us with the glory of God and, on the other hand, *a raising* of us at the communion with the Most Holy Trinity, at the experience of the divine life.

But there where the matter is seen *closed in itself* is confused „*the transcendence of God* with *His absence from creation*”<sup>45</sup> and the man is understood as having an autonomous

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<sup>43</sup> Idem, p. 243-244.

<sup>44</sup> Idem, p. 244-245.

<sup>45</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Man Without Roots* [Omul fără rădăcini], op. cit., p. 15.

existence, without „his roots thrust deep in the transcendent reality of the Creator and in the immanent reality of the cosmos”<sup>46</sup>, in the same time.

But there where the man is seen as *dependent of God* is possible the advancement in the communion with God, for that the man is created to fulfill in God and for that the souls of men and the matter are *open* to God’s glory.

In conclusion, if the matter does not have a *rational* and *ghostual foundation*, planted in it by the creator Logos, we can not talk about *the deification of man*, as relation always progressive in the knowledge of God, but nor about *the sight of God*, as brightness of the divine light in our lives.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibidem.

### 1. 3. The Uncreated Divine Energies and Their Presence in the Synergistic Acts of the Deification and of the Sight of God

The third premise of the deification of man and of the sight of God has and it interior link with the two anterior discussed. Only if our Creator is *the divine Logos*, and only if our body and the cosmos are *rational* and *transparent environments*, we can speak about *the deification of man* and *the sight of God*.

The Scripture speaks about God as about *the living God* [Θεοῦ ζῶντος]<sup>47</sup>, ie about *God*, Which irradiates us with His glory.

Is arhipresent in Scripture the indication of the existence of *God's glory* and of *God's uncreated energy*<sup>48</sup>. The living God manifests His eternal glory in the life of faithful people for to rise them at the communion with Himself.

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<sup>47</sup> To see Deut. 4, 33; 5, 26; I Kings 17, 36; Hos. 2, 1; III Maccab. 6, 28, acc. LXX and A. Ap. 14, 15, acc. GNT.

<sup>48</sup> The syntagma *the glory of the Lord* appears at Exod. 16, 7; Numb. 12, 8; Ps. 17, 31; Habak. 2, 14; Is. 26, 10; 35, 2 etc., acc. LXX, but about *the divine light* it speaks in many modes.

In fact, any revelation of the Scripture is made *in ecstatic mode* and is a *revelation*, in the light of God, of *what God transmits to us*.

In GNT, we find referrings at *the glory of God* in Mt. 16, 27; 25, 31; Mk. 8, 38; 10, 37; Lk. 9, 26; Rom. 1, 23; 4, 20; I Pet. 5, 10; Rev. 11, 13 etc.

Speaking about of our relation with resurrected Christ and ascended at the right of the Father, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae writes:

„The light of the Trinity, which is proper and the Son of God, it will show and through the body what He will take, through the words and His loving deeds, but it will show full in His body after resurrection. And from His body will spread in those who will believe in Him and will make deeds, like Him, in the earthly life, but fully in their body after their resurrection [from the dead].

If the body can be *environment*, through which spread wise words and are made good deeds, it's natural can be and a seen environment of the spiritual light, and from it to irradiate this light and in the universe with which is connected, although this apparation of spiritual light through matter is *a great mystery*<sup>49</sup>.

Is possible *our irradiation by the glory of God* for that the matter is *open* to the uncreated energies and eternal of God and through the sight of God's glory, we see on those *around* of God and not *the being* of God.

Therefore, Father Professor Dumitru Popescu speaks about the distinction between *the being* and *the works* of God, wroting the following:

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<sup>49</sup> Dumitru Stăniloae, *Jesus Christ: the Light of the World and the Deifying of the Man* [*Iisus Hristos: lumina lumii și îndumnezeitorul omului*], op. cit., p. 201-202.

„The eastern theology considers... that God can be known after *His works*, but not *in His being*, thus that the uncreated energies, as expressions of God's work, come to protect the mystery which surrounds the being of God, ie to substantiate *the trinitarian apophatism*.

All thus, the eastern theology considers that the process of the perfection of believers in Christ and Church is not realized through *constrainable external means*...but through *the transfiguration of the entire human nature from interior*, through the energy of the Holy Ghost, thus that the uncreated energies come to base the deification of man in Christ”<sup>50</sup>.

But the sight of the divine light or of the uncreated energies does not mean *a closing in itself* of the man for to contemplate His glory but *an opening of us to the overwhelming greatness of God's life*.

For that „the uncreated energies remain, in the same time, both *exterior* of the human nature, but and *interior*. They remain *exterior*, because they *spring* from God's being, and *interior*, because they have the role *to deify* the human nature. [But] the uncreated energy does not remain *just exterior* of the human nature, because it is not *added entity* from

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<sup>50</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Christ, Church, Society* [*Hristos, Biserică, Societate*], op. cit., p. 101.

exterior of the human nature, but *divine power* which penetrates in the human nature for to transfigure it in Christ”<sup>51</sup>.

Polemizing with the false dogma of *the created grace*, Father Professor Dumitru Popescu shows here that the *grace is not parallel* with the man or does not embrace on man in exterior mode, but deifies him inside, for that the man which is *depassionating himself* is *an transparent environment* of the glory of God.

Therefore, in the process of our deification, „the human nature remains *created nature*, [but] it acquires through the uncreated energies some *supernatural qualities* which make as the process of deification of the human nature does not remain only *a pious metaphor*, but *a true reality*”<sup>52</sup>.

Through the presence of the uncreated energies of God in our life, received in the Holy Mysteries, in the personal ascetic life and in the frame of the sight of God, we realize *the endless advance* in the near to God, in deification, which is a divine-human reality what is acquired in Church.

If we deny *the foundation* of our link with God and namely *the divine grace*, we have only *a hypothetical link* with God. The real link with God is the personal

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<sup>51</sup> Idem, p. 105.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem.

link with God through His glory of which we impart into a fervent ascetic life.

Saint Gregory Palamas speaks about the distinction between *the divine being* and *His energies* and about our imparting of the eternal energies of God in the context of the Change at face of the Lord, saying: „the entire Church of God declared that the grace seen by the Apostles [in] unspeakable [mode] in Tabor is *uncreated*, as being *divine light* and *unspeakable* and *brightness of the divine nature*, but *not nature*, for this is above of any manifestation and impartation”<sup>53</sup>.

We do not impart of *the being of God* in ecstatic mode but *the glory of God*, for „the soul sees on God in light, through body, through the intermedium of the body”<sup>54</sup>.

Talking about what is happening in *ecstasy* with us, Saint Gregory Palamas writes the following:

„When see the Pious men in themselves that divine light – and they see it when they are worthy of *the deifying impartation* of the Holy Ghost, when they are researched unspeakable by the perfecting rays – then they see itself

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<sup>53</sup> Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas*, with four treatises translated [*Viața și învățătura Sfântului Grigorie Palama, cu patru tratate traduse*], second edition, with a preface reviewed by the author, Pub. Scripta, Bucharest, 1993, p. 265.

<sup>54</sup> Idem, p. 203.

their deification garment, their mind being filled of glory and of brightness unsaid of beautiful what springs from the grace of the Word, so as the body of the Word was filled with glory on mountain through the divine light what flowed from His deity.

For the glory on which His Father gave Him, and He gave it to those who obey Him, as says the word of Evangel; and He wanted as to be those with Him and they see His glory [Jn. 17, 22, 24]<sup>55</sup>.

Saint Gregory speaks about the filling of the glory of God of those which clean of passions and, in the same time, of the fact that the glory of the Son is identical with the glory of the Father and with of the Holy Ghost.

But he specifies that Christ gives us His glory, to those who obey Him, filling us with His divine life and lifting us to the union with Himself through the Ghost and, through Himself, with the Father.

Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae tells us about *the divine grace* as about *the divine power* which comes to us from the transfigured humanity of Christ, saying the following:

„Speaking of grace we must emphasize both its quality of the inexhaustible power what comes to us from the infinite deity dwelt in Christ’s humanity, and the perspective of light

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<sup>55</sup> Idem, p. 178.

what opens us in the infinity of communion with the person of Christ or with the Holy Trinity, Which has opened to us in Christ, from love.

The grace is the open window to the infinity of God as person, or as [and] the trinitarian communion of persons, once what God has put us through grace in relation with Himself<sup>56</sup>.

The relation with God, stresses our author, is done through His grace, through His uncreated energies and in relation with Him we impart of the infinity communion with Christ or with the Most Holy Trinity.

Also Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, in the discussion about the personal salvation, speaks to us about the creating of *a unique link*, deep personal between us and Christ through the sight of His divine glory:

„The glory of Christ communicated to us, those who are in relation with Him, believing Him, is unending and do not scare us, but manifests a great intimacy toward us. Those who look at Christ and insist in communion with Him, become ever more righteous, more imprinted of the glory of Christ, of Christ Himself as model: <But we all, with the open face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, prechange us towards the same

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<sup>56</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], vol. 2, second edition, ed. cit., p. 200.

face, from glory in glory, as from the Ghost of the Lord> [II Cor. 3, 18]”<sup>57</sup>.

On the one hand, emphasizes the sight of the glory of God in the frame of our relation with Him and, on the other hand, that exists *a continuous imprinting* of ours by the glory of God behind our frequent ecstatic sights.

On measure what we grow in deification, we are imprinted by the glory of Christ and we become more proper for our relation with Him.

But our relation with God, through His glory, is not only *a vertical relation* but, in the same time, is the horizontal one.

Therefore, Father Professor Dumitru Popescu warns about the danger of *oversize the vertical or the horizontal* of our relation with God:

„It would be absurd to believe that the uncreated energies establish only a vertical link between God and believers, without to establish and the interpersonal link between believers.

The uncreated energies are not *entities separated* between them, as though would be separated from God and the work of the Ghost [is not] included individualistic in every human person, but superior ghostual power which embraces in Christ the community of believers in dynamic mode and perichoretic.

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<sup>57</sup> Idem, p. 225.

The uncreated energies are *dynamic interpersonal decks*<sup>58</sup>.

Thus is emphasizes *the active role* of the presence of the uncreated energies of God in the personal salvation but and in the interpersonal relations between members of the Church of Christ.

For us to be *of God* we must be *into His grace* and *to see His glory*, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, we manifest as *people of communion* and of *brotherhood* in Church and in world.

In conclusion, the three premises of human deification and of the sight of God discussed by us and namely: *the person of the creator and savior Logos, the rational foundation and ghostual of the world* and *the presence of the uncreated energies* in our life must be seen as *reciprocal interpenetrating* and being *the starting point* towards the understanding of experience and of theology of Saint Symeon the New Theologian.

For that, only when we see on man and the cosmos as *works* and *direct prints* of the divine Logos and the world, in its totality, as rational and transparent for the uncreated energies of God, we can understand that *the deification through grace* is *the scope of the orthodox life* and

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<sup>58</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Christ, Church, Society* [*Hristos, Biserică, Societate*], op. cit., p. 107.

*the sight of God is the receiving in act of  
the light of God in our life.*

## 2. The Sight of God at Saint Symeon the New Theologian and its Implications in the Personal Salvation

### The Ecstatic Terminology

#### 2. 1. The Symeonian Ecstatic Terminology

The first stake of our research is that of *to dismount* the extremist conjectures, which peripatetises in baneful mode in the row of the contemporary theologians, made on account of person and of opera of Saint Symeon the New Theologian.

And one of them is that Saint Symeon would not *enroll*, in full mode, in the row of the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>59</sup> If Jean Darrouzès (who is not too sympathetic with Saint Symeon), in the introduction at SC [Sources Chrétiennes] 51, p. 30, said that Saint Symeon did not try to be *an innovator* in the domain of the theological language, and that he is *a theoretician* of the spiritual life doubled of *a mystic one*, which is inspired from his personal experience, but and the fact that „we can recognize [at him] a traditionally engaged faith and current notions of the oriental spirituality” (Acc. Idem, p. 32), however there is a baleful current of opinion among the orthodox theologians and, equally, heterodox, of discrediting of Saint Symeon the New Theologian, which is seen as *out from the patterns* of

Besides this, stay other two affirmations, totally unfounded, and namely, that he would be *a precursor of the protestantism and a mystic with strong accents of singularization*.

For to respond to the prime grave accusation at his address, that he would *not fully enroll* in the Tradition of the Fathers of the Church, we must examine his theological issues and the mode in which he exposes the faith and his mystical experience.

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Orthodoxy, through the writing and through his very personal approach of the spiritual life.

Father Ică jr. sketches, in the introductory article at *Ică jr. 1*, entitled *Saint Symeon the New Theologian and the Mystical Challenge in the Byzantine Theology and the Contemporary*, the dispute *Trembelas vs. Teoclit* (Ică jr. I, p. 28), which, for us, is an explicit paradigm of *the motives of the unfavorable reception of Saint Symeon*.

And any names we want to enumerate here, as *opposers* of the symeonian theology, all of them would have something in common: *the helplessness or the lack of desire* of to receive full on Saint Symeon in their lives, for that they do not receive, in full mode, *the exigences of salvation*.

His exigences are *the exigences of holiness*.

Who fight with Symeon, struggle with what he is not or with what he cannot and he does not want to do.

Saint Symeon is not *the source of the frustrations* of these opposers, but he is who gives voice to the painful truth of their remoteness from the path of salvation.

For that Saint Symeon, although „a bunch of paradoxes” for contemporaries and his followers, he was credited by the Church as „an authoritative expression of the faith”, acc. Rev. Lect. Univ. PhD. Călin-Ioan Dușe, *The Integration of Saint Symeon the New Theologian in the Eastern Spirituality*, in rev. *The Theological Horizons [Orizonturi teologice]*, Oradea, 2001, p. 140, 145.

Just therefore, we will begin the discussion of the theological opera of Saint Symeon with an analysis of the ecstatic semantics of our Father, for to observe which are *the words* on which he uses for to express his ecstasies and as he is situated, from this perspective, in the ecstatic patristic theology area.

Symeon exploits the significances of ὁράω, the verb which expresses *the sight* having, very often, *mystical connotations*<sup>60</sup>.

In Chapters I, 1, those who *see bodily* (σωματικῶς ὁρῶσιν)<sup>61</sup> are put in opposition with those who *understand ghostually* (πνευματικῶς νοοῦσι)<sup>62</sup>.

This opposition is the paradigm in which he discusses always the difference between *sight* and *unsight*.

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<sup>60</sup> To see SC 51, Chapters, I, 1, p. 40; I, 51, p. 54; I, 52, p. 54; I, 101, p. 70; II, 8, p. 73; II, 19, p. 76; III, 21, p. 86; SC 156, Hymns, II, 18, p. 178; II, 104, p. 184; IV, 89, p. 196; VII, 2, p. 208; XIII, 72, p. 262; XV, 51, p. 280; XV, 54, p. 280; XV, 91, p. 284; SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 346, p. 38; XVII, 374, p. 40; XVII, 527, p. 50; XVIII, 8, p. 74; XVIII, 109, p. 84; XVIII, 119, p. 84; XIX, 21, p. 96; XIX, 29, p. 96; XIX, 140, p. 106; XX, 223, p. 126; XXI, 105, p. 138; XXI, 151, 162, 170, p. 142; XXI, 495, p. 168; XXII, 5, 8, p. 170; XXII, 157, 165, p. 182; XXII, 173, p. 184; XXIII, 232, p. 204; XXIII, 483, p. 220; XXIV, 248, p. 244; XXIV, 367, p. 252; XXV, 43, p. 258; XXVII, 104, p. 286; XXVIII, 60, p. 298; XXVIII, 179, p. 308; XXVIII, 196, p. 310; XXIX, 8, p. 314; XXIX, 67, p. 318; XXIX, 92, p. 320; XXIX, 108, 116, 128, p. 322; XXIX, 214, p. 328; XXX, 196, p. 354; XXX, 391, p. 366; XXX, 415, p. 368; XXX, 524, p. 376; XXXI, 4, p. 384; XXXIV, 17, p. 428; XXXV, 76, p. 446; XL, 1, p. 484; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 77, 78, p. 42; XLII, 85, p. 44; LI, 2, p. 184; LIII, 10, p. 212.

<sup>61</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 1, p. 40 / Icã jr. 3, p. 365.

<sup>62</sup> Ibidem / Ibidem.

*The understanding of God's presence or the personal knowledge of Him, whereof speaks Saint Symeon, is for him identical with the sight of the divine light (τοῦ θείου φωτὸς)*<sup>63</sup>.

Therefore, Christ is the One who enlightens (φωτίζει) on man<sup>64</sup>, for that the clean heart sees *the light* (φῶς) of *Trinity*<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 13, p. 74 / Idem, p. 393.

<sup>64</sup> About *lightenment* as result of *the sight of the light*, to see in SC 51, Chapters, I, 2, p. 40; I, 4, p. 41; I, 34, p. 49; II, 15, p. 75; II, 16, p. 75; III, 42, p. 92; III, 84, p. 107; SC 156, Hymns, I, 144, 146, p. 168; I, 211, p. 174; XV, 98, p. 284; XV, 105, p. 284; XV, 187, p. 292; SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 66, p. 18; XVII, 237, p. 30; XVII, 338, p. 36; XVIII, 97, p. 82; XXI, 12, p. 132; XXI, 104, p. 138; XXI, 145, p. 140; XXI, 147, 156, 164, 168, p. 142; XXIII, 223, p. 202; XXIII, 262, p. 206; XXIV, 243, p. 244; XXIV, 368, p. 252; XXV, 11, p. 254; XXV, 43, p. 258; XXVI, 100, p. 276; XXVIII, 176, p. 308; XXVIII, 197, p. 310; XXIX, 13, p. 314; XXIX, 201-202 (lightened by the divine Ghost), 209<sup>\*\*</sup>, 214, p. 328; XXX, 161, p. 352; XXX, 578, p. 380; XXXI, 101<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 392; XXXII, 14 (divine lightenments), 18, p. 402; XXXIII, 64, p. 418; XXXIII, 142, p. 424; XXXIV, 70, p. 432; XXXIV, 80, 81, p. 434; XXXIV, 106, p. 436; XL, 1, p. 484; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 201, p. 52; XLIV, 155, p. 82; XLVIII, 139, 152, p. 142; XLIX, 10, p. 146 (ghostual lightenment: φωτισμοῦ πνευματικοῦ); L, 158, p. 168; L, 244, p. 174; LI, 8, p. 184; LIII, 7, p. 212; LV, 6, p. 252; LV, 192, p. 268.

<sup>65</sup> Idem, I, 2, p. 40 / Ibidem.

In Idem, Chapters, III, 26, p. 88, Symeon speaks about the cleansing of the eye of the soul. In Idem, III, 29, p. 88, he shows that the clean heart is the one works all the virtues and lead them until perfection. About *the clean heart* or about *the cleansing mind's eyes* to see and SC 51, Chapters, III, 32, p. 89; III, 35, p. 90; SC 156, Hymns, XI, 46, p. 234 (mind's eye: τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν τοῦ νοῦς); XV, 53, p. 280 (ὄμμασι νοεροῖς); SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 525, p. 50 (clean with the heart); XXII, 107, p. 178 (mind's eye); XXII, 108, p. 178 (soul's eyes); XXIII, 429, p. 216 (in ecstasy we see only Trinity); XXVII, 134, p.

For as to understand, in authentic mode, the exposing of the symeonian theology we must retain that ὁράω has right content on φῶς. And when Symeon speaks about *sight*, he refers at *the sight of the light* of Most Holy Trinity and not to any kind of light.

*The sight of the light*, he expresses when as *an impartation* of it, using the verb μετέχω and its derivatives<sup>66</sup>, when as *an union* (συν + ὁράω/ συνάφεια/ ἔνωσις<sup>67</sup>) *with the light*<sup>68</sup> or *with God*<sup>69</sup>. In Hymns 42, 202 appears and the substantive κοινωνία (union/ communion)<sup>70</sup>, expressing

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288; XXXII, 15, p. 402 (mind's eyes); XXXII, 82, p. 406 (heart's eyes); XXXIII, 62, p. 416 (Ibidem); XXXIII, 63, p. 418 (Ibidem); XXXIV, 78, p. 434 (Ibidem).

<sup>66</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 2, 3, p. 40; II, 13, p. 74; II, 16, p. 75; III, 4, p. 81; SC 156, Hymns, VIII, 84, p. 220; SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 31, p. 12; XVIII, 120, p. 84; XXIX, 362, p. 338; XXX, 266, p. 358; SC 196, Hymns, L, 149, 158, p. 168.

In the Hymn 50, Saint Symeon uses the substantive μετουσία (participation/ communion) for to indicate the union with light. See the places from SC 196, Hymns, L, 58, p. 160 ἢ Idem, L, 201, p. 170.

<sup>67</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIX, 283, 285, p. 334; XXX, 157, 158, p. 350; XXX, 460, p. 372; XXXI, 119, p. 394; XXXIII, 128, 422 (ineffable union: ἀπορρήτῳ ἐνώσει); XXXIV, 16, p. 428 (union made in knowledge and sensation); XXXIV, 27, p. 428 (ineffable union); XXXIV, 60, p. 432; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 204, p. 52; XLII, 225, p. 54 (ineffable union); XLVI, 33, 116; L, 28, p. 158; LI, 58, p. 188 (mysterious union); LI, 142, p. 196.

<sup>68</sup> See SC 51, Chapters I, 3, p. 40; III, 60, p. 98; SC 156, Hymns, I, 107, p. 164.

<sup>69</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 101, p. 70; III, 21, p. 86 (God reveals Himself to men in the measure of the intimate union with them); III, 58, p. 97 (the ecstasy is union with God); III, 78, p. 104; SC 156, Hymns, VI, 13, p. 204.

<sup>70</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 202, p. 52; L, 200, p. 170.

the union in sensation, conscious, with the divine glory and in 46, 32 we find another of its correlative and namely: συνουσία (union/ communion/ connection)<sup>71</sup>.

The verb ἀναβλέπω, with the sense *to see before the divine light*, before eschatology, punctuates one of the principal coordinates of the symeonian theology<sup>72</sup>.

For Symeon, *the sight* must to produce, to begin *from this life*<sup>73</sup>. Therefore, the discussion of ἀναβλέπω, as and of other symeonian ecstatic verbs, must be connexed with *the reality of the sight as gift from God* or as *enworthiness of light*<sup>74</sup>.

*The sight of the light* is at Symeon and ἐνοίκησις, ie *dwelling* in us of the Trinity<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLVI, 32, 116.

Father Ică jr. translates in this context from 46, 32, on συνουσία with *togetherness* [*împreunare* in romanian] acc. Ică jr. 3, 248, for to show that the union with light is entire, beingly, total. See also its use in SC 196, Hymns, XLIX, 26, p. 148.

<sup>72</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 4, p. 41.

<sup>73</sup> See SC 156, Hymns, I, 84-87, p. 164.

<sup>74</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 4, p. 41; I, 40, p. 51; SC 156, Hymns, V, 22, p. 202; SC 174, Hymns, XXV, 66, p. 260; XXV, 90, p. 262; XXX, 388, p. 366.

<sup>75</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 7, p. 42/ Ică jr. 3, p. 366.

In SC 51, Chapters, I, 79, p. 64, Symeon called *the seer of light* as „home of the Trinity” (οἶκος τῆς Τριάδος).

For *the indwelling Trinity in us* to see also SC 51, Chapters, III, 72, 102; SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 54, p. 98; XX, 201, p. 126; XXVII, 1-2, p. 278 (the soul is *the dwelling of Christ*); XXVIII, 61, p. 298 (Christ dwells in us); XXVIII, 176, p. 308; XXX, 392, p. 366; XXIX, 165, p. 326 (Holy

*The descent*<sup>76</sup> of the light in our being is, in the same time, *the ascent towards the light and in the light of God*. The ecstatic ascension is expressed by Symeon in paradoxical terms because the descent of light to us is, in the same time, *our ascent to God*.

At him we find, most often, *the divine condescension as ray (ἀκτίς) of light*<sup>77</sup>, as *brightness (ἀύγλη)*<sup>78</sup> or as *bright*

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Trinity in us and in all); XXIX, 166-167, p. 326 (God dwells in His Saints in especially); SC 196, Hymns, XLIV, 153, p. 82 (The Holy Ghost lives in us); XLVIII, 140, p. 142, LI, 134, p. 194.

<sup>76</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XIII, 71, p. 262.

<sup>77</sup> We find in SC 51, Chapters, I, 35, p. 50 the expression „fw/j mikro.n” („small light”). This expression does not designate that divine light is *tiny*, but that his spiritual power, the his power to receive the light is *low* (see Chapters, II, 11, p. 74). The detail that we point out here is very important to Saint Symeon, because through it our author speaks of *the sight as a divine reality*, we receive in the measure of *the personal cleansing*.

About *the rays of the divine light* to see and SC 174, Hymns, XXIII, 233, 246, 252, 255, 256, p. 204; XXIII, 260, p. 206; XXIII, 362, 368, 370, 373, p. 212; XXIII, 385, 397, p. 214; XXVII, 99, p. 286; XXIX, 224, p. 330; XXXII, 19, p. 402 (the divine rays of Your deity); XXXV, 52, 59 (the deity rays) p. 444.

<sup>78</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 86, p. 66; II, 8, p. 73; SC 156, Hymns, VII, 5, p. 208; SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 325, p. 36; XVII, 334, p. 36 (the light bearing brightness: ai;glh fwtofo,roj); XVII, 344, p. 38; XVII, 354, p. 38; XVII, 358; p. 38; XIX, 17, p. 96; XX, 29, p. 112 (brightness of immortality: ai;glh| avqanasi,aj); XXII, 8, p. 170 (small brightness: ai;glh mikra.); XXII, 19, 33, p. 172; XXII, 157, p. 182; XXII, 171, p. 184; XXVIII, 175, p. 308; XXVIII, 217, p. 312; XXIX, 7, p. 314; XXIX, 173, p. 326 (shines in the heart); XXIX, 179, p. 326; XXIX, 193, p. 328; XXX, 160, p. 352; XXX, 243, 245, 247, p. 356; XXX, 267, p. 358 (the divine spark); XXXII, 15, 19, p. 402; XXXIV, 59, p. 432; XXXIX, 62, p. 480; SC 196, Hymns, XLIV, 14, p. 78;

*lightning*<sup>79</sup>, dazzling, that comes soon in man.

We find in the symeonian writing and *the coming of light as arrow* (βέλος)<sup>80</sup> or *the entering light in heart as wound*<sup>81</sup>.

In Hymns, 11, 71, *the ecstatic sight* is as a ὀπής μικρᾶς (small hole) in heaven<sup>82</sup>, while in Hymns, 12, 63, *the ecstasy* is described as a μικρὰν αὐγὴν (small brightness)<sup>83</sup> in the ghostual life of the orthodox believer.

In Hymns, 17, 326, *the ecstasy* is described as *a covering* of him by a φωτὸς νεφέλη (cloud of the light)<sup>84</sup> and in Hymns, 18, 63, we find *the sight* as ἔκστασις (ecstasy/ wonder/ the change of the status)<sup>85</sup>.

We can observe at Symeon and the recurrence of θεωρία<sup>86</sup>. The sight as

XLIV, 155, p. 82; XLV, 5, p. 102; XLV, 29, p. 104; XLIX, 26, p. 148; L, 238, p. 174.

<sup>79</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, III, 54, p. 96; III, 59, p. 98; SC 156, Hymns, II, 5, p. 176; II, 130, p. 186; VIII, 64, p. 218; XV, 55, p. 280; SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 24, p. 12; XVII, 35, p. 16 (the flashing light: τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀπαστράπτου); XXXIV, 79, p. 434; XXXV, 76, p. 446 (flash); SC 196, Hymns, XLI, 104, p. 18 (flash of glory); XLVII, 18, p. 122.

<sup>80</sup> SC 156, Hymns, V, 23, p. 202.

<sup>81</sup> Idem, Hymns, VI, 15-16, p. 204.

<sup>82</sup> Idem, Hymns, XI, 71, p. 238.

<sup>83</sup> Idem, Hymns, XII, 63, p. 246; SC 174, Hymns, XVIII, 62, p. 78 (the thin and very small brightness: λεπτή αἴγλη καὶ μικροτάτη).

<sup>84</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 326, p. 36.

<sup>85</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVIII, 63, p. 78.

<sup>86</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 34, p. 49; II, 10, p. 74; II, 11, p. 74; II, 14, p. 75; II, 15, p. 75; II, 18, p. 76; III, 23, p. 87; III, 61, p. 99; SC 156, Hymns, I, 150, p. 168; XI, 53, p. 236; XII, 15, p. 244; XIII, 67, p. 262; SC 174, Hymns, XXV, 2, p. 254; XXVIII, 8, p. 294; XXVIII, 60, p. 298; XXXIV,

*contemplation* which presupposes θεωρία, expresses both the ghostual understanding of the world as well as the sight of the realities of the ecstatic light.

The contemplation as *sight* produces a ghostual knowledge in man. Therefore, Symeon speaks of *the divine light* as about „τὸ νοητὸν φῶς” („a light thought [with the mind]”)<sup>87</sup>.

But he uses this expression, not as if talking about a *cerebralization* of the divine light or as though the divine light would be a reality which the mind possesses and *scientifically inventories*, to say, but in the sense that the mind understands the light on the measure of its illumination by God and knows that *the light is of God*, that is *divine* and that it is *God's love for itself*.

The symeonian expression want to say, that divine light is not *illogical*, *irrational* and *ambiguous visual effect*, but is *the divine energy* that *illuminates* the mind, that *reveals* the mind, that *sanctifies* man in his totality, not the man to exhaust it with his mind.

The ecstatic vision is a crystal, clear, bright, clean, simple view<sup>88</sup>. The adjective

26, p. 428 (the real vision: ἀληθοῦς θεωρίας); SC 196, Hymns, XLIII, 73, p. 62 (the mystical contemplations: θεωριῶν τῶν μυστικῶν); L, 58, p. 160; L, 161, p. 168 (the mystical contemplation); L, 234, p. 174 (contemplation of the mind); LV, 14, p. 254.

<sup>87</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 38, p. 51/ Ică jr. 3, p. 374. We find the expression and in SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 2, p. 10; XXIII, 222-223, p. 202; XXIII, 464, p. 218.

<sup>88</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 39, p. 51/ Ică jr. 3, p. 374.

τρανός, used by Symeon in the characterization of the divine sight, wants to say that the ecstatic sight prints with *the highest acuity* in our soul and is received with *maximum accuracy*.

It is *true* (ἀληθῆ) and can be *confirmed* only by *those who live it*<sup>89</sup>. Alongside ὁράω, Symeon uses and βλέπω<sup>90</sup>, both being *the constatation verbs* of the divine sight. Symeon does not want to *explain* by them *the light* but *affirms* the existence of ecstasy in his experience.

The ecstatic vision is *a ghostual* (πνευματικῶς) *sight*, is *a sight with mind's eyes* (τοῖς νοεροῖς ὁρῶν ὀφθαλμοῖς)<sup>91</sup>. The divine light is, in the same time, *true*

To see and SC 51, Chapters, I, 77, p. 63: „φωτὸς...καθαροῦ”; II, 3, p. 72: „τῶν αἰσθήσεων τρανῶς καὶ καθαρῶς”; II, 8, p. 73; II, 17, p. 75: „ἐν ἀπλῶ...θείῳ φωτί”; SC 156, Hymns, VII, 16, p. 210; XII, 15, p. 244; XV, 2, p. 276; SC 174, Hymns, XX, 14, p. 110.

<sup>89</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 40, p. 51 / Ibidem.

<sup>90</sup> Ibidem / Ibidem. A se vedea și Idem, Chapters, I, 50, p. 54; I, 51, p. 54; I, 52, p. 54; I, 101, p. 70; II, 6, p. 72; II, 8, p. 73; SC 156, Hymns, I, 159, p. 170; I, 160, p. 170; I, 161, p. 170; II, 18, p. 178; IV, 45, p. 194; VII, 1, p. 208; VII, 20, p. 210; XI, 47, p. 236; XI, 88, p. 238; XIII, 65, p. 262; XV, 8, p. 276; XV, 17, p. 292; SC 174, Hymns, XX, 39, p. 112; XXI, 18, p. 132; XXI, 105, p. 138; XXII, 68, p. 176; XXII, 162, 165, p. 182; XXIII, 112, 116, 119, p. 196; XXIII, 243, 244, 245, 248<sup>\*\*</sup>, 250, 251, p. 204; XXIII, 295<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 208; XXIII, 388, p. 214; XXIII, 425, 427, 429, p. 216; XXIII, 501, p. 220; XXIV, 6, p. 226; XXVI, 22, p. 270; XXVII, 163, p. 290; XXVIII, 16<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 294; XXVIII, 17, 18<sup>\*\*</sup>, 19, p. 296; XXIX, 79, p. 318; XXIX, 117, p. 322; XXIX, 210, p. 328; XXIX, 226, p. 330; XXX, 414<sup>\*\*</sup>, 415, p. 368; XXXII, 12, p. 400; XXXIX, 44, p. 480; XXXIX, 51<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 480; SC 196, Hymns, XLI, 102, p. 18; XLII, 75<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 42; XLII, 85, 87, p. 44; XLIV, 21, p. 72; XLIV, 117, p. 78; XLV, 97, p. 110.

<sup>91</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 41, p. 51 / Ibidem.

(ἀληθινὸν) but and *unreached* (ἄδυτον)<sup>92</sup>. It is *unreached* for those who are *ghostually blind*, ie for those who *have not ever seen it*.

The theme of *the blind from birth* (τυφλὸς ἐκ γενετῆς) is at Saint Symeon the paradigm of *the blind of the light*, of *the ignorant in the sphere of the mystical experiences*, the one who does not want the light because he *did not see it and did not know it*<sup>93</sup>.

Symeon puts *the knowledge* (γνωσία)<sup>94</sup> and *the unpassion* (ἀπαθεία)<sup>95</sup> in direct connection with *divine light*. For him, *the knowledge* is a direct result of divine views and *the sight* keeps to *the unpassion*.

He who has no *the experience of the light* will imagine about those described by Symeon only „the false manufactures” (ἀναπλάσματα ψευδῆ)<sup>96</sup>.

Light, *the ghostual knowledge* (gained as result of the sight of light) and *the unpassion* are at Symeon those that make the faithful to fill the state of *θέωσις* (deification)<sup>97</sup>.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibidem/ Ibidem. See and SC 174, Hymns, XXVII, 42, p. 282; XXVII, 66, p. 284.

<sup>93</sup> Ibidem/ Ibidem. See and SC 51, Chapters, I, 50, p. 54; I, 51, p. 54; I, 53, p. 54; I, 98, p. 69; III, 23, p. 87.

<sup>94</sup> See SC 51, Chapters, I, 65, p. 58; II, 10, p. 74; II, 14, p. 75; SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 33, p. 96; XIX, 70, p. 100.

<sup>95</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 98, p.69/ Ică jr. 3, p. 388. See about *unpassion* and in SC 51, Chapters, III, 33, p. 89.

<sup>96</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 100, p. 70/ Idem, p. 389.

<sup>97</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 269, p. 246.

Our Father uses and the verb θεοποιέω (to make god)<sup>98</sup> to indicate the state of deification and the derivatives of τελέω, as for example on ἡ τελειότη (perfection)<sup>99</sup>, but and the compound substantive θεωθείση (deification)<sup>100</sup>.

The grace is, in the ghostual man, as *a divine fire* that puts demons to flight<sup>101</sup>. Those who are *in grace* live „the liberty of the Ghost” (τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τοῦ Πνεύματος)<sup>102</sup> and have *boldness* (παρρησίαν) to God<sup>103</sup>. The symeonian soteriology, as *a inner sensation*<sup>104</sup>, conscious of grace, is the direct consequence of the sight of divine light.

The substantive ὀπτασία appears also in the symeonian theology with *an ecstatic qualification*<sup>105</sup>.

Those of the divine light are designated, sometimes, as *goodies/ eternal and invisible assets* (τῶν αἰωνίων καὶ ἀοράτων...ἀγαθῶν)<sup>106</sup> by Symeon or as *glory* (δόξα) of God<sup>107</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXII, 40, p. 174/ Ică jr. 3, p. 140. To see and Idem, Hymns, XXX, 360, p. 364.

<sup>99</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXIII, 413, p. 214.

<sup>100</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXIX, 286, p. 334.

<sup>101</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 68, p. 59/ Idem, p. 380.

<sup>102</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 78, p. 63/ Idem, p. 384.

<sup>103</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 101, p. 70/ Idem, p. 389.

<sup>104</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXVI, 19, p. 270.

<sup>105</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 85, p. 66/ Ică jr. 3, p. 386.

<sup>106</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 88, p. 67/ Ibidem. To see and SC 51, Chapters, II, 18, p. 76; III, 50, p. 95; III, 78, p. 104; XXVIII, 213, p. 310; XXX, 357, p. 364.

<sup>107</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 89, p. 67/ Ibidem. To see and SC 51, Chapters, II, 11, p. 74; SC 156, Hymns, I, 151, p. 168; I, 178, p. 170; I, 188, p. 172; II, 89, p. 182; II, 110, p.

Saint Symeon has the extraordinary plastic expressions when he wants to express *his interiorization with God*. For example, who sees God is clothed with God's light like *a bright garment*<sup>108</sup> and that means *the enclothing in Christ*<sup>109</sup>; Christ opens the heavens and He bends together with the Father and the Ghost, showing Himself to whom is believer<sup>110</sup>; he eats and *feeds beautifully* from His sight and unites with Him *going beyond*

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184; VII, 5, p. 208; XI, 88, p. 238; XII, 12, p. 242; XII, 129, p. 254; XII, 138, p. 254; XV, 2, p. 276; XV, 25, p. 278; XV, 59, p. 282; XV, 78, p. 282; XV, 85, p. 284; XV, 53, p. 288; XV, 187, p. 292; SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 20, p. 12; XVI, 31, p. 12; XVII, 34, p. 16; XVIII, 7, p. 74; XVIII, 15, p. 76; SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 10, p. 94; XIX, 57, p. 98; XIX, 149, p. 106; XX, 36, p. 112; XX, 47, p. 114; XXI, 276, p. 152; XXI, 277, p. 152 (glory of the glory: τῆς δόξης δόξαν); XXI, 495, p. 168; XXII, 68, p. 176 (glory of the glory); XXIII, 4, 190 bis, XXIV, 14, p. 228; XXIV, 268, p. 246 (height of the glory: ὕψος δόξης); XXIV, 272, p. 246; XXIV, 368, p. 252; XXV, 35, 36, p. 256; XXV, 66, p. 260; XXVI, 19, p. 270; XXVIII, 187<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 308; XXVIII, 213, p. 310 (the eternal glory: αἰωνίου δόξης); XXIX, 164, p. 326; XXX, 266 (the divine glory), 274, p. 358; XXX, 284-285, p. 360 (the divine glory); XXXI, 49, p. 388; XXXII, 90-91, p. 408 (the divine glory); XXXII, 112, p. 410; XXXV, 52, p. 444; XXXIX, 51 (the divine glory); 57, 63, p. 480. SC 196, Hymns, XLI, 104, p. 18; XLII, 77, p. 42; XLII, 193, p. 52; XLIII, 73, p. 62; XLVII, 46, 54, p. 124; XLVIII, 21, p. 132; XLVIII, 110, p. 138; LVIII, 100, p. 286.

<sup>108</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 90, p. 67/ Ibidem. The image of *the dressing in light as a divine garment* is and SC 156, Hymns, XIII, 7, 256; SC 174, Hymns, XXX, 325-326, p. 362 (dressing in the immaterial garment); SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 63, p. 106 (the bright and divine vestment).

<sup>109</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 8, p. 73/ Idem, p. 392. To see and SC 156, Hymns, XV, 178, p. 292; XV, 214, p. 294; SC 196, Hymns, L, 187-190, p. 170.

<sup>110</sup> SC 156, Hymns, 36-38, p. 234/ Idem, p. 77.

the heavens<sup>111</sup>; our union with God/ the sight of God is *an ineffable and divine wedding* (γάμος)<sup>112</sup> or he calls *the ecstasy* right nourishment from „the bosom of the glory” (τοῦ κόλπουτῆς δόξης)<sup>113</sup> of God.

These examples are just a few eloquent images of the symeonian theological discourse.

But Symeon speaks not only in the antinomic terms of *sight* and *unsight* in his theology, but he speaks and in apophatic mode about the divine sight, showing that „more lighting of His is *an full unsight* (ἀβλεψία)”<sup>114</sup> for man.

Ἀβλεψία represents at Saint Symeon not *a lack of sight*, but *an overwhelmingness of sight*, an uncomprehension of the light by man. Ἀβλεψία must be understood all in the relation with the light received as *gift*, as enworthiness of the sight, in which we see from the divine light as we can *comprehend* at personal level.

Two other characteristics of the sight of the light which we detach from the symeonian theology is that divine light is seen *above the sensation* (ὑπὲρ αἴσθησιν)<sup>115</sup> and that on it we receive

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<sup>111</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIII, 67-68, p. 262.

<sup>112</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 175, p. 292.

<sup>113</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 263, p. 246. To see and SC 196, Hymns, L, 143, p. 166, where *the sight of the light* is depicted as *a feeding* from one *breast* (μαζός).

<sup>114</sup> SC 51, Chapters, II, 2, p. 71 / Icã jr. 3, p. 390.

<sup>115</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 2 \*\*, p. 71; II, 3, p. 72. In SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 395-396, p. 40, Symeon says that the divine light clothed him in *the garment of mind's*

through His Ghost (δία τοῦ Πνεύματος Αὐτοῦ)<sup>116</sup>, of Christ.

We see the light *ghostually*, in other words, not *physically*. In the symeonian theology, the divine sight is not *a falling in the sensuality*, but *a rise*, through the Ghost, at the divine light.

Therefore, in Chapters, II, 8, Symeon speaks about *sight* as about *the climbing* at „the height of the ghostual contemplation” (ὑψος πνευματικῆς θεωρίας)<sup>117</sup>.

*The glory of the Ghost*<sup>118</sup>, which we see in ecstasy, is *the glory of the Lord* (τὴν δόξαν Κυρίου)<sup>119</sup> because it is *the glory of the Trinity*<sup>120</sup>.

Whenever Symeon indicates the glory as being of a divine person, he does not envisage *an exclusive revendication* of it for that divine person. He speaks as and the Scripture, conferring the possession of the divine light when to the one,

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*sensation* (αἰσθήσεως χιτῶνα νοεράς), namely gaved him the capacity *to seize the light with mind*, with a *spiritualised mind*, transparentised by grace.

<sup>116</sup> Idem, Capitole, II, 3, p. 72 / Icã jr. 3, p. 390.

<sup>117</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 8, p. 73 / Idem, p. 392. To see and SC 174, XVII, 339, p. 36.

<sup>118</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 21, p. 86 / Idem, p. 401; SC 156, Hymns, XI, 50, p. 236; SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 53, p. 98 (the grace of the Ghost); XXII, 177, p. 184 (the divine light of the Ghost: φῶς τοῦ Πνεύματος θείου); XXVII, 67, p. 284 (the light comes from the Holy Ghost); XXXIV, 84, p. 434 (the grace of the Ghost); SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 103-104, p. 44 (the light of the Ghost).

<sup>119</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 15, p. 75 / Idem, p. 393.

<sup>120</sup> SC 156, Hymns, II, 91, p. 182; SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 56, p. 98 (the grace of Trinity).

when to the other of persons, he knows that the light is *commune* of the trinitarian persons.

In the research of his theology must never be applied *the principle of discrimination* of the existing theological datas but that *of their corroboration*. Symeon is revealed to us as a fully Father of the Church in the measure in that we are approaching, through experience and sensation of grace, to his ghostual experience and his mystical theology.

Without our *real communion* with God, his theology has no *internal articulation* with us and we cannot generate than extremist, deplorable views, with address at his theology.

And this, for that Symeon speaks about theology as being *a full and mystic learning* (ἐπιγνώσεως)<sup>121</sup> of us by the grace of God<sup>122</sup>, through which we become *teodidacts*<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVIII, 7, p. 74; XXXIV, 82, p. 434 (the exact knowledge: ἐπιγνώσει ἀκριβεί); XL, 95, p. 492.

<sup>122</sup> SC 51, Chapters, II, 15, p. 75/ Ică jr. 3, p. 393. To see and Idem, Chapters, III, 38, p. 91, where the soul that sees God recognizes Him, Who rises him from the dead.

<sup>123</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 84, p. 107/ Idem, p. 418. To see and SC 51, Chapters, III, 85, p. 107. Into an article on theme of the understanding of the scriptural text, Father Professor Constantin Coman stressed „the decisive and indispensable contribution of the Holy Ghost to the act of understanding” of the Scripture, acc. Rev. Prof. D.Th. Constantin Coman, *About the Recourse of the Systematic Studies at Holy Scripture [Despre recursul studiilor sistematice la Sfânta Scriptură]*, rev. *Theological Studies*, Series III, II (2006), no. 2, p. 189.

In this context he assimilates *θεωρία* with *ἀποκάλυψις*<sup>124</sup>. *The revelation is the sight of the light* and those which are seen in light are designated by Symeon as *μυστηρίων*<sup>125</sup>.

Only these *mysteries of light* represent for Symeon *a knowledge of God*<sup>126</sup>. It is observable in the symeonian writing and the recurrence of the derivatives from *φαίνω* (to show/ to reveal)<sup>127</sup>, through which is designated *the divine revelations or the ecstatic sights*.

We find in Chapters, II, 16 a formulation of the theological knowledge

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<sup>124</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 15, p. 75/ Ică jr. 3, p. 393.

In SC 51, Chapters, III, 22, p. 86, Symeon assimilates *revelation* with *contemplation*, but brings into the equation and *knowledge*. He says that God reveals Himself to those worthy and as He is revealed as it is seen by them and *the sight of Him* means *the knowledge of Him*.

In other words, *the sight* means *the theological knowledge* and the knowledge is on measure of *His revelation*, the revelation that is on measure of the intimacy with God of those worthy. What wants to point out Saint Symeon is not the reality of *the restrictive knowledge* of God, but the fact that *the act of the knowledge* is proportional with *our intimacy with God*.

To see and Idem, III, 77, p. 104; SC 174, Hymns, XXV, 43, p. 258; XXVIII, 36, p. 296; XXXV, 4, p. 440; SC 196, Hymns, XLIX, 17, p. 148.

<sup>125</sup> Ibidem / Ibidem.

<sup>126</sup> Ibidem / Ibidem.

<sup>127</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 255, p. 244; XXV, 10, p. 254; XXV, 47<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 258; XXVIII, 36, p. 296; XXVIII, 179, p. 308; XXIX, 90, p. 320; XXXV, 2, p. 440; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 29, p. 104; XLVIII, 108, p. 138; XLVIII, 137, 152, p. 142; L, 31, p. 158; L, 238, p. 174.

as *entrance* in the divine light<sup>128</sup> or in „τῷ βυθῷ τοῦ θείου φωτός” („the depth of the divine light”)<sup>129</sup>, as in II, 17 or as an „φῶς...ἐν Φωτὶ” („light...in Light”), according as he specifies in II, 18<sup>130</sup>.

The knowledge in which we enter through *sight* is *unspeakable* (ἀπορρήτως)<sup>131</sup>. Accepting, alike, the terminology of Sinai and that of Tabor, our Father assimilates and on γνόφος with φωτός<sup>132</sup>, both *the darkness* and *the light* designating *the glory of God*.

And Symeon does not *simplify*, through these assimilations, *the understanding of the ecstasy*, but the understanding of *the ecstatic terminology*. This type of *the synthetic understanding* of the scriptural and patristic terminology is a *constancy* at Saint Symeon.

Another characteristic of the ghostual life, which appears in frequent mode at Saint Symeon, is that, *the salvation* and, in the ultimate instance, *the perfection*, are realities which do not occur in ἀγνώστως mode, *without consciousness* or *unconsciously*, but in γνωστῶς mode, *consciously*<sup>133</sup>.

<sup>128</sup> SC 51, Chapters, II, 16, p. 75 / Ică jr. 3, p. 393.

<sup>129</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 17, p. 75 / Ibidem.

<sup>130</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 18, p. 76 / Idem, p. 394.

<sup>131</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 16, p. 75 / Idem, p. 393.

<sup>132</sup> We refer in this citation at SC 51, Chapters, II, 18, p. 76, where Saint Symeon says that, then when the mind is fully covered by darkness and divine light, it reaches at the sight of God.

<sup>133</sup> SC 51, Chapters, II, 20 \*\*, p. 77 / Ică jr. 3, p. 394.

Therefore, for him, *the feeling of the grace and the sight of God* are absolutely real, conscious, deifying for that they are those which form, in fundamental mode, *the personal holiness*.

For this fact, we encounter often in his writing referings to the interior link between *knowledge* and *the union*, in beingly (οὐσιωδῶς)<sup>134</sup> mode, *with light*.

Desiring to prevent any puerile accusations against God's sight, in Chapters, II, 21 he warns of the capital danger of *bad allegorisation* of Scripture, through which is tangled what must to live *now* an orthodox christian with what must live *in future or in eternity*<sup>135</sup>.

We, as many are *worthy*, we see God, says Saint Symeon, but and God *sees us*<sup>136</sup>. God speaks *in ecstatic mode* with His *friends* and gives them all *to talk about Him*<sup>137</sup>.

Those who *have seen and see* God are *the whole people* (ὅλοκλήροις)<sup>138</sup> and they make part of that χρυσῆ ἄλυσις (gold chain)<sup>139</sup>, uninterrupted, of the Saints.

To see and SC 174, Hymns, XXIX, 168-169, p. 326 (God dwells in Saints in *conscious* [γνωστῶς] and *beingly* [οὐσιωδῶς] mode); XXXIV, 81, p. 435.

<sup>134</sup> SC 196, Hymns, LI, 138, 141, p. 196.

<sup>135</sup> SC 51, Chapters, II, 21, p. 77 / Icã jr. 3, p. 395.

<sup>136</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 24, p. 78 / Idem, p. 396.

To see and SC 156, Hymns, I, 161-162, p. 170; VIII, 1-5, p. 214; SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 17, p. 10; XVIII, 97, p. 82; XXX, 386, p. 366.

<sup>137</sup> Idem, Chapters, II, 24, p. 78 / Idem, p. 396.

<sup>138</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 5, p. 81 / Idem, p. 398.

<sup>139</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 4, p. 81 / Ibidem.

From these cited places, we observe that Symon puts the ecstasy on account of Saints and those who sanctify their life in continuously and, on the other hand, he highlights the fact that the sight of God and the ascetic life full of discernment are those that sanctify us, those that make us, in total mode, of God.

Saint Symeon, regarding *the holiness as conscious personal reality*, uses on *διάστασις* and on *χωρισμός*, for to show *the distance and the interior separation between Saints and the sinful world*<sup>140</sup>.

But this *separation* at Saint Symeon is not dictated by *subjectivism* or *religious intolerance*, but is a *consequence* of the presence of grace in our being, that puts out us from passions and from the transients and moves us at the eternal life.

We must remark the fact, that Symeon speaks about the receiving of the Holy Ghost as about *an cognizant<sup>141</sup> earnest (ἀρραβών)*<sup>142</sup>. Those who *preserve the earnest* are *the inheritors* of the Kingdom.

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<sup>140</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 42, p. 92/ Ică jr. 3, p. 407. To see and SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 397-398, p. 40 (the light *separated him* from those seen). To see the problem of *χωρισμός* and in SC 196, Hymns, 52, 148, p. 210.

<sup>141</sup> Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>142</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 47, p. 94/ Idem, p. 408. To see and Idem, III, 48, 49, 50, p. 94; III, 53, 54, 55, p. 96; SC 156, Hymns, I, 73, p. 162; SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 817, p. 68; XVII, 854, p. 70; XXVIII, 219, p. 312.

For *the uncreated divine grace*<sup>143</sup>, Symeon uses a wide range of entitlings, of which we mention: ἀρραβὼν (earnest), πῦρ (fire)<sup>144</sup>, φῶς (light)<sup>145</sup>, σφραγίς (seal/

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<sup>143</sup> About the divine grace as *uncreated* (ἄκτιστος) to see SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 245, p. 30; XVII, 359, p. 38.

<sup>144</sup> SC 51, Chapters, III, 59<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 97-98; SC 156, Hymns, I, 34, p. 158 (spiritual fire); VI, 1, p. 204; XI, 78, p. 238; XIII, 13, p. 256; SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 325, p. 36; XVII, 832, p. 70 (sweet fire: πῦρ γλυκάζον); XXII, 36, p. 172; XXII, 157, p. 182; XXII, 171, p. 184; XXII, 175, p. 184; XXIV, 20, p. 228; XXIV, 25, p. 228; XXV, 33, p. 256; XXVIII, 157, p. 306; XXX, 1, p. 340 (the divine fire); XXX, 11, p. 340 (Ibidem); XXX, 52, p. 344 (Ibidem); XXX, 81, p. 346 (Ibidem); XXX, 145, p. 350; XXX, 427, p. 368; XXXIII, 127, p. 422; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 35, p. 104.

<sup>145</sup> SC 156, Hymns, I, 72, p. 162; I, 160, p. 170; I, 226, p. 174; II, 6, p. 174; II, 104, p. 184; III, 4, p. 188; IV, 22, p. 202; VII, 5, p. 208; VII, 16, p. 210; VIII, 84, p. 220; IX, 5, p. 224; IX, 32, p. 226; XI, 58, p. 236; XII, 8, p. 242; XII, 47, p. 246; XIII, 1, p. 256; XIII, 60, p. 260; XIV, 61, p. 270; XV, 105, p. 284; SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 31, p. 12; XVII, 35, p. 16; XVII, 67, p. 18; XVII, 237, p. 30; XVIII, 8, p. 74; XVIII, 13<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, p. 74; XVIII, 109, p. 84; XVIII, 120<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 84; XIX, 14, p. 94; XX, 27, p. 112; XX, 205, p. 126; XXI, 1, p. 130; XXI, 2, p. 130; XXI, 7, p. 132; XXI, 9, p. 132; XXI, 104, p. 138; XXI, 162, p. 142; XXI, 297, p. 152; XXII, 11, p. 170; XXII, 19, p. 172; XXII, 159, p. 182; XXII, 174, p. 184; XXII, 177, p. 184; XXII, 202, p. 186; XXIII, 94, p. 194; XXIII, 112, p. 196; XXIII, 113, 116, 117, 118, 133, p. 196; XXIII, 222, p. 202; XXIII, 228, p. 204; XXIII, 464, p. 218; XXIV, 16<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 228; XXIV, 17, 18, 19, p. 228; XXIV, 265, p. 246; XXV, 33, p. 256; XXV, 44, 47<sup>\*\*</sup>, 50, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, p. 258; XXV, 90, p. 262; XXV, 149, p. 266; XXVI, 19, p. 270; XXVI, 96, 100, p. 276; XXVII, 42, 43<sup>\*\*</sup>, p. 282; XXVII, 80, 86, p. 284; XXVII, 129, 136, p. 288; XXVIII, 161, p. 306; XXVIII, 168, p. 308; XXVIII, 190, 206, p. 310; XXVIII, 217, p. 312; XXIX, 203, 204, p. 328; XXIX, 205 (God's light: φῶς Θεοῦ), 211, p. 328; XXX, 243, p. 356; XXX, 304, p. 360; XXX, 313, 314, p. 362; XXX, 428, p. 368; XXXI, 49, p. 388; XXXIII, 26, 31 (light of life), p. 414; XXXIII, 38 (divine light), 40 (unapproachable light), p. 416; XXXIII, 64, p. 418; XXXIII, 127, p. 422; XXXIII, 131 (divine light), 138-139 (Ibidem), 139, 140, p. 422; XXXIII, 141, p. 424; XXXIV, 70, p. 432; XXXIV, 112, p. 436; XXXV, 4, p. 440;

signet)<sup>146</sup>, τὸ κάλλος<sup>147</sup>/ ὠραιότης<sup>148</sup>  
 (beauty), λαμπηδόνα<sup>149</sup>/ λαμπρότης<sup>150</sup>  
 (brightness), ὕδωρ (water)<sup>151</sup>, ἡδονῆς καὶ  
 γλυκασμοῦ τοῦ θείου (pleasure and divine  
 sweetness)<sup>152</sup>, μαργαρίτη πολυτίμω (most

XXXV, 53, p. 444; XXXIX, 2, p. 476; XXXIX, 44, 54, 57  
 (divine light), 62, 63, p. 480; XL, 1, p. 484; XL, 14, 17  
 (simple light), p. 486. SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 88, 103, p.  
 44; XLII, 134, p. 48; XLII, 187, (great light), 192, p. 52;  
 XLIV, 21, p. 72; XLIV, 114, p. 78; XLIV, 243, p. 88; XLIV,  
 373, 374, p. 96; XLV, 5, p. 102; XLV, 32, p. 104; XLV, 97,  
 106, p. 110; XLVII, 46, p. 124; XLVIII, 20, p. 132; XLVIII,  
 139, 152, p. 142; XLIX, 18, 24, 27, p. 148; XLIX, 68, 87, p.  
 152; L, 41, p. 160; L, 238, p. 174; L, 239, p. 178; LI, 1, 8, 9<sup>\*\*</sup>,  
 p. 184; LI, 15, 17, p. 186; LII, 5, 6, p. 198; LIII, 10, p. 212;  
 LV, 6, p. 252; LV, 116, p. 262; LV, 192, p. 268; LV, 200, p.  
 270.

<sup>146</sup> Idem, Hymns, I, 73, p. 162; SC 174, Hymns,  
 XVII, 819, p. 68; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 88, 103, p. 44;  
 XLII, 134, p. 48; XLII, 187, p. 52 (great light).

<sup>147</sup> Idem, Hymns, II, 18, p. 178; XV, 14, p. 278; XV,  
 79, p. 282; XV, 153, p. 288; SC 174, Hymns, XXI, 170, p.  
 142 (divine beauty); XXIII, 501, p. 220; XXIV, 7, p. 226;  
 XXIV, 29, p. 228; XXIV, 246, p. 244; XXV, 2, p. 254;  
 XXV, 71, p. 260; XXVII, 118, p. 288; XXX, 196, p. 354;  
 XXX, 375, p. 366; XXXI, 3, p. 384; XXXIX, 1, p. 476; SC  
 196, Hymns, XLII, 76, p. 42; XLVII, 49, p. 124; XLVIII,  
 152, p. 142; XLIX, 29, p. 148; LII, 10, p. 198.

<sup>148</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 250, p. 244.

<sup>149</sup> SC 156, Hymns, II, 18, p. 178; SC 174, Hymns,  
 XX, 11, p. 110; XXX, 571, p. 378; XXX, 586-587, p. 380  
 (divine shinings); XXXI, 49, p. 388; SC 196, Hymns,  
 XLIII, 16, p. 56.

<sup>150</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 270, p. 246.

<sup>151</sup> Idem, Hymns, VI, 2, p. 204; SC 174, Hymns,  
 XVII, 523; p. 50; XVII, 831, p. 70; XXIV, 20, p. 228; SC  
 196, Hymns, XLV, 35, p. 104; XLVIII, 22, p. 132; L, 39, p.  
 158.

<sup>152</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 30, p. 12; XXI, 163, p. 142  
 (divine sweetness); XXIV, 15, p. 228; XXV, 86, 260  
 (divine sweetness); XXVIII, 143, p. 306 (divine  
 sweetness); XXVIII, 218, p. 312; SC 196, Hymns, L, 146, p.  
 166.

precious pearl)<sup>153</sup>; συνάπεως τῷ κόκκῳ (grain of mustard)<sup>154</sup>, ζυμίτης (yeast)<sup>155</sup>, ἱμάτιος<sup>156</sup> / ἔνδυμα<sup>157</sup> / περιβόλιος<sup>158</sup> (garment/ vestment), τροφή (food)<sup>159</sup>, πόσις (drink)<sup>160</sup>, δύναμις<sup>161</sup> / κράτος<sup>162</sup> (power/ strength), ἀστήρ ἀειλαμπῆς (ever bright star)<sup>163</sup>, ὄσμην ἀθανασίας (scent of immortality)<sup>164</sup>, φλόξ (flame)<sup>165</sup>, μεγαλωσύνη (greatness)<sup>166</sup>, τρυφή (delight)<sup>167</sup>, χαρά (happiness)<sup>168</sup>, θησαυρός (treasure)<sup>169</sup>, πηγῆ

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<sup>153</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVII, 539, p. 50; XVII, 540, p. 50; XVII, 573, p. 52; XVII, 620, p. 56; XVII, 650, p. 58; XVII, 701, p. 60; XVII, 825, p. 68; XX, 206, p. 126; XXX, 409, p. 374; XXX, 539, p. 376; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 86, p. 44.

<sup>154</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVII, 760, p. 64; XVII, 766, p. 66; XVII, 773-774, p. 66; XVII, 791, p. 66; XVII, 828, p. 70; XXVIII, 93, p. 300; XXVIII, 107, p. 302; XXX, 500, p. 374; XXX, 540, p. 376.

<sup>155</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVII, 829, p. 70.

<sup>156</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVII, 833, p. 70.

<sup>157</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 33, p. 104.

<sup>158</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>159</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 834, p. 70; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 32, p. 104; L, 149, p. 168.

<sup>160</sup> Ibidem; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 32, p. 104.

<sup>161</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVIII, 15, p. 76; XIX, 10, p. 94; XXIX, 164, p. 326.

<sup>162</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXV, 41, p. 258.

<sup>163</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVIII, 18, p. 76; XXII, 5, p. 170; XXII, 150, p. 182; XXII, 169, p. 184; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 85, p. 44; XLV, 38, p. 104 (ever bright star).

<sup>164</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVIII, 158, p. 88.

<sup>165</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVIII, 88, 82 (great flame: φλόξ μεγάλη); XXII, 8, p. 170; XXII, 33, p. 172; XXII, 157, p. 182; XXV, 34, p. 256.

<sup>166</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 10, p. 94.

<sup>167</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 152, p. 106; XL, 93, p. 492; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 37, p. 104.

<sup>168</sup> Ibidem; XXV, 86, p. 260; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 32, p. 104; LIII, 11, 13, p. 212.

<sup>169</sup> Idem, Hymns, XX, 207, p. 126; XXI, 181, p. 144.

(spring)<sup>170</sup>, σπινθήρ (spark)<sup>171</sup>, ἐνέργεια (work)<sup>172</sup>, ἔπαθλον (premium)<sup>173</sup>, ἔλεος (oil)<sup>174</sup>, στέφος (crown)<sup>175</sup>, σταγών (drop)<sup>176</sup>, λαμπάς (torch/ rushlight/ lamp)<sup>177</sup>, εἰρήνη (peace)<sup>178</sup>, ζωή (life)<sup>179</sup>, σκηνή (tent)<sup>180</sup>, θεῖος οἶκος (divine house)<sup>181</sup>, ἀνάστασις (resurrection)<sup>182</sup>, ἀνάπαυσις (rest)<sup>183</sup>, λουτρόν (bathing)<sup>184</sup>, ποταμός (river)<sup>185</sup>, ῥεῖθρον (flow)<sup>186</sup>, ἄρτος (bread)<sup>187</sup>, οἶνος (wine)<sup>188</sup>, πανδαισία (banquet/ feast)<sup>189</sup>, πλοῦτος (richness)<sup>190</sup>, ποτήριον (chalice)<sup>191</sup> etc.

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<sup>170</sup> Idem, Hymns, XX, 208, p. 126; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 35, p. 104 (spring of life: πηγὴ ζωῆς).

<sup>171</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXIII, 273, p. 206; XXX, 501, p. 374 (divine spark); XXX, 537, p. 376 (spark of the divine Nature).

<sup>172</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXVIII, 157, p. 306 (foreign work: ἐνεργείας ξένης).

<sup>173</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXVIII, 220, p. 312 (pl. τὰ ἔπαθλα).

<sup>174</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 36, p. 342; XXX, 41, p. 344.

<sup>175</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 328, p. 362; SC 196, Hymns, L, 138, p. 166 (divine crown); LIII, 16, p. 214.

<sup>176</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 409, p. 374.

<sup>177</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLII, 87, p. 44; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 39, p. 104; L, 31, p. 158.

<sup>178</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 32, p. 104.

<sup>179</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLV, 33, p. 104; LI, 2, p. 184; LIII, 12, p. 212 (eternal life).

<sup>180</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>181</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>182</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLV, 34, p. 104; LI, 2, p. 184.

<sup>183</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>184</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>185</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLV, 35, p. 104; L, 147, p. 166.

<sup>186</sup> Ibidem; L, 148, p. 168.

<sup>187</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLV, 36, p. 104.

<sup>188</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>189</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLV, 37, p. 104.

<sup>190</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLVIII, 109, p. 138; LI, 145, p. 196.

<sup>191</sup> Idem, Hymns, L, 147, p. 166.

An ecstatic symeonian entitling is and τό ὄραμα (sight/ vision)<sup>192</sup>. He calls *the ghostual changes* from his life and his visions right θαυμάστα (wonders)<sup>193</sup>. In Hymns, IV, 45, Symeon says, explicitly, that *to see* means „θαῦμα θαυμάτων” (the wonder of wonders)<sup>194</sup>.

Exists and places where he uses on φανός together with φῶς without as this to mean *something redundant*, but on the contrary an expression even more painful of *the longing for God*<sup>195</sup>.

In the Hymn I, Symeon presents the coming of light in heart as a rising in heart of *a sun* (ἥλιος)<sup>196</sup> or *a sun disk* (δίσκος ἡλίου)<sup>197</sup>.

The two ecstatic entitlings are *fluid* at Symeon, as and *the sight* also, for that

<sup>192</sup> SC 51, Chapters, III, 64, p. 99.

<sup>193</sup> SC 156, Hymns, I, 47, 160. About the sight as θαῦμα, as *wonder*, to see and SC 174, Hymns, XXX, 524, p. 376; SC 196, Hymns, L, 4, p. 156.

<sup>194</sup> Idem, Hymns, IV, 45, p. 194.

<sup>195</sup> Idem, Hymns, VII, 16, p. 210.

<sup>196</sup> Idem, Hymns, I, 39, p. 160 / Ică jr. 3, p. 53.

About *the sight of the light in heart as a sun*, to see places: SC 156, Hymns, VII, 4, p. 208; VIII, 74, p. 220; SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 327, p. 36; XVIII, 17, p. 76 (unsunset sun: ἥλιος ἄδυτος); XXI, 8, p. 132; XXII, 6, p. 170 (great sun: ἥλιος μέγας); XXII, 150, p. 182; XXII, 168, p. 184; XXIII, 233, p. 204; XXIII, 260, 261, p. 206; XXIII, 360, 364, 370, p. 212; XXIII, 388, 398, p. 214; XXV, 10, p. 254 (more than the sun); XXVII, 98, p. 286; XXXIV, 79, p. 434 (great sun); SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 85, p. 44; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 38, p. 104 (unsunset sun); L, 95, p. 164.

<sup>197</sup> Ibidem/ Ibidem. To see and SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 385-387, p. 40, where the light is shown in the middle of heart as a φωστήρ (luminary) but also as *a sun disc*.

they attest the sight of the light *in similarity* with some *bodily* and does not *solidify* the mode of the manifestation of the light in his being.

The light takes diverse forms, according as God wants to show them to *the seer* of His light. Therefore, the light that appears like *a sun*, in the same symeonian fragment, is and φλόξ<sup>198</sup>, *flame* or *tongue of fire*.

In Hymns, 29, 9, the light shows itself to him like *a full moon* (ὀλόφωτον σελήνην)<sup>199</sup> to Saint Symeon, while in 50, 41 as *a spheric light* (φῶς σφαιροειδές)<sup>200</sup>.

The ecstatic symeonian entitlings, with other words, are not all *aprioristic* given, but some touches *the ecstatic events* personally experienced.

Therefore, at Symeon merges *the traditional ecstatic entitlings* with *the ones personally experienced*.

The personal experience is *vital* for salvation, for that the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heavens is *on measure* (τὰ μέτρα) of lightenment and of love which we have<sup>201</sup>.

In Hymns, VIII, 41-42, Saint Symeon expresses in concise mode the fact that *the cleaning manifestation* of the Ghost in

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<sup>198</sup> Idem, Hymns, I, 40, p. 160 / Ibidem. To see and SC 174, Hymns, XX, 238, p. 128; XXVIII, 140, 142, p. 304.

<sup>199</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIX, 9, p. 314.

<sup>200</sup> SC 196, Hymns, L, 41, p. 160.

<sup>201</sup> SC 156, Hymns, I, 149-150, p. 168 / Idem, p. 55.

our being is *on measure* of cleaning and of personal lightenment<sup>202</sup>.

The assimilation of *light* with *the glory*, ie of φῶς with δόξα<sup>203</sup>, is pretty evident at him: „τοῦ φωτὸς ἡ δόξα” (glory of the light)<sup>204</sup>; „φῶς ἀθανασίας” (light of immortality)<sup>205</sup>; „φωτὶ τῆς θείας δόξης” (the light of divine glory)<sup>206</sup>; „αἴγλην ἀθανασίας” (sparkle immortality)<sup>207</sup>; „τὸ φῶς τῆς χάριτός” (light of grace)<sup>208</sup>; „τὸ φῶς τῆς δόξης” (light of glory)<sup>209</sup>; „δόξαν τὴν ἀθάνατον” (immortal glory)<sup>210</sup>; „δόξης θείας” (divine glory)<sup>211</sup>.

The adjectives and adverbs of the light, and they are very important in our discussion, because they expresse *the light ecstatic seen*, with dogmatic exactitude, as *light of God*: ἀπρόσιτος (unapproachable)<sup>212</sup>, ἀθέατος<sup>213</sup> / ἀόρατος<sup>214</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 41-42, p. 218.

<sup>203</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXVI, 19, p. 270.

<sup>204</sup> SC 156, Hymns, I, 184, p. 172.

<sup>205</sup> Idem, Hymns, II, 89, p. 182.

<sup>206</sup> Idem, Hymns, I, 210, p. 174.

<sup>207</sup> Idem, Hymns, II, 5, p. 176. To see and SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 25, p. 12.

<sup>208</sup> Idem, Hymns, II, 18, p. 178.

<sup>209</sup> Idem, Hymns, VII, 5, p. 208; SC 174, Hymns, XXI, 1, p. 130.

<sup>210</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 93, p. 222.

<sup>211</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVII, 455, p. 44; XVII, 465, p. 46; XVII, 485, p. 46; XXI, 12, p. 132.

<sup>212</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XI, 57, p. 236; XI, 69, p. 238; XIV, 61, p. 270; SC 174, Hymns, XVIII, 13, p.74; XX, 36, p. 112; XX, 44, p. 114; XXI, 2, p. 130; XXI, 276, 297, p. 152; XXII, 36, p. 172; XXII, 161, p. 182; XXVII, 43, p. 282; XXVIII, 206, p. 310; XXXIII, 40, p. 416; SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 76, p. 42; XLIX, 24, p. 148; LV, 117, p. 262.

<sup>213</sup> Idem, Hymns, XI, 56, p. 236; SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 297, p. 248.

(unseen), ἄστεκτος (unbearable)<sup>215</sup>, ἀφράστος<sup>216</sup> / ἀπόρρητος<sup>217</sup> / ἄρρητος<sup>218</sup> / ἀφθεγκτος<sup>219</sup> (unspeakable), ἄχραντος (unblemish)<sup>220</sup>, θείος (divine)<sup>221</sup>, τῆς ἄνω (from above)<sup>222</sup>, πρώτη (prime/ initial/ first)<sup>223</sup>, ἄσβεστος (unextinguished)<sup>224</sup>; γλυκεῖω σφόδρα (very sweet)<sup>225</sup>, ἀσημάτιστος<sup>226</sup> / ἄμορφος<sup>227</sup> (formless/ amorphous), ἀπλοῦς (simple)<sup>228</sup>, ἀσύνητος (uncompounded)<sup>229</sup>, ἀμέριστος (indivisible)<sup>230</sup>, ἀνεξερεύνητος (cannot be

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<sup>214</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXX, 19, p. 342;

<sup>215</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XI, 57, p. 236; XI, 81, p. 238; SC 174, Hymns, XXII, 36, p. 172; XXV, 44, p. 258; XXVIII, 161, p. 306.

<sup>216</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVIII, 120, p. 84; XXIV, 270, p. 246; SC 196, Hymns, XLVIII, 21, p. 132; XLIX, 26, p. 148; L, 146, p. 166.

<sup>217</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXIV, 7, p. 226; XXVIII, 187, p. 308.

<sup>218</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLIII, 73, p. 62; XLIV, 114, p. 78; XLVIII, 20, p. 132; XLIX, 27, p. 148; L, 39, p. 158.

<sup>219</sup> Idem, Hymns, LII, 6, p. 198.

<sup>220</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 14, p. 94; XXV, 149, p. 266; SC 196, Hymns, XLVII, 46, p. 124.

<sup>221</sup> Ibidem; XX, 205, p. 126; XXVII, 65, p. 284; XXVII, 129, 136, p. 288; XXIX, 211, p. 328; XXX, 52, p. 344; XXXIII, 38, p. 416; XXXIII, 131, p. 422; XXXIII, 138, p. 422; XXXIX, 51, 57, p. 480; SC 196, Hymns, XLIV, 243, p. 88; XLVIII, 22, p. 132; L, 41, p. 160; L, 147, p. 166; L, 296, p. 178; LI, 15, p. 186.

<sup>222</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 57, p. 98.

<sup>223</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>224</sup> Idem, Hymns, XX, 205, p. 126; XXX, 23, p. 342.

<sup>225</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVIII, 82, p. 80.

<sup>226</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXII, 159, p. 182.

<sup>227</sup> SC 196, Hymns, L, 42, p. 160.

<sup>228</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXII, 160, p. 182; XXIV, 15, p. 228.

<sup>229</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>230</sup> Ibidem.

investigated)<sup>231</sup>, ληπτός (understood/ comprised/ distinguishable)<sup>232</sup>, ἀκατάληπτος (not understood/ incomprehensible)<sup>233</sup>, τρανός (limpid/ transparent)<sup>234</sup>, ἀληθινός (true)<sup>235</sup> ἄδυτος (unreached)<sup>236</sup>, ἀνεσπέρος (without evening)<sup>237</sup>, ἄκτιστος (un-created)<sup>238</sup>, ἀναρχος (unbeginning)<sup>239</sup>, ἄυλος (immaterial)<sup>240</sup>, ἀναλλοίωτος (unchangeable)<sup>241</sup>, ἀπερίγραπτος (un-circumscribed)<sup>242</sup>, ἀθανατος (immortal)<sup>243</sup>, ἀπερίληπτον πάντη (boundless with all)<sup>244</sup>, ἀνείδεος (faceless/ without image)<sup>245</sup>, ἀφθαρτος (incorruptible)<sup>246</sup>, ἀγήρως (unoldening)<sup>247</sup>, ἀσύγκριτος (incomparable)<sup>248</sup> etc.

In Hymns, XIX, 68, enters in the frame of the theological discussion and

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<sup>231</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXII, 161, p. 182.

<sup>232</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXIII, 234, 238 p. 204; XXIII, 380, p. 212.

<sup>233</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXIV, 296, p. 248.

<sup>234</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXIV, 368, p. 252; XL, 1, p. 484.

<sup>235</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXXIV, 26, p. 428.

<sup>236</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLIV, 373, p. 96.

<sup>237</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXVII, 43, p. 282; SC 196, Hymns, L, 293, p. 178.

<sup>238</sup> Idem, Hymns, 19, p. 342.

<sup>239</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 20, p. 342.

<sup>240</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>241</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 21, p. 342.

<sup>242</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 22, p. 342.

<sup>243</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 23, p. 342; SC 196, Hymns, L, 148, p. 168.

<sup>244</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXX, 24, p. 342.

<sup>245</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>246</sup> SC 196, Hymns, LI, 146, p. 196.

<sup>247</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>248</sup> Idem, Hymns, LII, 6, p. 198.

the verb θεάομαι<sup>249</sup> for *to qualify* the ecstatic sight and in the Hymn 31 we found twice the substantive θέα (vision)<sup>250</sup>.

In the Hymn 34 makes its appearance the substantive πείρα (experience)<sup>251</sup> for to indicate *the divine sight* and in 38, 74 the substantive ἀνατολή (sunrise)<sup>252</sup>. In the Hymn 50, 234 we find πραγματεία (occupation/ quoti-dianness)<sup>253</sup> put in direct link with πείρα and γνωσία.

The light enters in our being and our members become *carrying of light* (φωτοφόρα)<sup>254</sup>. The whole symeonian theology is built around this deifying experience: that of *seeing the divine light*.

From those on which we have presented results that Symeon is *profoundly scriptural* and *traditional* in his ecstatic terminology without being less *innovative*. Symeon's terminological innovations are not *intellectualistic* but *pragmatic* ones. He describes what he saw, the forms under which he had seen

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<sup>249</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 68, p. 98; XXIX, 204, p. 328.

<sup>250</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXI, 2, 3, p. 384.

<sup>251</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 17, p. 428; XXXIV, 48, p. 430; SC 196, Hymns, L, 234, p. 174.

<sup>252</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXVIII, 74, p. 472; SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 34, p. 104.

<sup>253</sup> SC 196, Hymns, L, 234, p. 174.

<sup>254</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVI, 33, p. 12; XIX, 15, p. 94 (λαμπροφόρους).

the divine light and he does not seek to bring in front of his readers the expressions for the sake of expressions.

But, from the descriptions of these very strict, exactness of ghostual experience until at the suspectness of Saint Symeon that he fantasizes on the theme of the divine sight or of the fact that he would propose a *non-traditional mystique is a long and unrealistic path*.

The textual research indicates us the complete orthodox and traditional legitimacy of the symeonian ecstatic terminology, for that he expresses *a personal experienced teaching*, before to be *a humble and full rallying* to the teaching of the previous Church Fathers.

## Triadology

### 2. 2. The Most Holy Trinity in the Personal Ghostual Experience

The symeonian triadology has two major characteristics: is *apologetic*, then when responding of public and personal contestations and *doxological*, personalistic, when not made for the large public, but is integrated into the personal prayers.

But the combative dimension of symeonian triadology has nothing to do with the malicious and the impersonalism of a modern dogmatic treatise, but combines *the living piety*, total and, especially, *attentive*, with *the fidelity* towards *the faith of the Church's Saints*, towards *Tradition*.

In this section, we begin the presentation of *teaching about the Most Holy Trinity* at Saint Symeon, beginning with its *public dimension*, combative, for to conclude with *the personalistic*, interior, as a manifestation of his love towards God.

## 2. 2. 1. The Apologetic Dimension

The three *Theological Discourses* are the apologetic emblem of the symeonian theology. The theological concision unites here with the simple majesty, delicate of the mode to do the ghostual theology.

Therefore, Symeon does not begin the first of his theological discourse with a revolutionary impulse to a theology made by any tyro, but with the indication of the fact that the understanding of God has nothing to do with a soul ἀὐθαδοῦς (stubborn) and full of τολμηρᾶν (audacity)<sup>255</sup>.

He is *sharp*, trenchant, and justly, to those who innovate without *a traditional base* or which repertoires of traditional writings for *to flabbergast* in front of ignorants<sup>256</sup>.

Therefore, we believe that a knowledge of the issues of the symeonian triadology means *a precise understanding* of the theology of glory.

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<sup>255</sup> SC 122, The Theological Discourses, I, 3-4, p. 96/ Ică jr. 1, p. 75. The admonestations of Saint Symeon are not *gratuitous*, but are part of the arsenal of discreditation of those who are *improper* for theology. They specificate the deficiencies of the false *theologians* and they are never *personal attacks*.

To see in this sense Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 172-173, p. 108; I, 273-282, p. 116; I, 332-337, p. 120; I, 403-404, p. 126.

<sup>256</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 4-10, p. 96/ Ică jr. 1, p. 75.

Only if we believe in the trinitarian God about that speaks to us Scripture and the Fathers of the Church, we can experience the sight of God. The triadological stake is capital for understanding the ghostual life, the sight of God and the personal salvation.

The trinitarian problem of the first discourse is to demonstrate the fact that the Father *is not greater* than the Son<sup>257</sup>.

Because only μυσταγωγούμενοι (initiates into *those hidden*, sacred) know the ones that are said by the Ghost<sup>258</sup>, Symeon affirms the fact that the trinitarian persons being *eternal united* (ἀεὶ ἠνωμένα) and *eternal alike* (ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως) it can not exist between them *the anteriority* and *posteriority relations*<sup>259</sup>, and, in definitive, nor any *degree of excellence* of any person before another. If they renounce at the idea of *the degree of excellence* of the Father towards the Son, says Symeon, he can talk about the Father as *the cause* (αἴτιον) of the Trinity<sup>260</sup>. The preexistence (προϋπάρξαν) of the Father towards the Son is radically contested by Symeon<sup>261</sup>.

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<sup>257</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 10, p. 98/ Idem, p. 76.

<sup>258</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 24-25, p. 98/ Ibidem.

<sup>259</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 31-32, p. 98/ Ibidem.

<sup>260</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 43-45, p. 100/ Idem, p. 76-77.

<sup>261</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 49-50, p. 100/ Idem, p. 77.

The Son is together-eternally (συν-αἰδίον) and *together-without-beginning* (συνανάρχον) with the Father<sup>262</sup>. The Father is into the Son and the Son is into the Father in entirety, because Both are *the one-honor* (ὁμοτίμον) and *the one-being* (ὁμοουσίον)<sup>263</sup>.

But, stresses our Father, Symeon, the Father is *the cause* of Son in regarding His incarnation, and the idea of the *gradual*, consecutive apparition of the trinitarian persons has no relation with the Most Holy Trinity<sup>264</sup>.

The idea of *cause* (αἴτιον) in Trinity is not rejected definitively by Symeon, but only *purged* of the idea of *the primacy* and of *the consecution*.

The ineffable and divine birth of the Logos from the Father may be orthodox formulated in sentence: *the cause* of the Son is the Father<sup>265</sup>.

But the fact that the Father is *cause* of the Son does not mean that the Father is *πρῶτον* (first)<sup>266</sup>.

If we introduce *the primacy* of the Father in the Trinity and *the consecution* of the persons of the Trinity, we are only

<sup>262</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 52-53, p. 100/ Ibidem.

<sup>263</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 54-56, p. 100/ Ibidem.

<sup>264</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 64-70, p. 100-102/ Ibidem.

<sup>265</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 72-74, p. 102/ Ibidem.

<sup>266</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 75, p. 102/ Ibidem.

falling into *polytheism*, because we *divide* the Deity in *three gods*<sup>267</sup>. If the Father is *πρῶτον*, continues Saint Symeon, then we have as *δύτερον* the Son and as *τρίτον* the Holy Ghost<sup>268</sup>. The affirmation which he examines (that „the Father is *greater* than the Son”) it discloses in I, 101 as a dogmatization covered of *the tritheism* (*τριθειϊαν*)<sup>269</sup>.

Commenting John. 1, 1, Symeon draws us the attention that the Logos was not known as *Son* than in the frame of the incarnation and that God was not known as *Father* until not revealed to us this thing His incarnate Son<sup>270</sup>.

Triadology is a *post-incarnational revelation* made in the space of *the oikonomia of salvation*<sup>271</sup>. Therefore all what we know about Trinity we have learned from the Son, Who became man. Retaking the discussion about *cause* in Trinity, Symeon affirms the fact, that *the idea of cause* should not be interpreted as a *primacy* of the Father towards the Son or the Ghost.

Although the Father is *αἴτιον*, *the cause* of the Son, He is not *πρῶτον*, *the*

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<sup>267</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 75-77, p. 102/ Ibidem.

<sup>268</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 96-97, p. 104/ Idem, p. 78.

<sup>269</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 100-101, p. 104/ Idem, p. 79.

<sup>270</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 104-106, p. 104/ Ibidem.

<sup>271</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 106-119, p. 104-106/ Ibidem.

*first*. Neither the Son is δεύτερον, *the second*, although He is *from* the Father. Nor the Ghost is *a third*, a *triton*, although He *proceeds from* the Father<sup>272</sup>.

Trinity is *one from the beginning* (ἐν ἔξ ἀρχῆς) and Her existence excludes *any anteriority*<sup>273</sup>.

Symeon believes that is not a *boldness* to analyze those about God, about the trinitarian God into Whom we have been baptized. We must know that God is Trinity<sup>274</sup>, but we do not examine „*how* or *when* or *wherewith* or *how* is Trinity the creator of all”<sup>275</sup>.

Through this Symeon discourages the vainglorious research, haughty of the knowledge of God, which proposes *to inventory* problems that not related by the Holy Tradition, but a gnosticizing speculation of the theological research.

In the second discourse, Symeon draws attention that the triadology does not occupy with *the research of God's being*<sup>276</sup>.

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<sup>272</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 124-126, p. 106/ Ibidem.

<sup>273</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 126-129, p. 106/ Ibidem.

About the problem of *the non-anteriority in Trinity* to see and Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 131-138, p. 106; I, 236-237, p. 114; II, 68-69, p. 134; II, 100-101, p. 138.

<sup>274</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 240-246, p. 114/ Idem, p. 83.

<sup>275</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 246-247, p. 114/ Ibidem.

<sup>276</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 53-55, p. 134/ Idem, p. 92.

The discussion about φύσις (nature) and οὐσία (being) does not have *the revelational covering*. But the discussion about the persons of Trinity can emphasize to us the truth, that the Father „gives birth in the timeless and eternal face to the Son the one-being, Which [Son] in noway doesn't leave Him, and together with Which, together-proceeds and the divine Ghost from the Father the one-being and Which [Ghost] is the one-being with the Son”<sup>277</sup>.

His assertion excludes *any temporalisation* of the persons of the Trinity, any *interval* between *the birth of the Son* from the Father and *the procession of the Holy Ghost* from the Father and shows *the eternal communion* between the trinitarian persons, Which have in common, in perichoretic mode, the same being of the Godhead.

Debating the parallelism between *the image of God in man* and *the Holy Trinity*, Saint Symeon affirms that the Father cannot be without the Son and the Ghost<sup>278</sup>.

For as to confess in orthodox mode about Trinity, says Symeon, we must say that the Father gives birth to the Son but He *did not pre-existed* the Son, that the Son is begotten of the Father but without *to be posterior* to the Father and that the

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<sup>277</sup> Idem, *The Theological Discourses*, II, 81-84, p. 136/ Idem, p. 92-93.

<sup>278</sup> Idem, *The Theological Discourses*, II, 105-108, p. 138/ Idem, p. 93.

Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, but *is together-eternal* and *the one-being* with the Son and with the Father<sup>279</sup>.

The symeonian triadology focuses in the second theological discourse, primarily, on the attestation of *the Trinity's unity*.

Who *denies* a person from Trinity or talks about her in *unrevelational* mode, he abolishes the Trinity<sup>280</sup>. The God Father was made known to us by the Son and His Ghost and those of the Holy Ghost we have learned from the Father and the Son, together-eternal with Him<sup>281</sup>.

All three persons of Deity have one and the same *will*<sup>282</sup>, stresses Symeon. This thing is capital in our relation with Trinity, because we receive *the grace of the Trinity* and see *His glory* and not a *substitute* of His presence.

Our relation with God is *an impartation* of His glory but reality of God's being is *not understood* for all creation<sup>283</sup>.

The God's being is for us ἀπρόσιτον and ἀκατανόητον, *unapproachable* and *not*

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<sup>279</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 108-111, p. 138 / Ibidem.

<sup>280</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 167-170, p. 142 / Idem, p. 95.

<sup>281</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 187-190, p. 144 / Idem, p. 96.

<sup>282</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 205-209, p. 144 / Ibidem.

<sup>283</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 242-246, p. 148 / Idem, p. 98.

*understood*<sup>284</sup>. Therefore, the Holy Scripture says about God only that *He exists* but not and *how is He*<sup>285</sup>.

In the end of the second discourse, Symeon says that, although we *cannot see* the being of God, if we see „the unapproachable glory of His divine light and endless”, we have seen God<sup>286</sup>. The sight of the Trinity’s glory makes us to have on God in us, Who speaks us and introduces us into His mysteries those hidden<sup>287</sup>.

And the third discourse has right center of its problematizations *the unity of the Trinity*, without as Symeon to look the triadology in *a substantialist mode*. But he emphasizes, in preponderant mode, the triadologic details which his opponent has required from him.

Here, Symeon speaks about *the theology of Trinity* as about *a knowledge* in that we were *introduced* by the Ghost and affirms the fact, that the Trinity’s persons are *unmixed* (ἀσυγχύτους) and *undivided* (ἀδιαίρετους) in Their divine, common nature<sup>288</sup>.

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<sup>284</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 250-251, p. 148/ Ibidem.

<sup>285</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 257-259, p. 148/ Ibidem.

<sup>286</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 297-299, p. 152/ Idem, p. 100.

<sup>287</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 300-303, p. 152/ Ibidem.

<sup>288</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 30-33, p. 156/ Idem, p. 102. To see and Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 81-84, p. 160.

As to talk about *God*, we must confess Him to be *in three persons and the one after nature*<sup>289</sup>. The revelation brought by the incarnated Son *essentialized this triadological doctrine*<sup>290</sup>.

Triadology must be received *through faith*<sup>291</sup>, says Simeon. We must keep and confess *only* those who have been *revealed* and we must *not seek to understand* more than that<sup>292</sup>.

We do not know *the being of God*, concludes and the third discourse, but we know that *those around* of God, those that *come from God* and those who *are in God* are *one light*<sup>293</sup>.

In III, 142-157, Symeon puts *the equal sign* between *all nominations* which the Scripture gave of *God's works* that come to us, saying that all are not something else than *the divine light*<sup>294</sup>.

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<sup>289</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 84-85, p. 160/ Idem, p. 103.

<sup>290</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 86-97, p. 160/ Ibidem.

<sup>291</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 130, p. 164/ Idem, p. 105.

<sup>292</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 129-132, p. 162-165/ Idem, p. 104-105.

<sup>293</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 133-135, p. 164/ Idem, p. 105.

<sup>294</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, III, 142-157, p. 164/ Ibidem.

Saint Symeon says here, that life, immortality, the fountain of life, living water, love, peace, the truth, the Kingdom of Heavens, the bridal chamber, the bed, the Paradise, the delight, the land of the meeks, the crowns, the clothes of the Saints, the pearl, the grain of mustard, the true vine, the lump, the hope and the faith are not than *the different expressions of the reality of divine light, of the glory of the Trinity*.

*The light is of the Trinity* and each person of Trinity is *in relation* with us through *the uncreated light* which we see.

The third theological discourse ends in the positive note of *the impartation of light*, as a consequence of the relation of the believer with the trinitarian God.

We found scattered in the three theological discourses and a number of the ascetic qualities for *to be proper* of the light.

Symeon shows in the first Discourse, that triadology is *a medicament* given to us for to not get sick of *atheism* and which must make us *doxological* and not *full of the boldness*, that we can understand *rational* on those *suprarational* of the Trinity<sup>295</sup>.

Reporting *the knowledge of God* at *our faith*, entering thus in the perimeter of the ghostual experience, Symeon shows that God gives us, at all, in His love of people, τὴν περὶ Αὐτοῦ γνῶσιν (those about His knowledge)<sup>296</sup>.

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<sup>295</sup> Idem, *The Theological Discourses*, I, 141-155, p. 106-108/ Idem, p. 80.

About *suprarational* of the triadological dogma to see Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], ed. II, vol. 1, Ed. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1996, p. 199: „The effort towards the understanding of *the single-distinct constitution of reality* helps us ascend to *the suprarational paradox of the perfect unity of the three distinct Persons*, which is represented by *the unity of being of the three divine Persons*”.

<sup>296</sup> SC 122, *The Theological Discourses*, I, 185-196, p. 110/ *Ică jr.* 1, p. 81.

Our Father speaks of a *knowledge of God* being *in relation with Him* and not about a knowledge gained, in exclusive mode, from the *reading* of the theological books. For this reason, he sees *the measure* of our knowledge as being *direct proportional* with *the measure of faith* which we have it<sup>297</sup>. Because he puts at base of the theological knowledge, of γνώσεως, on πίστεως, *the personal faith*.

The faith is the one that receives from God *the knowledge*. And *the knowledge* or *the ghostual experience* consists in the receiving from God of many σημείων (signs), ἀινιγμάτων (enigmas), ἀσόπτρων (mirrors), ἐνεργειῶν (works), θείων ἀποκαλύψεων (divine revelations), ἐλλάμψεων (enlightenments) and in the deepening in θεωρία, in *contemplation*<sup>298</sup>.

But *the certitude* (πληροφορία) of the faith is given by *the coming of the Holy Ghost* (παρουσίας τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος) in our being and more fully enlightenment we have through *the sight of the divine light*, which it is *our teacher* in the mysteries of God<sup>299</sup>. The faith must to follow *the repentance* (μετανοία)<sup>300</sup>. The

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<sup>297</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 189-190, p. 110/ Ibidem.

<sup>298</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 195-198, p. 110/ Ibidem.

<sup>299</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 200-203, p. 110-112/ Idem, p. 82.

<sup>300</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 255, p. 114/ Idem, p. 83.

repentance is what provides us *the knowledge that we are people but and the knowledge of God*<sup>301</sup>.

Repentance destroys *the wall* (τείχος) that *separates us* from God's *light*<sup>302</sup> and therefore its importance is *essential* in the symeonian theology<sup>303</sup>.

The faith and the repentance bring *ghostual knowledge*<sup>304</sup>.

In II, 304-305, Symeon speaks by another *condition* of the glory's sight and namely: „τῆς τῶν ἐντολῶν Αὐτοῦ ἀκριβοῦς φυλακῆς” (*the exact keeping of His commandments*)<sup>305</sup>.

The perspective of *the purification of passions* of the ghostual life is the frame in that Symeon *lives* and *sanctifies* his life. And in this perspective, *the ghostual knowledge* is acquired not studying *the theology or the philosophy from books*, but by *repentance* we understand *the mysteries* (μυστηρίων) *of our faith*<sup>306</sup>.

But Symeon does *not exclude* the theological study (he himself was a man

<sup>301</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 256-257, p. 114/ Ibidem.

<sup>302</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 253, p. 114/ Ibidem.

<sup>303</sup> About *the role of repentance* in the theological knowledge to see and SC 122, The Theological Discourses, I, 273, p. 116; I, 304 -306, p. 118; I, 313-319, p. 120.

<sup>304</sup> SC 122, The Theological Discourses, I, 304-306, p. 118/ Ică jr. 1, p. 85.

<sup>305</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, II, 304-305, p. 152/ Idem, p. 100.

<sup>306</sup> Idem, The Theological Discourses, I, 306-311, p. 118 / Ibidem.

who knew the scripting Tradition of the Church) but he does *not antepune* the theological study to ascesis, for that he considers primordial in the ghostual life *the cleansing of passions*, the way to *the sight of God*. His focalization was on methods to struggle with himself, of the mode in that we do worthy of the sight of God.

It becomes evident the non-discrimination of the theological study by Simeon from the next reference at knowledge. Those who have beautifully repented, he says, to those is revealed *the knowledge of God* contained in *the holy books*<sup>307</sup>.

With other words, we must not to transform theology into *an attribute* of those who are doing very easily with the textual study and with the memorizing of the holy texts of the Church, but must *decipher* the texts of the Tradition with the help of the divine grace, that comes into our ascetic lives<sup>308</sup>. Not *the autonomous mind*<sup>309</sup> must prevails in the

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<sup>307</sup> Idem, *The Theological Discourses*, I, 313-325, p. 120/ Ibidem.

<sup>308</sup> In SC 122, *The Theological Discourses*, I, 380, p. 124, Saint Symeon warns in trenchant mode to the fact, that we cannot *make theology* without *purity*, without *sanctifying our lives* in continuous mode. The purity is *the place where the grace likes to live* and that only *the pure* can see, aided by grace, *the depths* of the holy writings of the Church.

To see and SC 122, *The Theological Discourses*, II, 33-35, p. 132; II, 60-62, p. 134.

<sup>309</sup> About the devastating problems aroused by *the autonomous mind* of man that does not want to

understanding of Tradition's texts, but the mind that is *lightened by grace* and *humble* is what that keeps *the deep meanings of faith* and can *transmits of its* in consciousness of cause.

In conclusion, the symeonian Theological Discourses put before us a *triadology without mystifications* and which guarantees *the energetics relation* between the Trinity and the faithful man.

Symeon does not propose us a *substantialist triadology*, that gives preeminence to *the divine nature* in the detriment of *the trinitarian persons*, who possess, in perichoretic mode, the same divine being, but highlights, in special mode, *the unit of being of the Trinity*, because it was defectious understood in his time.

Therefore, in measure in that we know *the triadological positioning* of Saint Symeon, we cannot suspect of *the idecent pietism* or of *the ailing exacerbation* his relation with God and

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obey God in noway, to see Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Man Without Roots* [*Omul fără rădăcini*], op. cit., p. 11-12: „the modernity transferred *the center of gravity* of the world from God to man, thus that the man feels so *autonomous* in the face of the Divinity, that considers *the will of God* as a kind of *attempt* against his own freedom. In this anthropocentric conception, the man realizes himself by himself, without *God's help*. The sacred is *the principal obstacle* in the way of his freedom, and he does not feel free only in measure in that *eliminates the sacred* from nature”.

we cannot see the his ecstatic experience  
*in outside* of a real relation, personal with  
Trinity.

## 2. 2. 2. The Personalistic Dimension

If in *The Theological Discourses*, Saint Symeon is connected at the living thesaurus of Tradition, presenting the triadological dogma as a *ghostual contemplation*, in *Hymns* we are dealing with *doxological expressions* started from the largest communion with Holy Trinity.

In his prayer, *the trinitarian God* is not a God about Who you talk to others, but with Who you are talking, to Which you adress through the prism of love that links you to Him.

Having the experience of the fact that „the divine light of Trinity is in all”<sup>310</sup> that are in existence, Symeon feels a *direct relation* with God through *the sight of His glory*.

In 11, 36-38, He presents Christ as One who opens the heaven and *bends/ inclins* toward him, together with the Father and the Ghost.

Holy Trinity is known by him as „Φωτὶ τῷ τρισαγίῳ” (threefold-holy Light)<sup>311</sup>, for that is „έν ὄν έν τοῖς Τρισὶ καὶ έν ένι τὰ Τρία” (one in Three and Three are in one)<sup>312</sup>.

The verb παρακύπτω used at 11, 37, with the acceptation *to look out/ in*

<sup>310</sup> SC 156, Hymns, I, 226, p. 174 / Ică jr. 3, p. 57.

<sup>311</sup> Idem, Hymns, XI, 38, p. 234 / Idem, p. 77.

<sup>312</sup> Idem, Hymns, XI, 39, p. 234 / Ibidem.

*outside*<sup>313</sup>, defines *the ecstasy* as an act of mercy of the Trinity to the faithful, descending to him, looking at him.

The Trinity, continues Symeon, is the one Light „that lights my soul more than the sun and shines my mind that is darkish”<sup>314</sup>.

In the first line, the divine light *overwhelms* the mind one who sees (right for that it is *stronger* than the visible sun) but the brightnesses of it illuminates the mind, purifies it. And this *cleansing of the darkness of passions* cannot be made by *the rays of the heavenly star*, but only by *the divine light* ecstatic seen.

Symon emphasizes in this context *the reality of the sight of the divine light* and its ghostual character, overwhelming and paradoxical in the same time, that to be *an initiator* in the knowledge of the Trinity.

Thus, „in the light of the Ghost look those who see, and those who look see in it the Son, and the worthy to see the Son looks the Father [acc. Jn. 14, 9] and who looks to the Father, that one contemplates the Father together with the Son”<sup>315</sup>. In outside of the divine light, with other words, we do not know *in clear*

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<sup>313</sup> Both recent romanian translations of *the Hymns* translate παρακύπτουτα, from SC 156, Hymns, XI, 37, p. 234, wiht: „They *bend/ inclin* [towards him]”, acc. Ică jr. 3, p. 77 și Hymns, ed. Stăniloae, p. 361.

<sup>314</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XI, 41-42, p. 234/ Ică jr. 3, p. 77.

<sup>315</sup> Idem, Hymns, XI, 50-53, p. 236/ Ibidem.

*mode*, from experience, but only *from books*, about *the eternal communion*, interpersonal, of the trinitarian persons, about *the being unity* of the Trinity and about *His the ever-being light* that sanctifies us. *The sight of the Trinity's glory* is what brings *the true knowledge of God* and puts us in an abyssal, paradoxical *relation* with our God.

Just therefore at *τρανεῖ θεωρία* (the limpid/ clear contemplation)<sup>316</sup> reaches few, for that this contemplation is given to the Son, Who is more-before-of-all-ages with the Father and the Ghost<sup>317</sup>.

In the Hymn 15, Symeon specifies the fact, that those receiving the light from the Son are *believers* and they are *not from outside* the Church: „Your glory, [the glory] of the divine Divinity only *believers* (πιστοὶ) see it, while all *unbelievers* (ἄπιστοι) seeing You remain blind, the Light of the world!”<sup>318</sup>.

The faith in the Trinity is what *helps us* not to be blinded by too overwhelming evidence of the divine glory. Christ, says Symeon, ever shines on those who see Him<sup>319</sup>.

But *the scope* of the divine sight is not that *to take us out of the world* and *to separate us from the world* – as and how the world would be *an evil* or would *the devil work* – but to live in paradoxical

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<sup>316</sup> Idem, Hymns, XII, 15, p. 244/ Idem, p. 79.

<sup>317</sup> Idem, Hymns, XII, 15-17, p. 244 / Ibidem.

<sup>318</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 88-90, p. 284/ Idem, 92.

<sup>319</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 96, p. 284/ Ibidem.

mode, both *in the world* and *above the world* and *the our senses*, our relation with Trinity through the sight of His glory.

The Trinity's light *raises us* to the divine sight, which is beyond of *those felt* (τῶν αἰσθητῶν) and of *those seen* (τῶν ὁρωμένων) in this world, for that we want to be, always, *enlightened* by His light and we want to make *immortal* (ἀθανάτους) from *mortals* and *gods* (θεοὶ) who see God<sup>320</sup>.

The Hymn 19 discusses *the energetics presence* of Trinity in our being from *the reality* that should be *quotidian* to us, familiar for every christian in part and namely: from *the feeling of grace* in our being.

Symeon writes: „Who having *the grace of the Ghost* (τὴν χάριν τοῦ Πνεύματος) in heart, he did not receive *the indwelling* in him of *the glorious Trinity*, Which enlightens and makes him god?”<sup>321</sup>.

The *conscious/ aware* presence of the grace in our being, as a direct result of the ecstatic sight, means *the feeling of the inner dwelling* of the Trinity.

Continuing with the assertion, that *the grace* of the Trinity (χάριτι τῆς Τριάδος) is what makes us *gods*<sup>322</sup>, we

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<sup>320</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 103-108, p. 284-286/ Idem, p. 92-93.

<sup>321</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XIX, 53-55, p. 98/ Idem, p. 118.

<sup>322</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 56, p. 98/ Ibidem.

understand very clearly, that Symeon is conscious of *the synergistic act* of deification, stipulating thus *an universal consciousness* of the personal deification process of the orthodox christians.

For that, at Symeon, *the divine sight* has a relational and paradoxical character, because it is, in fact, the simultaneous existence of the Trinity in us by His light and of ours in communion with the Trinity, through *the sight of His glory*.

The reality of the feeling of grace is part from the foundation of *the state of consciousness*, of the very deep awareness of *the personal deification*.

*Gods or Saints* are born into *the consciousness of cause*, they live very mysterious and personal *the deification*, for that they live *the largest interior communion* with *the trinitarian God*.

In Hymns 19, 74, Symeon defines the process of deification right the fact of „to *liturgise* (λειτουργεῖν) [of God] in the purity of heart and into the purity of conscience”<sup>323</sup>.

*Heart* (καρδία) and *conscience* (συνειδήσις) about that Symeon speaks vise *the center of entire being* of the believer, *the abyss* where it takes place *our communion* with God.

The cleaning of our innerness is produced by *the descent* of the grace in us, which is living, permanent irradiation

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<sup>323</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 72, p. 100/ Ibidem.

of the Trinity but God's grace *sanctifying us* and, in the same time, *exceeding all of our and*, through it, the Trinity *draws us to Himself*.

Just therefore Symeon says: „If you have *seen* (ἐθεάσω) Christ, if you have *taken* (ἔλαβες) the Ghost and if you were *brought* (προσηνέχθης) by Both at the Father”<sup>324</sup>, we know the ones he tells us, and we realize that the stance of a *celebrant of the Trinity* is thing „*great and trembling, above all [human] glory, splendor, domination and [transient] power*”<sup>325</sup>.

We observe that for Symeon *the deification is the central occupation of the whole universe* and that it is synonymous with the state of the interior liturgising, of the ministry and the inner most glory of Trinity.

The relation of the faithful man with the Trinity is not only *the most living theological thrill and the most proper narration* of God's presence in creation, but, in the first line, is *a theological life*, a continuous banquet of the ghostual happiness, for which every moment means *a new delight and a discovery* of overwhelming greatness, trembling of the Trinity.

The ghostual knowledge is a celebration, a feast of wonderness of God.

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<sup>324</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 68-69, p. 98-100/ Ibidem.

<sup>325</sup> Idem, Hymns, XIX, 71-72, p. 100/ Idem, p. 119.

The Hymn 21 speaks about *the knowledge* that about our learning by the Trinity, through the divine light: those who see God „have as *didascal/ teacher* (διδάσκαλον) the Ghost, and they do not need to learn from people, but being *the enlightened* (λαμπόμενοι) by His light, look at the Son, seeing the Father and worship the Trinity in persons, of God *united by nature* (ἡνωμένον τῇ φύσει) in unspeakable mode<sup>326</sup>.

It is noted that Symeon emphasizes *the communion* and *the interpersonal relations* at the level of Trinity and, in the same time, stresses the fact that the Ghost leads us through the Son at the Father and thus *introduces us* into the communion with the Trinity.

If in the apologetic side of his triadology emphasizes the problem of *the Trinity's unity*, in the side doxological but, Saint Symeon speaks about *the real communion* of the faithful with the Trinity through the sight of His glory and *the real initiation* of it, through ecstasy, in *the divine life* and love between persons of the Trinity.

Thus, the ghostual knowledge is a *lightenment*, is a *divine revelation* for the believer.

Triadology, according as we understand from the symeonian discourse, is a dogma that *we can*

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<sup>326</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXI, 102-107, p. 138/ Idem, p. 130.

*experience if we live the sight of the divine light.*

It is not only *a veritable expose* of Tradition, but also *a mysterious lighting* and *a divine reality* to which we accede, *an internal cohabitation* with Trinity, because the Trinity dwells in us by Her grace and thus lives up to Himself.

Those who accede, through the Ghost, to the knowledge of the Holy Trinity, they see the glory of God and they don't have the reflex of *the curious seekers*<sup>327</sup> in those mysterious of God. The ghostual experience destroys from swaddle *the tendency for cerebralization* of the Trinity's mystery.

For the ghostual man, the Trinity is not *a distant object of research* and that has *nothing to do* with himself, but is *the source itself* of man's spiritual life, because he lives in *the deep communion* with Trinity.

But in *the communion* with the trinitarian God we enter as *response* at His more-loving initiative to us. And therefore, we not only bring us to Him, but we want to bring *the whole cosmos* to fulfill into God's glory.

For that the matter is a structure with *rational* and *ghostual* foundation and has right sense *the ghostualisation*, its transfiguration, our bodies are made of this matter, through the sight of His glory we personalize and we sanctify in us

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<sup>327</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXI, 495, p. 168/ Idem, p. 138.

the matter of our body and this *irradiance* of divine light extends and to what is around us.

Symeon recognizes those who know, through lightenment, *the dogma* and *the truth* of the Trinity, because they can give *details* about this reality from *the discovery* of the Trinity in their being.

At the beginning of the Hymn 31, praising *Most beautiful Trinity*, our Father affirms *the initiative* of the Trinity in the personal discovery of the faithful and the fact that, in ecstasy, is seen *the beauty* but not *the being* of the Trinity<sup>328</sup>.

The being beyond-being (οὐσία ὑπερούσιος) of God is *unknown* both to Angels and men<sup>329</sup>.

Light of the Trinity but is the reality that *we impart in ecstatic mode* and this is *the subject* that Symeon wanted to *clarify* in his entire opera.

*The reality of the sight and the possibility of the God's sight* by any christian in part is *the quintessence* of the symeonian theology.

The Hymn 33, which has right *the prolegomena* an extended triadological confession, puts *light of Trinity* face in face with *the human reality* made after the image and likeness of God<sup>330</sup>. The first man, like as στρουθίον εὐτελής (the

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<sup>328</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXI, 1- 6, p. 384 / Idem, p. 191.

<sup>329</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXI, 6, p. 384 / Ibidem.

<sup>330</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIII, 1-25, p. 412-414 / Idem, p. 199.

humble sparrow), alias δράκοντα (the serpent) the old and great, fell because they lost the light of the Trinity<sup>331</sup>.

To experience again *the communion with the Trinity*, in Church, is *the consequence* of the sight of the Trinity's light and the feeling of the grace in our being, which gives us to live a paradoxical relation with God, through that the Trinity is *in us through His glory* and we *in the glory of Trinity*, being together with Trinity.

The light's sight is *a irrepressible interior reality* for who lives of it. The light *sparkles* on our soul and body and makes them *shine*<sup>332</sup>.

Of course, our being full of light does not shine a light on *to see it all* (it's here word about *the uncreated light*) but, in the first line, sees the one *who lives it* and other ghostual people, who would see the ecstatic *during his sight*.

He who lived the light sees himself *invaded by light* and in light he sees *the mysteries of God*, what God *wants to reveal* to him.

The consciousness's state of ecstasy and, evident, the awareness and the remembrance of it is marked in the Hymn 34.

The sight of the Trinity's light is a „τὴν ἕνωσιν ἐν γνώσει (union in

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<sup>331</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIII, 25-26, p. 414 / Ibidem.

<sup>332</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIII,141-142, p. 424 / Idem, p. 202.

understanding/ in state of consciousness),...ἐν αἰσθήσει (in sensation),...πέιρα (experience) καὶ ὄρασι (and sight)”<sup>333</sup>.

All four members of the symeonian statement catalogs the ecstatic’s sight right *a total experience* and *a direct link* with the glory of the Trinity.

The sight of God is a vision without *a external mediation*, namely is not produced *with the aid* of a heavenly Power, but is *a direct view* of the glory of God, through the work of the Holy Ghost.

The glory of God reveals us those of the Trinity, because we find „the grace of the Ghost, and through Him and in Him [we see] the Son together with the Father. And [the soul] will see [the glory of the Trinity], as it is able (δυνατὸν) to look at it.

And thus, through Them and from Them, it will learn in face of unspeakable and it will speak and it will write all to all and they will make teachings *on measure of God* (θεοπρεπῆ), alike with the teachings of all the previously Holy Fathers”<sup>334</sup>.

Symeon, in accord with this passage, is observed that he sees *the didascalical initiative*, but and *the writing* and *the editing of the theological books*, as the *post-ecstatic achievements* at that we are *pushed* to the Trinity Herself and that

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<sup>333</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 16-17, p. 428/ Idem, p. 203.

<sup>334</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 84- 90, p. 434/ Idem, p. 205.

this books have *the endorsement* of the earlier patristic books.

The patristic writing, with other words, is not *an inventory of the theological data* on base a predetermined chronology, but is a reality that keeps *the man who divinizes himself* and it will be *write and edit* until the second coming of the Lord.

*The personal measure* determines *the understanding* concerning of those of the God's light and *differences gradually* on *the seers to God*. This does not means then, that there are *the special lights* for each Saint in part, but everyone imparts the unapproachable light of God on his measure.

The impartation by the Holy Ghost, by glory, is for Symeon *the indication* that someone is *a Holy man*<sup>335</sup>. This state of *παρρησία*, *the boldness to God*, translates, in fact, the reality of *the communion with God*.

We have *boldness to God* not if we are without grace, the good deeds and the sight of God and we hide behind a personal experience that is only *the linguistic type* and *not factual*, but only if God revealed to us and He continuously discovers Himself to us, if we feel that He *lightens always* and if we feel *un-interrupted* His grace in our being.

The presence of Trinity in us through Her glory, of the grace of Trinity

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<sup>335</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 96-97, p. 434/ Ibidem.

that *embraces* and, in the same time, *exceeds all*, is what that *guarantees our theology* and *supports our state of παρρησίαν*.

Symeon knew this thing entirely, for that his theology was *one with his experience*, was *on measure* of his ecstatic experience.

But, how his experience was *the result* of real communion with God, he does not speak anywhere in his opera about *the states subjectivist* or *fantastical of the spirit*, but about *a sensation* and a *paradoxical ghostual experience* of communion with the Trinity through *the sight of His glory*.

The addressability the most proper of Symeon to the Trinity is retrieve in *the nomination of God* right Φιλοκτίρμος (Lover of mercifulness)<sup>336</sup>.

The mercifulness of God is manifested in his life as crossing over all his sins, for to fill his heart with the brightness of His glory<sup>337</sup>. For this *the unspeakable mercifulness* he is *archi-thankful*, because he knows very sure, that only the mercifulness of Trinity *filled* him with so much grace and not *his good works*.

And we observe enough limpid, how the Hymns 44 and 45 begin *in doxological mode* concerning to Trinity, for to

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<sup>336</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLV, 1, p. 102/ Idem, p. 244.

<sup>337</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLV, 1-3, p. 102/ Ibidem.

transform in *the highlights very condensed* of the triadological dogma.

Prevails the happiness, the gratitude, the thanksgiving for the graces poured into his being by the Mostpure Trinity and these transform, suddenly, into *a concise theology* of the reality of *the trinitarian persons* and of *the eternal relations* between them.

Symeon emphasizes the God's desire to have a faithful with a *δουλείαν γνησίαν*, with a real, true service<sup>338</sup>. They are the ones who *get in their heart* on the Father, on the Son and on the Holy Ghost *in face conscious*, in their being, on the Trinity who *lives* (οἰκοῦντα) and *walks* (ἐμπεριπατοῦντα) together with them<sup>339</sup>.

Of fact, the fulminant Hymn 58 requires nothing else, than *the real presence of God* in every orthodox, who is *baptized christianly* in the Church of God.

As was able to ascertain, Saint Symeon speaks with boldness with the Trinity, because He is *the God of his love*, of his heart, for that he has *a real communion* and *paradoxical* with God.

He is the doxological and very grateful to Her, he feels *unworthy for the gifts* of Her but, in the same time, he feels and follows *which teaches* the Trinity.

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<sup>338</sup> Idem, Hymns, LVIII, 209, p. 294/ Idem, p. 295.

<sup>339</sup> Idem, Hymns, LVIII, 205-208, p. 292-294/ Idem, p. 294-295.

He speaks as *a servant* of the Trinity's love, as *a friend* of the Lord, as *a theodidact*, who made from his life *theology* and from theology one of *the most encouraging invitation* at the personal experience of the God's presence.

Any *alignment* of his with *the extremism*, with *the psychic unbalance* or with *the phraseological theology* comes only from people who have *not experienced the faith as a way to sight*, but as *a historical form* of the epistemologization and the repertoire of the Church's Tradition.

## Christology

### 2. 3. The Sight of the Christ's Glory and the Path of Deification

We could tell from the beginning, anterior of the laborious textual analysis, that *the relation* of Saint Symeon with Christ is *the central theme* of his theology, of where pass on, in abrupt mode, to the theology of glory. This thing becomes evident even if we do only a *frugal reading* of his work.

The person of Christ is one that *absorbs* the full attention of Symeon and Symeon speaks with Christ and about Him, seeing Him both *personally*, in his being, but, in the same time, and *objectively*, as the Pantocrator, the one *Who keeps all* and is *the interior foundation* of all creation visible and invisible.

*The personal reporting* and, in the same time, *objective*, realistic of Symeon at *the person of Christ* is the deepest experience and knowledge of his life.

This thing we want *to emphasize* from good beginning, for that not to be considered *the communion of Symeon with Christ* right a reality of the domain of *the strict subjectivity*, which has nothing to do with Christ as *the real person*, objective, Who is *the Head of the*

*Church and the Almighty, the Pantocrator of the entire existence.*

*The centrality of the Christ's person in the theology of Saint Symeon does not start from the fact that our Father has an exclusive initiation, of the textual type in the christology of the Scripture and of the anterior Fathers, but because Symeon saw the glory and the beauty of Christ in ecstatic mode.*

*The Christ of Symeon is the Christ of the Church, Who is above all, but He is the Lord of his life in the same time, with Who he is in communion, until he no longer live, but Christ lived in Symeon.*

We present in this section *the mystical oikonomia of Christ*, about Who Symeon speaks to us, the continuous miracle that happens with those who deify themselves and, in the frame which, each relives, in personal mode, *the whole oikonomia of salvation* experienced by Christ in His humanity.

## 2. 3. 1. The Birth of Christ in the Personal Experience

The Ethical Discourse 5 attacks *a thorny problem* for every generation of believers and theologians, who poste regarding the Sacraments and the mystical experience on the field of the personal *unconnection*, by grace, at *the God's life*.

Saint Symeon discusses here *the false orthodox attitude* of those who say, that they have the Ghost of God in *unknown/ unconscious* (ἀγνώστως)<sup>340</sup> face, Whom they received from their Baptism, but that they have no *an interior evidence* of His by *sight* (θεωρία) and *revelation* (ἀποκαλύψει), but received Him and keep Him in them only by *faith* (πίστει) and *thought* (λογισμῶ)<sup>341</sup>, ie through an interior attitude that does *not touch at all* the ecstatic experience of the glory.

Symeon dismantled step by step the affirmations of his opponents, that, after how is observed, they had *an intellectualist relation* and not *a graceal one* with God.

Commenting on Gal. 3, 27 (the verse from which Symeon begins his theological contraoffensive), our Father says that Christ, the One with that *we dress us in*

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<sup>340</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, V, 1, p. 78/ Ică jr. 1, p. 247.

<sup>341</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, V, 2-13, p. 78-80/ Idem, p. 247-248.

*Baptism* (a real, mysterious dressing), being *the true God* and *the true man*, came to make man god through His divinity<sup>342</sup>.

*Our deification*, emphasizes Symeon, is produced by *the deified body* (διὰ τῆς θεωθείσης ζωοποιεῖ) of Christ and through this we do not know Christ as *man*, but as *perfect God* known in *two natures*<sup>343</sup>.

The deification (θεοποίησις) of man is a *reality for all ages*, for that Christ divinizes us „through *His divinity* and not just through *His body*”<sup>344</sup>.

According to the christological dogma, where the person of Christ is *not divided* because of *the two natures* of His hypostasis<sup>345</sup>, Symeon punctuate without right at appeal, that we have clothed in Baptism with God, with Christ God and that the dressing with God *was felt* by our being<sup>346</sup>.

If we say that *the dressing with God* is a *metaphor*, resulting by the symeonian syllogism, that Holy Baptism is not a *Holy Mystery*, but a *symbol*. Those who do not feel that *Christ is in them*, although they were baptized orthodox,

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<sup>342</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 14-35, p. 80-82/ Idem, p. 248.

<sup>343</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 38-41, p. 82/ Idem, p. 249.

<sup>344</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 58-59, p. 84/ Ibidem.

<sup>345</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 59, p. 84/ Ibidem.

<sup>346</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 59-68, p. 84/ Ibidem.

are for Symeon νεκροὶ καὶ γυμνοὶ, namely: *dead and naked*<sup>347</sup>.

*The dressing in Christ* is for Symeon *the first part* of the equation of *our ghostual birth*.

Binding to the famous pneumatological text from I Thess. 5, 19, Simeon says that the address of this verse are those who have λαμπάδαν, the candle/ the torch<sup>348</sup>, that „καιομένης καὶ ἀστράπτου ἐχούσης τὸ φῶς” (burns and has a bright light)<sup>349</sup>.

Translating the expression into the next phrase, Symeon says that the pauline verse is *an encouragement* for those who *see in themselves* the Ghost, which burns and gives light to them<sup>350</sup>, and not *a moral exhortation* without coverage in our being or a reference to an inner reality, that is only *a mental projection*. But his opponents consider *the theological confession* of Symeon right *a blasphemy*, because, in their conception based on Jn. 1, 18, God is *unseen* to the faithful<sup>351</sup>.

The symeonian citations lead to a *contrary result*, reaching to the

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<sup>347</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 72-73, p. 84/ Idem, p. 250.

<sup>348</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 78, p. 84/ Ibidem.

<sup>349</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 80, p. 86/ Ibidem.

<sup>350</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 82-83, p. 86/ Ibidem.

<sup>351</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, V, 83-90, p. 86/ Ibidem.

conclusion that the Gospels speak about *the sight of God* and the sight of God is *on the measure of power* (δυνατὸν) *of man to see Him*<sup>352</sup>.

Proper with Mt. 5, 8, Acts 5, 4, Jn. 14, 21 and I Jn. 4, 20, Symeon shows that where is *the purity* and *the exactness keeping* of the commandments, there is and *the sight of God*, of where comes *the perfect love*<sup>353</sup>.

For that we will have a section where we will analyze the relation between Baptism and ecstasy, where we will achieve the distinction – more evident at Symeon – of what we receive in Baptism and what we receive in ecstasy, we will remain in the sequence of our work only to substantiate *the ghostual reality of our birth in Christ*. In the Ethical Discourse 8, taking into account the *indwelling in us* of Christ and of the Ghost, of the Trinity at Baptism, Symeon presents our ghostual birth conscious, produced by a δρόσος οὐράνιος (*heavenly dew*)<sup>354</sup>, ie of the love of God united with *an ineffable light* (ἀρρήτῳ φωτὶ), that is falling in spiritual face, alike *a lightning* in our hearts and becomes *a beautiful pearl*<sup>355</sup>.

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<sup>352</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, V, 106-107, p. 86/ Idem, p. 251.

<sup>353</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, V, 108-135, p. 86-88/ Ibidem.

<sup>354</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, VIII, 79, p. 206/ Idem, p. 301.

<sup>355</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, VIII, 79-82, p. 206-208/ Ibidem.

The pearl of God's love will grow in us daily, by renunciation of ourselves and by fulfillment of the commandments, so that it will become *a miracle of miracles* (θαῦμα θαυμάτων)<sup>356</sup>.

In *the allegory of the prisoner*, where Symeon shows the *difference in degree* between *ecstasy* and *the indwelling* in Kingdom of God, he states that *the ecstasy*, „this *rapture of mind* (ἄρπαγή τοῦ νοῦς) is not of *the perfects* (τελείων) but of *the beginners* (ἀρχαρίων)“<sup>357</sup>.

*The output at light* (from the prison of *the God's unsight*) or *the sight of the first ecstasy* means *the first making contact* with the glory of God.

But *to see the light* is not *perfection* but *the beginning of perfection*, because *perfection* means sitting unceasing in God's glory.

Just therefore, Symeon speaks about the enlargement of *the opening* in this allegory, of ὀπήν, about the increasing of light that begins to see it someone who purifies of passions, situation in that „*the growing habit* (ἡ συνήθεια) with the light's sight *erases that small wonder*“<sup>358</sup> of *the initial ecstasy*.

*The ghostual growth* presupposes *the experimental understanding* of the

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<sup>356</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, VIII, 82-92, p. 208/ Idem, p. 301-302.

<sup>357</sup> SC 122, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 12, 338-339, p. 296/ Idem, p. 160.

<sup>358</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 12, 365-369, p. 298/ Idem, p. 161.

fact, that „there is something else *more perfect* and *higher* than *the state* (καταστάσεως) and this *sight* (θεωρίας)<sup>359</sup>, than *the first ecstasy* that we've had.

The sight of light ever more increases our inner *repulsion* towards the dark *prison* (τὴν φυλακὴν) of the mind, which does not see the light and, in this situation, we support with great heaviness the conviviality with our deprivation of His glory<sup>360</sup>.

But *the first ecstasy* that we had is *the foundation* of ghostual life, is *the beginning* of the spiritual life, as personal relation, conscious with God. In the absence of ecstasy, any auto-entitling as *ghostual man* or *charismatic father* is a *fictionalisation* of our own interiority and an *insolent* and *disgusting personal affirmation*, in the face of those *who know*, in authentic mode, these *divine realities*.

Just therefore Symeon called the first ecstasy „*a beginning* of those what are introducing in piety and that *now* (ἄρτι) were stripped (ἀποδυσσάμενων) for the struggles of the virtue”<sup>361</sup>.

The adverb ἄρτι, which uses it Symeon in the phrase cited above, translates, without equivoque in

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<sup>359</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 375-377, p. 300/ Ibidem.

<sup>360</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 413-415, p. 302/ Idem, p. 162.

<sup>361</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 416-417, p. 302/ Ibidem.

romanian language, with: *right now, just now*.

Symeon used it intentionally in phrase, because, in our opinion, he wanted to indicate *the concomitance between the incipient purification of passions and the ecstatic sight*.

When we get *in real mode*, and not *imagined*, to cleanse us from passions in *some degree*, we come to see the light of God, as a *fast ecstasy*, unexpected.

Our erminia is not *an enforcement* of the symeonian text. Because Saint Symeon continues by saying, that after this θεωρία, after *our ghostual birth into consciousness* (for that we to be *proper* to the symeonian style) follows „[long] years without *return* (ἀνεπιστροφήως) at that sight”<sup>362</sup>.

The long search, with longing, with far more discerning and ascesis of the light seen at the beginning of our ghostual life, is *rewarded* – says Symeon in same context – by the sight *and more* of the light and of the mysteries which it brings in us, to the point where that we *accustome* with the divine light and we live *the coexistence* (συνών) of it<sup>363</sup>.

But until *the continuous coexistence* with light from this life, there must be *the first sheen/ brightness* of the light in our

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<sup>362</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 418, p. 302/ Ibidem.

<sup>363</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 418-426, p. 302/ Idem, p. 162-163.

being. It must be therefore, *the birth into consciousness* through Trinity's glory.

In the Ethical Discourse 1, 10, the reality of *our ghostual birth* or *of Christ in us* becomes *a conception of Christ* by ourselves.

Says Symeon, that we do not conceive Him „*physically*, like how to wear (συνέλαβεν) the Virgin and the Mother of God, but *ghostually* (πνευματικῶς) and *beingly* (οὐσιωδῶς)”<sup>364</sup> on Christ.

The conception of Christ has place *in our heart*<sup>365</sup>, but, according to II Cor. 4, 7, we have in us and *the treasure* (θησαυρὸν), ie on *the Holy Ghost*<sup>366</sup>.

Making this new *augmentation* at the reality of the God's presence in us, Symeon asks us to think at *the presence of the Trinity in us* and not at a Christ separated from the Trinity.

Then when we hear to talk about *Christ in us*, says Simeon, we must understand that together with Christ is in us and the Ghost, but and the Father, because *Holy Trinity* is *consubstantial* (ὁμοούσιον) and *inseparable* (ἀχώριστον)<sup>367</sup>. The conception of Christ in our heart

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<sup>364</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 17-19, p. 252/ Idem, p. 143.

<sup>365</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 20, p. 254/ Ibidem.

<sup>366</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 27, p. 254/ Idem, p. 144.

<sup>367</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 29-38, p. 254/ Ibidem.

makes, but through *the faith from all the heart* in Holy Trinity, through a *total faith* and through *an ardent repentance*<sup>368</sup>.

Faith and repentance make from our souls some *παρθένους δηλαδή* (*virgins clean*) and in such souls appears *the dew from heaven*, the fountain with water of immortal life, the divine fire, ie *the presence in us* of the Holy Trinity<sup>369</sup>.

*The beginning of the real and of conscious ghostual life*, in conclusion, is *the sight of the God's glory* and filled us by *the Trinity's grace*.

Symeon emphasizes *the impossibility* of existence of a relation with God without *the overwhelming awareness* of it and he presents *the beginning of our deification* as *an act of the Trinity* and as *a feeling of the Trinity's energy* in ourselves.

Christ is together with the Father and with the Spirit in our being and this means *the energetics presence of God* in us. But the presence of Christ in us does not make Him our *prisoner*, for that He is *above* us. Or just for that He is *above all*, He comes and He is born in us, that we raise ourselves to Him.

The ghostual realism which it *disengage* the symeonian theology is

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<sup>368</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 39-40, p. 254/ Ibidem.

<sup>369</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 42-51, p. 254-256/ Ibidem.

bound, in fundamental mode, to *the divine reality of the grace* and of *the ecstatic contact*, directly with God<sup>370</sup>.

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<sup>370</sup> Mr. Dorin Ielciu, into *an evaluated article at the life and the mystique of Saint Symeon*, he score very well both *the presence of Christ* in the life of Symeon and *the awareness* of this divine presence of Christ in him: „The mind becomes *bright* as Christ, because no is separated from Him, but through it working, irradiating, thinks Christ, though Symeon knows himself, for he felt with *Christ's mind* as *his mind*”, acc. Dorin Ielciu, *The Saint Symeon the New Theologian – Byzantine Mystic*, in rev. *The Orthodox Faith III* (1998), no. 1-2, p. 147.

## 2. 3. 2. The Death and the Resurrection of Christ in the Personal Experience

In the Catechesis 13, Saint Symeon discusses these realities *in concise mode* and *programed*. He wants to show to the monks under his leadership *in what consists* the mystery of Christ's Resurrection in our being<sup>371</sup>.

This ἀναστάσεων, *the resurrection of Christ* has place only in those who desire it, says Symeon, in those who strive to have it, to live and it happens constantly, *in mystic face* (μυστικῶς) in them<sup>372</sup>.

Christ, Whom we received in Baptism and Whom we awared in us, through the sight of the divine light, in our first ecstasy, is *buried* (θάπτεται) in us as into *a tomb* (ἐν μνήματι), says Symeon, and *raised* (ἐξανίσταται), united being with our souls<sup>373</sup>.

But to get to the death and resurrection of Christ in us, we must participate at *the His Passions* (τῶν Παθημάτων).

Participation at the Lord's suffering is done through *exiting from world* and

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<sup>371</sup> SC 104, The Catecheses, XIII, 35-36, p. 192/ Ică jr. 2, p. 173.

<sup>372</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 36-37, p. 192/ Ibidem.

<sup>373</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 38-39, p. 192/ Ibidem.

*entering in the tomb* of repentance and humility. We must *to wait* in this tomb our resurrection, for that only here is going *the true ghostual resurrection*<sup>374</sup>.

Our resurrection is a resurrection together *with Christ* (σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ)<sup>375</sup>.

This resurrection is *real* and not *phraseological* for Symeon, for that the one who raised with Christ, together with Him, from the tomb of repentance, sees yet now *the glory of His mystical resurrection* (τὴν δόξαν τῆς μυστικῆς Αὐτοῦ ἀναστάσεως)<sup>376</sup>.

In the catechesis which we are discussing, we don't have than a confirmation of the fact that *the birth, the death and the resurrection of Christ in us* is all one with *the sight of the divine light* and that *the repentance and the faith*, our entire effort for to be *proper* to God are *the sufferings of Christ in us, the together-passion with Christ*, for as we resurrect into Him and we see the glory of His divine-human person.

For to be understood properly by his audience, Symeon states that *the Christ's resurrection* which he speaks about is, in fact, *our resurrection*<sup>377</sup>. But this *resurrection and glory* of Christ shown in us

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<sup>374</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 48-50, p. 194/ Ibidem.

<sup>375</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 54, p. 194/ Ibidem.

<sup>376</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 54-55, p. 194/ Ibidem.

<sup>377</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 56-57, p. 194/ Ibidem.

through *the resurrection of Christ in us*<sup>378</sup>, through this *ecstatic consciousness sight*.

Our resurrection is the resurrection of our souls<sup>379</sup>. And the resurrection is an *ένωσίς*, a union of our with the life<sup>380</sup>.

The soul, states Symeon, our soul dead cannot rise by itself from his ghostual death, from his passions, if it is „not connecting in unspeakable face and unmixed with God, Who is *the eternal life*”<sup>381</sup>.

For as we raise together with the Lord, we must have a union with Him in consciousness (*έν γνώσει*), sight (*όράσει*) and sensation (*αίσθήσει*)<sup>382</sup>.

All three *calificatives* of the vision, which are proposed to us for understanding, in the symeonian affirmation, shows the fact that *the union* with God is real and is personal awared, it is partial understood, is ecstatic and, in the same time, is *repercussed* both in the soul and the body of those who live it.

The soul does not live the divine sight, the presence of the divine light in distancing from the body, but the body

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<sup>378</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 61-64, p. 194/ Ibidem.

<sup>379</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 65, p. 194/ Ibidem.

<sup>380</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 65-66, p. 194/ Ibidem.

<sup>381</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 69-70, p. 196/ Idem, p. 174.

<sup>382</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 70-71, p. 196/ Ibidem.

*participates* at the reality of the divine grace.

Without *the union* with the Lord, without this *ecstatic union*, Symeon affirms – and on good righteousness – that the soul is *dead* (νεκρά), although it is νοερά καὶ τῇ φύσει ἀθάνατος (after his nature, *rational* and *immortal*)<sup>383</sup>.

Our soul *cannot achieve* the ghostual resurrection and the sight of the light only for that it has *the possibility* to think and to understand the reality, but only if it is *united* with the Lord, it begins *to see* and *to feel* with true those ghostual.

Symeon continues the theological explanation by the presentation of the three *qualifications* of the vision as being interdependent. Thus, he says, the ecstatic knowledge, this ecstatic γνώσις which we are discussing, is not without ὁράσεως, without *the ecstatic sight*<sup>384</sup>.

*The knowledge* and *the ecstatic sight* have occur simultaneously. What you see, you *know* and what you *know* is a result of the ecstatic sight.

But *the sight* (ὄρασις) is not without αἰσθήσεως (*sensation*)<sup>385</sup>. What we see in ecstasy, we feel *with the soul* and the light *floods us* and *the body*.

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<sup>383</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 71-72, p. 196/ Ibidem.

<sup>384</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 72-73, p. 196/ Ibidem.

<sup>385</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 73, p. 196/ Ibidem.

If in the frame of the unghostual experience, of *the bodily experience* (as calls it Saint Symeon), we can feel *something*, as the blind for example, without and we see that thing *at proper*<sup>386</sup>, but in the ghostual, „μὴ εἰς θεωρίαν ἔλθῃ ὁ νοῦς τῶν ὑπὲρ ἔννοιαν τῆς μυστικῆς ἐνεργείας οὐκ αἰσθάνεται” (if the mind does not reach until *the sight of those beyond mind*, it does *not feel* the spiritual work)<sup>387</sup>. *The sensation of those ghostual* is reserved for those who have seen *the ecstatic light*<sup>388</sup>.

Symeon incites his followers to *the real living* of the resurrection of Christ, saying that many people *believe* in the Lord’s resurrection, but very few are those who *have it* in themselves and *look it* in pure face (βλέποντες καθαρῶς)<sup>389</sup>.

Those who *lived it* in themselves are those who *truly worship* the Lord, as *Holy and Lord* of their<sup>390</sup> and they know *the interior content* of the song: „Resurrection of Christ *seeing* (θεασάμενοι), let’s worship the Holy Lord Jesus, the one, Who without sin...”<sup>391</sup>.

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<sup>386</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 75-77, p.196/  
Ibidem.

<sup>387</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 78-79, p. 196/  
Ibidem.

<sup>388</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 80-81, p. 196/  
Ibidem.

<sup>389</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 90-92, p. 196/  
Ibidem.

<sup>390</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 92-93, p. 196-198/  
Ibidem.

<sup>391</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 98-100, p. 198/  
Idem, p. 175.

Resurrection of the Lord from the grave, *the historical*, says Saint Symeon, which the Scripture indicated it by *the absence* of the Lord's body from the grave, it was *not seen by anyone*<sup>392</sup>.

The witnesses of the resurrection are the witnesses of the sight of *Christ risen*, Which was shown in front of them, but not the witnesses of *the divine event of the resurrection*, of the moment when it occurred, as were present at Transfiguration of the Lord, on Tabor, the three Apostles.

But the wonder, that can occur in each of us, says our Father, is that now, in each of those who believe *can occur* the Christ's resurrection, and not *only once*, but *in every moment*<sup>393</sup>. The resurrection of Christ, which we sing it and we believe it, we have experience of it then, when „Himself the Master Christ risens in us, *shining* (λαμπροφοροῦντος) and *flashing* (ἀπαστράπτουτος) with *the scintillations of incorruption and of His divinity*”<sup>394</sup>.

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<sup>392</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 104-105, p. 198/  
Ibidem.

<sup>393</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 106-108, p. 198/  
Ibidem.

<sup>394</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 109-111, p. 198/  
Ibidem.

Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev discussing the problem of the Christ's sight in the symeonian theology said, in an article very erudite, that „Symeon never spoke about any appearance of Christ as *a visible image*, but only about *the light* and sometimes about *the voice of Christ*”, acc. Hilarion Alfeyev, *The Patristic Background of St. Symeon the New Theologian's Doctrine of the Divine Light*, in rev. *Studia Patristica*, vol. XXXII, edited

The presence of the Ghost in us, stresses Symeon, gives us the grace *to see* the Lord Himself resurrecting in our being<sup>395</sup> and resurrecting and us once with Him. The resurrection of Lord in our being is an ἐπιφάνειαν, a *ghostual revelation* of Christ in us, a *ghostual revelation* of Himself in our being, being seen with τοῖς πνευματικοῖς ὄμμασι (ghostual eyes), ie with *the eyes* required by Mt. 5, 8.

Christ, continues Symeon, comes in us together with the Ghost (διὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος) and resurrects us from the dead (ἀνιστᾶ ἡμᾶς ἐκ νεκρῶν) and makes us to see Him *live* (ζῶντα) and *whole* (ὅλον) in our being, giving us the grace *to know Him* in limpid mode (τρανωῶς), as the one *Who resurrects together with us* and *He is glorified together with us*, acc. Eph. 2, 6 and Rom. 8, 17<sup>396</sup>.

This resurrection is *of the true believers*, says, towards the end of catechesis, our Father, and not of *the believers on halfness* (ἡμίπιστοι)<sup>397</sup>.

*They do not see anything and will not see anything from those ghostual*<sup>398</sup>.

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by Elizabeth A. Livingstone, Pub. Peeters Publishers, Louvain, 1997, p. 235.

<sup>395</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 113-114, p. 198-200/ Ibidem.

<sup>396</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 119-124, p. 200/ Ibidem.

<sup>397</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 125-127, p. 200/ Ibidem.

<sup>398</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 127-128, p. 200/ Ibidem.

The faith in that is not God, Who resurrects the man, is *a dead faith*<sup>399</sup>, and alike with they are *dead* and those who have a such of faith without *the interior intimation* of the God's presence<sup>400</sup>.

The end of the symeonian catechesis is encouraging, hardener, for those who are eager to purify and sanctify their lives: „the faith in God ever makes living and, it being alive, makes alive those who approach it with *good intention* (προθέσσεως ἀγαθῆς) and receive on it, which, even before the work of the commandments, it took many from *death* to *life* and showed them the Christ-God”<sup>401</sup>.

The faith that feels in it *the movement of grace*, the divine lightenment and *sees the light of God* is *the living faith* and it makes us *live*, for that it is *our ghostual life*.

Symeon, as how is observed, blends *the theological reasoning* with *the concrete experience of ecstasy*, for to talk about *the orthodox faith mysteries*.

These *mysteries* are not *a dozen speculation*, made easy, but is *a complex experience*, a personal revelation of the

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<sup>399</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 138-139, p. 200-202/ Idem, p. 176.

<sup>400</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 145-147, p. 202/ Ibidem.

<sup>401</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIII, 147-151, p. 202/ Ibidem.

eternal life, which is given to you by the divine Trinity, in your life full of longing for holiness.

Our Father shows that *the dogmas of faith* are not *the mental abstractions* or *the landmarks* of a christian philosophy that can be *ideologised*, but *the divine realities* which we can experience in our lives, in the frame of the deepest relation with the trinitarian-God, which we love Him.

## 2. 3. 3. The Ascension of Christ in the Personal Experience

A very realistic and plastic expression in the same time of the experience of the Christ's ascension in our being, we find in the Ethical Discours 4.

Here, Saint Symeon speaks about *his relation* with God, more precisely about *his ecstatic relation* with God, as about the fact to be τὸ τῆς δόξης ἐκκρέμασθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ (hanged/ pendent of the God's glory)<sup>402</sup>. The one who is *hanged* by the divine light is, in the same time, and the one who wants God always (ταύτην ἀενάως ἐπιζητεῖν)<sup>403</sup>.

*To be* with the God which you see Him means to desire Him always, to seek to see Him always. *The finding of God* does not mean nothing but *the continual increasing* of the desire to want more Him, of to be with Him. The communion with God, in the frame of a life in which is *present* the divine light, is *an escalation* of any term of comparison. In the Ethical Discours 3, *the ascension* is presented as *rapture* (ἀρπαγήν)<sup>404</sup>.

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<sup>402</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 76-77, p. 14/ Ică jr. 1, p. 221.

<sup>403</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, p. 77, p. 14/ Ibidem.

<sup>404</sup> To see the verb ἀρπάζω and in Acts 8, 39, I Thess. 4, 17, Rev. 12, 5, where *rapture* has the evident meaning of *ascension*, taking, *lifting* by the Ghost.

Commenting II Cor. 12, 2, Symeon says that Paul speaking about „rapture, showed first of [all] *the [ecstatic] sight* (τῆς ἀρπαγῆς τὴν θεωρίαν πρῶτον ἐδήλωσε)<sup>405</sup>.

The divine sight is *a rapture*, a total *stealing* of the mind by what *shows you* the Holy Ghost.

The ecstasy is presented here not as *a dislocation* of the mind from the human being, but as a total *perplexedness* of the human mind. The mind is *stolen*, is *captured*, is *caught entirely* in the contemplation of light.

*There's nothing more important than the sight of God's glory* means, in definitively, *the rapture of mind* by what God reveals us.

But texts in which Symeon *speaks explicitly* about *our ascension together with Christ* in the frame of the ecstasy, we found, for example, in the *Hymn 15* and *Catechesis 36*.

In the *Hymn 15*, 97-108, Symeon speaks about *the descent of Christ to us*, a real descent, for to lift us, together with Him, at the Father:

„But since You, as said, You are out of all that exists, and those that enlighten them, make them to be *outside* (ἔξωθεν) from those seen, and as how You, as the One who are *above*, together with Your Father, You are *inseparable* from us, as

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<sup>405</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, III, 247-248, p. 408/ Ică jr. 1, p. 204.

the One who are *integer* together with us, and, although You are *in the world*, though You are *incomprehensible* to the world – because You being in all things there, You are as the One above all – whole thus, to us, Thy servants, we are in the midst of those felt and seen, take us out (ἐξάγεις) from all things there and take us up on the entirely, together with You, enlightened by Your light, and You make us be *immortals* from *mortals*. For to remain what we are [You make us] Your sons by grace, alike You [I Jn. 3, 2], gods who see God”<sup>406</sup>.

Is observed how Symeon speaks about *the sight* of the Christ’s glory as about *an ascension* with Him to heavens.

We cannot, with other words, tells us Symeon, *lift us* to the sight of the Christ’s glory than *together with Him*, Who comes to us, but Who is beyond all that exists and rises us, with Him, at His sight.

In Catechesis 36, speaking about the act of our ascension with Christ, Symeon denominates it right „shattering/ tremendous mystery” (φρικτὸν μυστήριον) <sup>407</sup>.

This mystery consists in the fact that: „taking me (λαβόμενος) and ascending You (ἀνελθών) to heaven, You take me together (συνανήγαγες) with You,

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<sup>406</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XV, 97-108, p. 284-286/ Ică jr. 3, p. 92-93.

<sup>407</sup> SC 113, The Catecheses, XXXVI, 167, p. 344/ Ică jr. 2, p. 374.

whether in the body, I do not know, whether outside the body, You alone know, Who did that”<sup>408</sup>.

Is observed how Symeon combines *the historic plan of the Christ’s oikonomia with the world with the personal plan of the Christ’s oikonomia* in the salvation of everyone of us.

He speaks, also, about the Ascension of the Lord with the body into heaven but and the ascension of the Lord, together with Him, into heaven, as *an entry in ecstasy*.

If *You taking me and You ascending to heaven* is an expression of *assumption and of ascension* of the human nature by Christ on the throne of the Trinity, the next part of the phrase quoted, indicates the fact that *the ecstatic sight is a together ascension with Christ or the living of the Christ’s ascension by our person*.

Symeon, like as Paul, do not know *how is going the ecstasy, how does take place* in his being. But he is *sure* that Christ is the One who knows *how to get to the sight of the light*, for that together with Him we ascended at *the sight of the Trinity’s light*.

Simeon lives *the inexpressible astonishment* of the divine glory, that „unmeasure height” (τῷ ἀμετρήτῳ ὕψει)<sup>409</sup>,

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<sup>408</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXXVI, 167-170, p. 344/ Ibidem.

<sup>409</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXXVI, 172, p. 344/ Ibidem.

which made him *tremble* in his whole being and *to mourn* his own wickedness<sup>410</sup>.

Our ascension with Christ is thus *true* and *not purely rhetorical*. The *sight of the light is a sight of the Christ's glory* and, in the same time, *an ascension with Christ to the unmeasured glory* of the Trinity.

Any human endeavour, that wants to reach the divine light is *a failure*, says Simon, as long as Christ Himself is not born, is not suffering, does not die and does not rise in us, and, not in the last line, if does not ascend in us and not lift us in the glory of the Trinity.

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<sup>410</sup> Idem, *The Catecheses*, XXXVI, 172-175, p. 344/  
Ibidem.

## Pneumatology

### 2. 4. The Holy Ghost and the Sight of the Divine Glory

Although Saint Symeon is *the Theologian of the Trinity* and he never sees a divine person as being separated from the other two, though we find in his theology a rich pneumatology, as we have found a rich christology applied in the frame of the personal salvation, but unsystematic presented.

The energetics presence of the Ghost in his being is amply discussed, because the Holy Ghost is the One who *lifts us to sight*, at the divine light, the light which is, in fact, *the grace* of the Trinity.

But at Symeon, *Christ* is *the backbone* of the entire ghostual life and the person of the Holy Ghost is never seen as *separated* from Christ, but where is Christ is and the Ghost present or Christ is seen *through* His Holy Ghost by the believer.

In this section of our work, we will present various hypostasises of the symeonian theology, where the person of the Holy Ghost is presented as having *direct link* with *the ghostual knowledge* and with *the sight of the divine glory*.

## 2. 4. 1. The Holy Ghost, the True Faith and the Experience of the Grace

The Ethical Discours 10, occasions us *a trenchant discussion about faith and the sight of the divine glory*. Saint Symeon has in view here the orthodox christians *canonically baptized* and not *any kind of believers*.

Speaking about the sight of the glory of God, he says, „*the deity, namely the grace of the Most Holy Ghost, is not shown to anyone, never, without faith* (οὐδενὶ οὐδέποτε δίχα πίστεως πεφάνερωται); and if it shows, however, by a man, in paradoxical face, it shows *frightening and fearful* (φοβερὰ καὶ φρικτὴ), not *luminating, but burning, not being alive, but frightening punishing*”<sup>411</sup>.

The exemplification which brings Saint Symeon, at this affirmation entirely true, is *the case of Saint Paul, who, on the road to Damascus lost its natural light of the eyes then when he saw the glory of Christ*<sup>412</sup>. Saint Paul, concludes in his argumentation Saint Symeon, „could not see *the slightest brightness* (οὐδὲ μικρὰν ἀπαυγὴν)”<sup>413</sup> of the Christ’s glory on the

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<sup>411</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, X, 88-92, p. 264-266/ Ică jr. 1, p. 325.

<sup>412</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 92-97, p. 266/ Ibidem.

<sup>413</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 102-103, p. 266/ Ibidem.

road to Damascus. *The unbelief* of Paul is for him *the sure indication*, that only believers see God's glory, as a *lighting* and *holiness* of their being.

For this reason he says further, that „for those who are *still in unbelief* (τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ) and are *mastered* by passions (τοῖς πάθεσι κατεχομένοις), *the grace* is completely *unapproachable* and *unseen*”<sup>414</sup>.

Symeon does not indicate here *the unbelief* that state of non-membership to the Orthodox Church, but as *full non-attachment* to God. *The unbelief* of a believer is shown in that, that he does *not come off fully* of his passions and he is not looking *to see* the glory of the Trinity, that is *to sanctify him* and *to deificate him* in integral mode.

Without *the purity of heart* and without *the fulfillment* of the divine commandments, we cannot be *lighted* in continuous mode<sup>415</sup>.

Commenting Jam. 2, 17, Symeon shows that the *fulfillment* of the commandments or what we call *good deeds* must to set us up into a *pressed evidence*, clear, into an *evidence of our faith*<sup>416</sup>. *The faith* and *our deeds* must be *concordant*.

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<sup>414</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, 104-106, p. 266/ *Ibidem*.

<sup>415</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, III, p. 266/ *Ibidem*.

<sup>416</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, 201-202, p. 274/ *Idem*, p. 328.

Therefore says Symeon: „those who confess that *Christ is God*, but they *do not keep* His commandments, they will be considered not only those who *reject* Him (ἀρνούμενοι), but and that those who *dishonor* Him (ἀτιμάζοντες)”<sup>417</sup>.

The faith that *manifests* itself through facts is it that *receives* the experience of the Ghost.

For Symeon, the faith cannot be a *real one* if it has not a *touch* with the grace. He says, in trenchant mode, that „cannot [even] be called *faithful* in accomplished face (πιστὸς τελείως)...[that who] *does not receive* the Ghost of God”<sup>418</sup>.

Bringing in support of this assertion Jn. 4, 14, Jn. 7, 39 and I Pet. 2, 22, Symeon shows that the Lord Himself testified *the presence* and *the interior sensation* of the grace in our being, in so that, „if *That one* says that the Ghost *is given* (διδόναι) those who believe in Him, all those who *have not* (μὴ ἔχοντες) the Ghost are *not believers from the heart*”<sup>419</sup>.

Symeon asks *the sensation of the grace*, sensation that means a *personal relation*, real, of the orthodox faithful with God. The personal faith must to be *the interior foundation* where experience

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<sup>417</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 202-205, p. 274/ Ibidem.

<sup>418</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 488-489, p. 294/ Idem, p. 337.

<sup>419</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 448-500, p. 294/ Ibidem.

occurs the glory of God and where the ghostual growth is *a personal evidence* and not *a simple supposition* with traditional character.

*Faithfulness to God*, for Symeon, is not measured in *ascetic deeds* and not in *acts of the exterior presence* in the Church of God, but in *revelation of God* to us, in *ecstatic revelation*, as an expression of *our right living* in His face.

Just therefore, „if anyone says that each of us, the faithful, *received* Him [the Ghost] and has Him in *insensitive* face (ἀναισθήτως λαβεῖν), that one *blasphemyes* (βλασφημεῖ)”<sup>420</sup> against Christ, Who said that *we feel the grace* of the Holy Ghost in *our being*<sup>421</sup>.

*The sight of the divine light* is the *beginning of the sensation of the grace*.

In symeonian theology, *the sight of the light*, as *beginning* of our relation, conscious and real, with God, is *the foundation* of the ghostual life, without thereby *to diminish somewhat* the Holy Sacrament of Baptism.

The Baptism *presupposes* the ecstatic sensation of the grace.

It is not *contrary to the personal ecstatic experience*, but this is *a personal actualization*, absolutely necessary, of the *grace received* at Baptism.

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<sup>420</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 501-502, p. 296/ Ibidem.

<sup>421</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 502-506, p. 296/ Ibidem.

Light of the Trinity is a *divine reality* perceived by the believer, the believer that *cleanses himself* from passions.

Symeon says in express mode that thing: „none from people could not ever see it before being *cleaned*, [and] cannot receive it before seeing it. For many people saw it, but they have *not acquired it* (οὐκ ἐκτήσαντο) [in stable mode], exactly with those who are worthy to see a large treasure in the royal treasures, but they go there *with empty-handed*.

Because, at many times, those who *repent ardent* (τοὺς μετανοοῦντας θερμῶς) it makes itself to them at beginning a *divine brightness* and a *lighting* (ἐλλαμψις θεία καὶ φωτισμός), but that *quickly passes*.

And if they give themselves entirely, up to death, and they will seek it with tiredness, depicting the Lord as *worthy* by it and *without reproach* in all, they will receive it again, in perfect face, when it will return<sup>422</sup>.

There is therefore a *confirmation* of repentance and of faith of the beginners from part of Trinity, then when they see the divine light and when they *begin to feel in them*, living and working, the Holy Ghost but there is and an *increasing filling* of our by Ghost, until *the return* of the divine light in us, as a *quotidian presence*.

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<sup>422</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 522-532, p. 296-298/ Idem, 338.

*The initial ecstasy* makes us to see *the endless treasure* of the divine glory but this we does not have as *stable wealth* in our being.

Symeon uses the aorist of κτάομαι, preceded by negation, for to show that light does not *enter* into our *definitive possession* only because we saw it *once* or *several times*, and emphasizes through the adjective ἄξιος, that *the sight* is not a *gift* of God, at which we have *no personal contribution*, but it is a *worthiness/ a worthy* gained by *doing with longing* of all His commandments.

But the most important message of the text quoted is, that the ecstasy is a *confirmation from God* of our faith and it is not a *badge* that we put ourselves alone on the chest. We are not those who declare ourselves *believers*, but God is the One who *confirms* our zeal and our faithfulness to Him.

The ecstasy is *the first engrossing letter*, the first *shattering email* from God, how that He saw *our sincere zeal* for Him.

But *His sight* must to turn into a *living longing*, acute in our being, for *His sight* in continuous mode, into a running full of love and hope, for *only He* is *the single fulfillment* and *the eternal rest* of ours.

Conscious, *the consciousness graceful relation* of the believer with God is *the foundation of deification*.

If we live *the Godhead's brightness* in the purity of our soul, says Simeon, then this λαμπάς, *the divine brightness* is „knowledge of the divine and heavenly things (ἡ γνῶσις τῶν θείων καὶ οὐρανίων πραγμάτων) given by the Holy Ghost to that who is *israelite* with the mind”<sup>423</sup>, namely *seer of God*.

The sight of the light is what *procures us* the ghostual knowledge<sup>424</sup>. Saint Simeon repeats *often* this thing.

How he repeats, also, and the fact, that *only through* cogitation on the divine meanings, through full asceticism, ghostual readings and tears we cleanse our soul, for as *to receive* the divine light<sup>425</sup>.

*The dynamism* of faith is *the principal premise* of the ghostual life at Saint Simeon. The living faith or what makes us *to be alive unto God* is *the sensation of grace* in us and *the sight of His glory*.

Speaking about the faith, that manifests itself as *a fulfillment* of God's commandments, Simeon states that Holy Apostles and Holy Fathers have gained, by such a faith *filled with an overwhelming dynamism*, „the love of God

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<sup>423</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, XIV, 184-187, p. 434/ Idem, p. 396.

<sup>424</sup> About the theme of *the divine sight*, that brings us *the spiritual knowledge*, to see and Ică jr. 1, p. 81, p. 82, p. 91, p. 92, p. 100, p. 154, p. 163, p. 255 etc.

<sup>425</sup> SC 129, *The Ethical Discourses*, XII, 182-184, p. 396/ Ică jr. 1, p. 379. About *asceticism as a preamble* of sight to see and Ică jr. 1, p. 84, p. 85<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, p. 100, p. 204-205, p. 305, p. 338.

into the knowledge” (τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀγάπης ἐν γνώσει)<sup>426</sup> and „the knowledge of God in love” (ἐν ἀγάπῃ γνώσιν Θεοῦ)<sup>427</sup>.

We stressed the last two citations by *the greek text* for to clarify and better the fact, that Symeon called *the grace* right *the divine love* and presents it, in the Hymn 18, into a majesticness full of enthusiasm, full of divine fervor.

In this Hymn, Symeon shows that *the ecstasy* is *determinant* for our cleaning from passions, for that the light seen ecstatic „is shown *for little time* and *it is contracting/ it withdraws*, but erases one, *just one* between the passions of the heart (τῶν παθῶν τῆς καρδίας). For man cannot *overcomes* the passions, if it did not come *in aid* and, moreover, it does not chase away all *at once*.

For *the psychical man* (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ψυχικός) may not receive all at once *the Ghost entire* and to become *unpassioned* (ἀπαθής), but then when he *accomplished* all those found *in his power* (τὰ εἰς δύναμιν)<sup>428</sup>. The presence of the Holy Ghost in the believer’s life is *an active presence*, cleansing, deifying, of which he is *conscious*<sup>429</sup>.

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<sup>426</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XV, 156, p. 454/ Idem, p. 405.

<sup>427</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XV, 158, p. 454/ Ibidem.

<sup>428</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVIII, 50-57, p. 78/ Ică jr. 3, p. 112.

<sup>429</sup> Father Dușe said, into an article of his dedicated to Saint Symeon: „The deification is a *permanent process* of ontological transformation, but

His *humbleness* consists in the fact, that he feels himself *a dwelling* of the Trinity's grace but, in the same time, he is *conscious* of his defaults, at the fact that he is not always *at the measure* to delight the Holy Ghost, Who *dwells* into him.

*The union with God*, about that speaks Symeon, is *a real one*, it is an experience lived *in overwhelming mode* of the believer.

Then when we have *an ecstatic sight*, „man unites ghostually and physically (ἐνοῦται πνευματικῶς τε καὶ σωματικῶς) with God, because the soul does not separate from the mind, nor the body from the soul, but by *a union in the beingly face* (οὐσιωδῶς ἐνώσει), man makes himself *threehypostatic* through grace, a god through adoption (θέσει θεός), made from *body, soul and the divine Ghost* of which he *imparts* (μετείληφε)<sup>430</sup>.

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without that the faithful man to lose his created nature...for that *the possibility* of union [with God] is given by *the status of person of human*”, acc. Rev. PhD. Călin-Ioan Dușe, *The Deification after Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Îndumnezeirea după Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog] in rev. *Theological Horizons* [Orizonturi teologice], I (2000), no. 2, p. 117, 124.

And P. Miguel said, into an article *about grace* at Saint Symeon, that „the sin is *solely responsible*, after Symeon, for *the lack* of spiritual experience: *the habitation* of the Holy Ghost in us cannot be but *conscious*”, acc. P. Miguel, *The Consciousness of the Grace after Symeon the New Theologian* [La conscience de la grâce selon Siméon le nouveau Théologien], en Irénikon XLII (1969), no. 3, p. 325.

<sup>430</sup> SC 104, The Catecheses, XV, 72-77, p. 288/ Ică jr. 2, p. 186. About the full man, spiritual, that cannot be *without* the Holy Ghost, to see and Ică jr. 1, p. 337\*\*.

Thus, we constate, that *the ecstatic sight* is not at Symeon a *collateral theological subject* but, on the contrary, it is *the foundation* of our deification.

The ecstatic sight is lived by soul *in inseparable* mode from his own body and the fully man, *the whole man* is the one in which the Holy Ghost *reigns* in his being.

The living faith, full of the grace of the Ghost is *the true faith*, because God speaks to His *true children*, those who are *living* for that they stand in *the graceful* relation with the Living One.

Those who see through the Ghost *the Trinity's glory* and feel in they the grace as *an alive source* of eternal life, they are believers that must go *full of longing* towards *the permanent dwelling* in them of the divine light.

The symeonian theology does not know *a ghostual life* in which *relaxation* has *a positive side* but, on the contrary, continue desire towards more, towards *more sight* of the light and of understanding of it mysteries, represents *the true orthodox-christian interiority*.

For that, in the frame of the ghostual experience, after how says Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, „man has *the perspective of an eternal advance* in the divine light and in *his spiritual enrichment*”<sup>431</sup>.

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<sup>431</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Personal Relation with Christ in the Light of Divine Infinity, after Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Legătura personală cu Hristos în lumina infinității

## 2. 4. 2. The Personal Ecstatic Testimonies and Their Validation

Undoubtedly, we cannot *venture* to pronounce, in trenchant mode, on those about *the theology of glory* without to have ever *the experience of the sight* of the divine light.

It would be the one between the things of *the most embarrassing with possible* and a muster of *cheap vedettism* from our part, to trample a domain so *holy* and *shattering* for any humble christian.

Therefore, the symeonian testimonies about his ecstasies, in our opinion, take account the most important thing in the frame of the theology of glory and namely the real understanding, authentic, about how we must deify our whole being.

His ecstatic confessions are not *gratuitous*, they do not have a *stressful morgue*, they do not *stiff exhibitions* of private experiences, but, on the contrary, they are *generated* by holy conscience, that these ecstatic experiences *will be enlightening* for those who will *listen and read later*.

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*dumnezeiești, după Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog*], in *Studies of Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [Studii de teologie dogmatică ortodoxă], Pub. Metropolitan of Oltenia, Craiova, 1990, p. 316.

Saint Symeon speaks about of *his own sights* and of *his proper holiness* driven by the divine grace, that incited him to speak, to give *confidence* to those who are cleansed of passions and, especially, to show them that holiness is a *reality shockingly beautiful* and not a *trite story*, that happened or not in foretime.

Speaking about *the sight of God*, Symeon wants to be *authentic* and *less didactic*, strongly emphasizing *the identity* of *his ecstatic experience* with *the ecstatic experience* of all previous Saints, without that through this *emphasis in force* to consider him *worthy of God's mercifulness*, which it showed as *sight of His glory*. His confessions are full of *humbleness*, *contentedness*, *gratitude* and of *a truth conquering*.

They are *extensive guarantees* for a *theology of the glory* wholly orthodox, because they have „the force an personal *unmediated experience*”<sup>432</sup>.

Thus, in the following sequences of this subchapter, we will punctual excogitate various ecstatic symeonian testimonies, we try to present a *clear analysis*, internal, *in proper terms*<sup>433</sup>, of theology of glory.

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<sup>432</sup> Rev. Prof. John A. McGuckin, *The Biblical and Theological Paradigms of the Sight of the Divine Light to Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Paradigmele biblice și teologice ale vederii luminii dumnezeiești la Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in *Ică jr.* 4, p. 420.

<sup>433</sup> Father McGuckin finish his study cited in note above, dedicated *the theology of glory* at Saint

## 2. 4. 2. 1. The First Ecstasy of Saint Symeon

Without to enter into an *exegetics-historicist perspective*<sup>434</sup>, our research,

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Symeon, with the express desire to continue *the internal exegesis* of the symeonian ecstasies.

He said: „With all the literary, historical and theological *complexities* of it, this important collection of epiphany stories, *deserves and requires* an analysis fuller and more rigorous *in their proper terms*”, acc. Idem, p. 422.

<sup>434</sup> We believe that *the historical perspective* of Father McGuckin, with *the sight I* in 969 [acc. Idem, p. 407] and *the sight II* in 976 [acc. Idem, p. 410] is interesting, possibly credible, but we tend to believe that we must to punt more on *the undated sights*, according his expression [acc. Idem, p. 417], namely *the current sights* in the life of Saint Symeon, of which he confessed *the ones he wanted* or made a *synthesis of them*, intended to present *the sight* as a *divine reality* in his life.

We do not believe that our Father wanted to make a *systematization*, a hierarchy, a chronology of his ecstasies, designed to give us a *historical perspective on the frequency and the number* of them.

We agree that he speaks about a *first ecstasy*, about how was *at the beginning* of his ecstatic life. But, then, the things are complicated. We do not know clearly *about what* ecstasies he speaks, but it is evident that he speaks about *realities* personal lived.

We tend to *give right* to Father Golitzin, when he affirms, that „we cannot *specify* the exact number of occasions in which Symeon was *visited* by the appearing of the divine light. His writings and *Life* of Niketas suggests that this thing was *quite frequently*, although it *varied* in intensity”, acc. Hierom. Alexander Golitzin, *Symeon the New Theologian: the Life, the Epoch, the Thinking*, in Ică jr. 1, p. 466.

But, both, Father Golitzin [acc. art. cit., p. 466] and Father McGuckin [acc. art. cit., p. 407], designates right *the first* epiphany relating *Catechesis 22*, which the first sees it repeated by Niketas in *Life*, 5 [acc. Idem,

*theological* and *linguistic* in the same time, of the symeonian confessions, leaves from the premise of *the indeterminacy of the number* of ecstatic experiences which Saint Symeon has had.

According to a *theological consensus* statued of Life, 5, Catechesis 22 is designated as *the first ecstatic symeonian confession* that we have.

The ecstatic relating is *comprised* between 88-103 lines<sup>435</sup>, being *concise* and presented, by humbleness, *under the name* of the young George, who lived in Constantinople and had almost 20 years<sup>436</sup>.

The symeonian ecstatic confession is contextualized. It appears as *a emphasis* of God's oikonomia with those who fulfill with zeal His will.

Young George, alias Symeon, appears as *standing in prayer* and saying *the prayer of heart*, of repentance: „The God, have mercy on me, the sinner!” (88-89 lines).

His desire was *the commiseration* from part of God, the forgiveness, the

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p. 467] and, the second sees it retaked in *Catecheses* 35 and 36 [acc. Idem, p. 408-409].

Therefore and we will discuss this *epiphany relating* of Catechesis 22 as *the first ecstatic symeonian experience*, after how confesses and Saint Niketas [Stethatos] in *Life*, 5, acc. OC [*Orientalia Christiana*] 12, V, 1-8, p. 8/ ed. Iliescu, p. 18 and *Life*, ed. Koutsas, apud. Ică jr. 4, p. 247.

<sup>435</sup> Acc. SC 104, *The Catecheses*, XXII, 88-103, p. 372/ Ică jr. 2, p. 242.

<sup>436</sup> Idem, *The Catecheses*, XXII, 22-23, p. 366/ Idem, p. 239.

discharged from the passions of his being and not *the sight* of the divine light.

The sight comes as *a divine surprise* in his life.

Symeon states *a single thing* regarding *the prayer* of George: the fact that it was made more *with mind* than *with the mouth* (89-90 lines).

Our young man was into a state of *mental's prayer*, into *a cry* of his mind to God. Were preponderating the mind and the heart, *the interior effort* in front of God and not *the articulated words*.

The specification of this fact is very important, because *the sight* comes into a state of *interior concentration*, of repentance, *the interior perception* of the light. The light comes *in the time of his prayer*, when he was *ready* to receive it and without any notice from God.

When Symeon begins *the relating of the ecstasy* of George, he begins abruptly, talking about an ἑλλαμψις θεία [divine brightness], that comes αἴφνης, in unexpected mode, that appears *suddenly* in his being and it *shines*, being shown coming *from above* [ἐπέφανεν ἄνωθεν] [90 line].

Symeon does not explain to the auditorium *the terms* communicated by him. It is *presupposed* that they *had to know* what means that *divine brightness*.

We have, from the first enunciation, a few certain things: during the prayer of George it *came*, in unexpected mode, in

his being, *a brightness* from part of God, which he has lived it as coming from *above*, from *heaven*.

Symeon does not speak about a *simple* ἔλλαμψις, that would have caused by *something physical* but not the adverb ἄνωθεν, an adverb that expresses *the place*, the location from where something comes to us, to those on earth, should not lead us with the thought, that it indicates a *terrestrial* or *cosmic source* of light.

We believe that ἄνωθεν wants to emphasize *the role* which it has the adjective θεία, that *accompanies* ἔλλαμψις.

The light is *divine*, is from *above*, ie is *from God*.

George asked God's *mercy* and God shows His mercy as *light*.

But the phrase open by Symeon is *not finished*.

After specifying that the light comes *from above*, Symeon affirms that *the divine brightness* filled the whole place where was the young George [91 line].

The aorist of πληρώω, and namely ἐπλήρωσε, which Symeon uses here, in our opinion, it does not indicate the fact that our young man *looked around*, with his *physical eyes*, and saw that everywhere, in his cell, was *light*, but, rather, that everything what sees him now, in this moment, was only that *brightness*.

Symeon looks *retrospectively* the things and *compendious*.

He has not present the ecstatic event *in progress*, like a televisual horse racing, where is showing to us, finally, in slow motion, which of the competitors walked first across the finish line and how it actually happened.

Symeon includes in running the event *details* that he did not realized *during* the ecstasy, but he understood *the post-ecstatic*, at some time *after* the event.

This thing is evident from the following two phrases.

If, further, in the phrase following that in which we reported before, Symeon said that the young man „did not know [anything *by himself*, to him, who *prayed*] and he forgot that he *was in the house or under a roof*” (91-93 lines), immediately Symeon opens an another phrase and says: „because everywhere he sees *only light* and he did not know whether he was *walking* on the earth” (93-94 lines).

The idea of *the roof*, of *στέγη*, that suddenly disappears, collapses, that he does not see it because the light, it will *reappear* in the symeonian description.

The light of God coming down, coming in human, and it takes over completely, is what *separates us* from things seen, catapulting us, suddenly, in *the vastness* of the divine light.

The divine light does not give us *the possibility* to think something related of

the visible world, but we see φῶς μόνον, *only light* in that moment.

The transition from *what we see* to that *what-we-do-not-expected-to-see* of the ecstasy, but which we was *ready* to see it, fills us with amazement. Our young man *forget everything he knew*, what *he wanted*, what he believed that *he was*.

The symeonian relating presents again *post-ecstatic details*.

It says that the young George *felt not* in him the fear of not falling into sin, he did not *take care* of things from the world and he bore himself like one *immaterial* (94-98 lines).

But *the ecstatic state*, that to be ὅλως φωτὶ ἀὐλῶ συνῶν [completely *united* with the immaterial light] (97 line), does not permit *the evidence* of the world with which we are *accustomed*, but is a *transposition* of us in eternity.

Therefore and returns Symeon at the narration of the ecstatic event, through characterization of *divine brightness* right *the immaterial light* and through emphasis the fact that light was in the young George with such *interior evidence*, that he himself felt *the light* (97-98 lines).

The utilization of δοκεῖν from the line 98 does not indicate *a conjecture*, a simple *supposition* of the young George. The verb δοκέω, used with his intransitive significance as in Acts 15, 28; 17, 18, I Cor.

12, 22, Hebr. 12, 11 translates with: *to seem*, in comparison with the transitive form where it means: *to think*, to believe, to presuppose, to consider<sup>437</sup>.

In the symeonian text, we have that *connotation* of the verb that we find and in *the synodal tomos* from Acts 15, 28.

When Symeon said about the young George, that to him it seemed that he was made *light entirely*, that he is *a light in the light* of God, more concrete said, he had *no doubt* that *this was reality*.

He lived not *a state of unreality*, of appearance, which might be presupposed based on the aorist of the verb δοκέω, but he was *convinced*, as the Synod's Fathers from Jerusalem, that this was reality: he was filled with divine light, because he was *in the light of the Trinity* and not into *an impersonal light* and *depersonalized*.

Our young man sees himself *joined* with the light, made entirely the light and seeing only those who appeared to him in the light which revealed him the Trinity.

He does *not choose* what *to see* in the light, but he sees in wonder, he was only *the one seeing eye* of those that God shows him. For that the ecstasy is *precisely* in this: in our raising to communion with the Trinity, through His glory.

Symeon touches with more perspicacity the fact that light *flooded* the

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<sup>437</sup> Acc. *Gingrich Lexicon*, apud BW 07.

young man without that he *to oppose* the interior resistance.

The light flooded him with everything. Being into a state of repentance and of fervent prayer, into a deep state of concentration, by ghostual introspection, our young man is *kidnapped with the mind* to God and he sees the divine light.

The ecstatic state is *incompatible* with *the memory*, says Symeon, using the participle ἐπιλαθόμενος.

He forgot all world *suddenly* [98 line], then when appeared the light.

The detail, how that he arrived in this moment „full of tears and unspeakable joy and gladness” [99-100 lines], it does *not belong* of the ecstatic moment, but it is a *ghostual result* of the ecstasy in his life.

That what keeps *by ecstasy*, by development of the ecstatic moment is *the final specification*, that „his mind ascended into heaven and it saw another light *more limpid* than the one that was close to him. And standing in proximity of that light was showed to him, in paradoxically face, that old man *Holy and wise and alike with Angels*” [100-103 lines], and namely *Saint Symeon the Pious*, his *ghostual Father*.

The problems raised by the end of ecstatic confession to an exegete are *insurmountable*, as long as we consider that we are dealing with a *prime light* and

with *a second light*, the latter being *separated* from the first by *its reality*.

The symeonian expression οὐρανὸν ἀνῆλθεν ὁ νοῦς αὐτοῦ [his mind was *exalted/ ascended* to heaven, acc. 100 line], it should not be interpreted as *a crossing* from an ecstatic sight with *terrestrial connotations* at an ecstatic sight with *heavenly qualities*, divine, for that *this passage* does not exist in reality.

Our young man was *already* in the light, he was *full of light*.

*The ascension of mind* about which Symeon speaks and the heaven that he indicates for us here, is not than *a revelation more intense*, from part of God, of those things seen in the divine light.

Speaking in *anthropomorphic manner* about this *ecstatic situation*, Symeon wants to tell us only that, his mind was *widened* in the light of divine, that it received a more pronounced sight of the mysteries of light, this *crossing* towards *an all-more-knowledge/ sight* of those from the light being called οὐρανὸν, *heaven*.

The young George, with other words, he did *not pass* from heaven to another as *in mythology*, but he passed from one ghostual heaven to another *and more impressive*, from the light to a light *and more clear/ limpid*, ie from *an initial sight* to *a more divine and overwhelming*, in which *appeared* his ghostual Father.

Symeon points out all these *ecstatic details*, internal of ecstasy, for to show that *the ecstasy* is not only *sight* but also *the advancement in the sight*, in knowledge, in the discovery, from part of God, *of those divine*.

The increasing *clarity* of light is a *divine gift* and the sight of Symeon the Pious in light was a *confirmation*, from part of God, of *his holiness*.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian was taught, on the one hand, about those of the light of God, God Himself *initiated* him into *the mysteries* of His eternal glory but, in the same time, God ensures him that the holiness is *known* by Him, that Saints *are His people* and that only they can be *credible with truly* for those who want to sanctify their lives.

## 2. 4. 2. 2. The Ecstasy During His Noviciate<sup>438</sup>

The text that we find in *Catechesis* 16, 78-107<sup>439</sup>, which relates *the sight* of a young brother of the monastery, it constitutes in *the second ecstatic description*, that we analyze here.

Saint Symeon anonymizes again his own experience, he had at 28 years, as *novice* at Stoudios, putting it on account of a young man. Niketas will describe it in *Life*, 19, as *the third* of his ecstasy<sup>440</sup>.

The confession begins with *the habit* of the young man *to pray*. He fulfills the commandment of his Holy abbot to pray with the prayer: „Holy God” [78-79 lines].

The fulfillment of the commandment to pray is immediately *rewarded* by God, for that the young Symeon was *moved* „towards tears and towards *divine longing*”, the fact that brought to him *an interior joy* (χαράν) and *a pleasure* (ἡδονήν) immense [80-82 lines].

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<sup>438</sup> We punt in this context on *the emphasis* on that makes the Metropolitan Basil Krivochéine in *the starting note* to *Catechesis* 16: „Dans la vision de la Cat. 16, il s’agit par contre d’un novice, vivant avec son père spirituel dans le meme monastère” [But in the vision of *Catechesis* 16, it is rather *a novice*, who lives together with his spiritual Father in the same monastery], acc. SC 104, p. 238, n. 3.

<sup>439</sup> Acc. SC 104, *The Catecheses*, 78-107, p. 244-246/ *Ică jr.* 2, p. 193-194.

<sup>440</sup> Acc. OC 12, II, 19, 13-23, p. 28-30/ *Life*, II, 19, ed. Iliescu, p. 34-35/ *Life*, II, 19, ed. Koutsas, apud *Ică jr.* 4, p. 257.

*The antechamber* of the sight is again the prayer. But at this time *the prayer* is joined with a state of joy, the ghostual *impetus* and *confidence* in God, ie is animated by a *sensation* resulting from the atmosphere of repentance, that we found it and in the ecstasy previously analyzed.

It is seen *the increase* of young novice in this description.

The young man, being with his face to the ground [82-83 lines], into a state of *adoration* of the Trinity, is again *invaded* by the divine light.

Introduced by the adverb ἰδοὺ – that expresses, in this case, the huge surprise, *the unexpected ecstatic* – the symeonian confession tells us, first, about a φῶς πολὺ (more light), that *shines* his mind, taking the mind *wholly* to it, along with the soul [83-85 lines].

This *divine light* shines upon him as and the first description.

Symeon used ἐπιλάμψαν, ie the same *formula* as the first time, showing that the light which shone upon him, this *immense* divine light was seen by his mind and the sight of it nailed the mind and his soul in its contemplation.

Using the verb λαμβάνω into a such context, with the meaning of *rapture*, *seizure*, *taking* is *strategic* for Symeon.

The insinuation in text of this verb *keeps to clarify* the fact, that the soul prepared by *longing* and *love* by God does

not oppose *resistance* to the divine light, at its sight, but, rather, it is captured *to the full* by its presence, then when it is revealed by God.

A *false-ghostual* discussion, better said an *intellectualist-theological* one, of the report between *grace* and *freedom* in the frame of the ecstasy, ceases to exist by itself in the symeonian theology.

One who expects with longing *God's mercy*, namely *His sight*, does not think in terms of *equity*, of *the counter-value* the God's presence in his life, but *the divine condescension* as *light* is received with an impressive opening, *beingly*, by his own person.

The light is not *violent* with Symeon's freedom but it guarantees *the authenticity* of its beingly expression, for that *the perception of the light* in his being is more than he could have ever imagined, that means *the divine mercy*.

The light reveals not a rationalist, atheist or gnostic mind, who prefers a God *built by the computer* of mind or *the absence* of the Being creative, but a mind full of longing, of waiting to the Loved One.

Symeon confirms into all this direction of thought, because, he says: „the unexpected of wonder filled me with *wonder* and made me to be *like into an ecstasy*” [85-86 lines].

The sight filled Symeon not with *disorder* but with *wonder*, the supreme

*admiration* that human beings can achieve.

That the light was perceived as *a miracle is a evidence* in the opera of Saint Symeon. From the symeonian theology resulting in express mode the fact, that did not exist *a greatest miracle* in his life than *the sight of the divine glory*.

The ἔκστασις was *real* for Symeon. Particle ὡς, from the phrase anterior regiven, has not at Symeon the dubitative character but, we believe, rather that he puts, through the intermedium of it, *the equal sign* between *sight* and *ecstasy*.

*The sight of the light* which he lived it is *an ecstasy*, is *an output by itself*, ie that *state*, evoked more above in other words, when the soul was *captured by the sight* of the Most Holy Trinity's light.

The young Symeon forgets *the place* where he was and *who he was* [86-87 lines]. His *seizure* by light and this *forgetfulness* – real *forgetfulness* – about that he speaks here are *post-ecstatic details*.

When he *came out* from ecstasy was found himself crying: „Lord have mercy!” [87-88 lines]; the cry emphasizing, both, *his immense joy* but and *his surprise*.

The line 88 ends the relating proper-said of the ecstasy. Until the line 107, we have a theological elaboration of *his reality* and, especially, of its *consequences* with that has resulted the ecstasy.

Symeon says that the young man spoke with the light [92 line]. Using the aorist προσωμίλησα, he indicates the fact that he did not *listen passively* to what the light *said* him or what was *told to him* from the divine light, but that he *conversed* with the light, he had a *personal attitude* towards the light, he felt it as a *personal irradiation* of Godhead.

The *personalistic* attitude of Symeon opposite at light is seen from the fact that *designated it* that being conscious of the fact that *they converse* [92 line].

In this situation, the form of perfect οἶδεν, from 92 line, translated by *to know, knowing*, by us, indicates *understanding*, mutual discussion of the trinitarian God, Who reveals His overwhelming glory, and Symeon.

But Symeon *accepts* and *the direct significance* of οἶδα, as we have seen, because he speaks about *a sight of us* by God, through light, but and about *a sight of Him*, by us, through intermedium of the light.

In the light, Symeon *conversed* with God but he *also saw* God. *Converse* with Him whom he saw.

The sight of the light *scattered the fog* and *the earthly thought* from his soul, removed *the burden* of the soul and it has made that his body become suddenly *vigorous*, stripping *the garment of the corruption* [92-99 lines].

Symeon was invaded by *a great joy*, by *a sensation of the mind* and by *a divine sweetness* [100-101 lines], that we could not acquire only from the prayer *without* divine sight.

Of fact, this is the message which he wants *to induce* to his listeners and readers: that the ecstatic sight *produces* a divine knowledge and it has *amazing reactions*, at holistic level, in the faithful man and is not just *a passenger event*, who could be forget *easily* by him.

He lives, post-ecstatic, *an amazing interior freedom*, he forgets *the syllogistic attitude* that requires your life in the world and he forget and the death, the fact that he is *a mortal man* [102-105 lines], for that „all *sensations* of the mind and of the soul were glued *only* (μόνην) of that *ineffable joy* of the light” [105-107 lines].

All these *evidences* show us that *the sight* is not *a mental disorder*, nor *a paralysis of conscience*, is not an *unwelcome* and *uncomfortable pressure* of God in our being, but is *the meeting*, at a deep personal level, of *God* with *the faithful man* and the entry in communion, through His glory, with the Most Holy Trinity.

## 2. 4. 2. 3. The Ecstatic Confession and the Validator Comment

In the Ethical Discourse 5, we have a symeonian typical muster of *the trenchant testimony* of the personal ghostual experience, doubled by *a rigorous theological validation*, which has no *defect of logic* or of *the hook* at mystical Tradition of the Church.

In 5, 251-354<sup>441</sup>, Saint Symeon makes *a fulminant apology* to the divine sight and to the direct theological experience, presenting *theology* as on *a consequence* of the ecstatic sight.

Symeon begins *the experiential explanations*, which we wish to comment here, from the traditional syntagma: „the light of knowledge” (φῶς γνώσεως) [251 line].

He tells his audience, that at the hearing of this syntagma, we must not to understand that we can have *a real* theological knowledge *without* the sight of the divine light [251-253 lines].

Not *the knowledge* is what that *produces* the light, warns Symeon, but „*the light* produces in us *the knowledge*” [254-255 lines].

The γνῶσις/ gnosis/ knowledge or *cognizance* (as we translate, taking as *paradigm* the liturgic usance) does not

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<sup>441</sup> Acc. SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, V, 251-354, p. 98-106/ Ică jr. 1, p. 255-258.

have at Symeon than *the ecstatic foundation*.

*The ecstatic knowledge* is for him *the true knowledge*, beingly knowledge, ontological, in that we are *fingerprinted* by the glory of God.

*The knowledge by collecting data*, the knowledge as multilateral experience is subsumed for him *the knowledge that sight*. The one that gives *the tone* in his relation with his listeners or his hierarchical superiors is *the ecstatic experience*, this being *the promoter of law* of his theology.

Without *the ecstatic sight* we can not know, in real mode, on God. Symeon repeats this thing by every time, he massive making angry those who had *no idea* about a such experience.

In the text to which we refer, he says: „someone can not know God *than only through the sight of the light* (μη̄ διᾱ τῆς̄ θεωρίας̄) that gushes from Him” [255-257 lines].

Saying that, Symeon emphasized his relation with *a living God*, with a God who is not *an antiquity* of the Church, *well preserved* by its theologians or *an impeccable fake*, that is covered with *eulogies*, for as not to know the non-actualness and His inoperability.

Symeon *gives testimony* about an overwhelming experience of the reality of the Creator of the heaven and of the earth, and he asserts the fact that, his

relation with God is one as possible *common, quotidian* and in no case a relation occasioned just by any *celebration* or *tradition* or by *his position as priest* of the Church.

The God whereof speaks Symeon is *living*, He is *the single God* and He *irradiates us* with His glory, that brings us *His knowledge*.

Bringing in face of his auditorium *the paradigm of the witness*, the one who can give a *testimony* about a *man* or a *city* only if *he saw* these [257-262 lines], Symeon concludes: „(also none cannot speak) about *the above Jerusalem* and about *the invisible God*, Who dwells in it, about *the unapproachable glory* of His face and about *the work* and *the power* of His Most Holy Ghost, so *about the light*, if he first *sees not* the light with the eyes of his soul and (if he not) know with exactness *the lightings* and *its works* in he himself” [263-269 lines].

The symeonian syllogism is *irrefutable* at *practical* level and *contemplative*.

You can *know* and *speak* about something, only if you *have experience* that fact. We cannot *know* what we *do not know nowise*.

If God’s light is *seen* from the eyes of our heart, if we see light *in purity of heart* and we have *the current lighting* of the Ghost, related to different problems of the quotidian life, then there is no great difficulty *to give testimony* about them.

Symeon spoke *very openly* about his ecstatic experiences because they were *common* to him, they were part of the daily rhythm of his life and they were not *taboo problems* theological.

If in the case of *the knowledge as the personal revelation of light*, you know it if God gave you in your life, Symeon says that and the reading a holy book, in the case a ghostual man, is not *a scanning of surface* of the readable information, but his reading is *a continues divine revelation of the senses*: „even and then when he hears through the divine Scriptures intermedium, speaking to those who have seen God, (the spiritual man) is *learned* (διδάσκεται) about those *only* (μόνα) through the Holy Ghost” [269-271 lines].

*The knowledge through the light* unites in the ghostual man with that through *the divine illumination*.

The grace of the Holy Ghost is the one who reveals to us both. They are manifestations of *grade* of the Ghost and not of *essence*.

As said above Saint Symeon, all what we call as being *of God* are, in fact, *the references to the divine light*.

Symeon continues with *the paradigm of probation*, of the immediate experience.

The simply reading of Scripture’s texts considering at *the sight* does not

mean *an experience of sight* [271-276 lines].

No matter how *banal* may seem his explanations, full of *truism* for a ghostual man, Symeon goes on *a low syllogism* to explain his ecstatic experiences.

*The sight of God* means *to see the light* [276 line]. *To know God* you have not to see anything else *irradiating* from Him than *His light*. If we saw *the light*, then, in that moment, „(we received) *first cognizance* that God (*exists*)” (γνώσις πρώτι ὅτι Θεός) [277 lines].

If we know that God exists from what we read about Him and we believe that *He exists*, the sight of the light demonstrates, in personal mode, to the believer, how *shows* the God that *exists*, Who is always and forever [277-286 lines].

Beginning with the line 287, Symeon *reconfess* the ecstasy of his novice years, which we *analyzed* in the previous section.

Only that here, Symeon does not opt for *a simple narration* of any ecstatic details, but he remembers the details that requires to be *theological interpreted*.

The confession retaken here has a preamble constituted by allusions to the reality of the ecstatic experience.

The God that revealed Himself to Symeon is ἀοράτον [287 line], *unseen*. But one who *sees on the One invisible* has a revelation, he sees *a light* [288-289 lines].

The state of sight contains in it the state of wonder, of *astonishment* of the one who sees [289 line].

The sight of the light does not *indicate*, in the first phase, and *the knowledge* of Him who appeared to you. Symeon states that you cannot ask Him, Who reveals in the light, who is, as long as you cannot look Him, nor you can comprehend His greatness [289-293 lines].

We see, with other words, the glory of *Someone*, not the glory of *something*.

The symeonian ecstatic theology is *personalistic* because indicates us a relation with *Someone through the inter-medium* of His glory and not a relation with *an impersonal glory*, with a *phantomlike* and *depersonalized* holistic reality.

Says Symeon, that he who sees, knows that „ὅλως τις ἐστὶν ὁ φανείς πρὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ” (all that was *shown/revealed* in front of him is of *Someone*) [293-294 lines].

The glory is of *Someone*, of the trinitarian God.

Retelling the ecstasy of Catechesis 16, Symeon gives the light the appellative of γλυκύς (*sweet*) [297 line].

He doubled linguistic *the characteristic of the light*, that to be refelt as *sweet*, he emphasizes this thing, for to show the personal mode in that *he received* the light in his being.

The light did not filled him of fear, did not burn him, did not brought him in the threshold of madness but, on the contrary, it filled him with an inexpressible divine sweetness.

Light came into a longing heart for God and it was refelt as sweetness.

The sweetness (γλυκεῖαν) and the longing (πόθον) [300 line] are the ecstatic consequences highlighted by Symeon with this occasion. The ardent tears and many come from itself, as a continuation of the two [301 line].

In this context appears the image of the house that disappears and, once with it, and the whole world, moment in that the ecstasy is presented as an extreme deep loneliness in two: he and God are face to face [302-304 lines].

After what he expresses in face of his Father, his perplexity considering at the presence of his body during ecstasy, Symeon indicates us his interiority: an unspeakable joy, love and miss much and rivers of tears of joy flowed him from eyes [304-309 lines].

The Father responds him that the light is what that cleanse us, until when makes us perfect and in this state we can, we gain, we have the boldness to ask Him, Who shows us, who is He and He will answer us that is God, our Creator [311-316 lines].

The increase *in knowledge* means for Symeon *the growth in the sight and the understanding* of the divine light.

In the knowledge of God advances *slow but constant*.

Symeon says, that we go forward *κατ' ὀλίγον*, *by little* in every day *in those of God* [317-319 lines].

*The sight of God* means *His authentic knowledge* and *His knowledge* means to know *that is His will to us* [320-323 lines].

The sight stays *in internal connection* with *the knowledge* in the frame of the symeonian's theology and *His knowledge* is manifested as *personal understanding* of τὸ Αὐτοῦ ἁγίου θέλημα (His holy will) [322-323 lines].

Communion with God, which procures us the sight of His glory, gives us to feel how *we behave*, how must *we talk*, how must we manifest before God and people.

This communion with Him we do not *presuppose* how to act, but we are taught interior, by the light, what to say *to the glory of God*.

*Theology of glory* is the one that gives us true moral dimension of the ghostual life, for that good deed *into consciousness*, good deed which we see *the consequences* in our being, they are realized in personal mode or it is *made* then, when we *see* light, when *we feel the grace* of God in us.

Saint Symeon does not live *active moral dilemmas*, congested.

Knowledge as *sight* and that as *lighting* discharges us of what seems *dilemmatic*, obscure, obturated in ghostual life.

The advancement and the reaching in familiarity with God is for Symeon a *knowledge* of what God does in us, thing that is *identic* – accentuates he – with what God *has done* and *will do* with all the Saints [324-328 lines].

Symeon does not speak than by a *single modality* to advance in communion with God and namely the life of holiness, which *translates* to a life in that we go forward *always* in *the sight of the light* and *in lightings* and *ghostual contemplations*.

Therefore, for that just this *mysterious side* of the relation of Saints with God means *ghostual life*, and, in definitive, *theological knowledge*, Symeon sees our relation cu God, the holy communion with God, as having its foundation *in itself initiation*, which makes to us God Himself about *Himself* [328-329 lines].

Symeon debates *intensely* this capital truth about personal salvation, showing that *true knowledge of God* we do not receive through *our work*, through *the efforts very tiresome* we are making,

but *His knowledge is a divine gift*, is a gift received in *purity of heart* and it is *personal revelation of the divine light* of the Trinity.

We begin *to receive* His knowledge *still* from this life, but *the full receiving* of His sight is *reserved* to the eternal life [329-337 lines].

But, if we do not know that *we are children* of God from *the presence* of Holy Ghost in us, says Symeon, then we will not be *like* God, because *He is not in us* [343-346 lines].

### 2. 4. 3. The Symeonian Ecstasies from *the Life* Written by Saint Niketas

In the description of *the Life* of Saint Symeon, his Father, Saint Niketas Stethatos punctuates more ecstasies of him, *the first* being that from I, 5.

After how we said into a previous section, *the first symeonian ecstasy* is recognized and by Niketas, as being the one *before coming* of Saint Symeon at Stoudios, after what he met on Saint Symeon the Pious<sup>442</sup>.

The ecstatic description of the I, 5, begins with the detail that Symeon *was at prayer*, on time *at night* and he was *united* with *Prime Mind*, as a νοῦ καθαροῦ [*pure mind*]<sup>443</sup>.

Niketas puts the accent on *ghostual rationality* of man who prays, which is brought of *purity of mind* and on *his relation* with God as *Prime Reason*, as the *Fountain* of any *clean thinking*.

The ecstatic sight is integrated also in *the context of private prayer*, prolonged, of Saint Symeon.

It was a *night prayer*, where Symeon sees, suddenly, „a light from above, shining upon him, [*an*] *unmixed* [εἰλι-

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<sup>442</sup> Acc. OC 12, I, 4, 1-34, p. 6-8 [ed. Hausherr]/ *Life*, ed. Iliescu, p. 16-18/ Ică jr. 4, p. 246-247 [ed. Koutsas].

<sup>443</sup> Idem, I, 5, 1-2, p. 8/ Idem, p. 18/ Idem, p. 247.

κρινές] [*light coming*] from heaven, *immense* [ἄπλετον], that filled all with *the light* and *purity*, as and how *the day had come*<sup>444</sup>. *The light* and *the purity* are two *pregnant* realities of the niketian description and *the divine light* is presented as the foundation of *purity of mind* of Saint Symeon.

To Symeon, which *stands in the light*, says Niketas, it seemed to him that he did not see anymore *the house* and *the cell* in that he prayed, for that these two no longer *espied*<sup>445</sup> and he was „ἄρπαγέντα ἐν τῷ ἀέρι” [*ravished in the air*]<sup>446</sup>, he *forgetting his body*<sup>447</sup>.

In I, 5, 9-10, Niketas recognizes that he *reproduces* what he *heard* from Symeon and *what wrote and Symeon* about this *sight*<sup>448</sup>.

The oral and written tradition merges in *Life* written by Niketas and it is *the living mode*, coherent in that was transmitted to us *the holy* and *multilateral* Tradition of the Church.

The sight, says Niketas, was received by Symeon as a „foreign enormity” [τὸ ξένου τοῦ τεραστίου], as a *colossal experience*, for that he did *not live* such *discoveries* [ἀποκαλύψεων]<sup>449</sup>.

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<sup>444</sup> Idem, I, 5, 2-4, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>445</sup> Idem, I, 5, 5-7, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>446</sup> Idem, I, 5, 8, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>447</sup> Idem, I, 5, 7-8, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>448</sup> Idem, I, 5, 8-9, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>449</sup> Idem, I, 5, 10, p. 8/ Idem, p. 18-19/ Idem, p.

If Niketas recognizes that this is *the first symeonian ecstasy*, in the same night, Niketas says that Symeon lived and *another divine sight, distinct* from ecstasy, but *in extension* of it – for that it was „into the work of light”<sup>450</sup> – in which *he saw Saint Symeon the Pious*<sup>451</sup>.

In this second sight [εἶδος], Symeon sees „*a too-bright cloud, without form and without interruption, full of unspeakable glory of God, [which came] from the high heaven*”<sup>452</sup>.

Thus, νεφέλη [the cloud] and δόξα [glory], the two classical ecstatic representations of ghostual experience, *recur* and at Niketas and they punctuate *the ecstatic realities* of Saint Symeon.

From this is observed, that Saint Niketas proves himself *a fidel disciple* of Saint Symeon the New Theologian even and in the smallest details.

Speaking about *the apparation* of Saint Symeon the Pious *in the light*, Niketas uses the substantive ὄραμα [sight/ vision]. Symeon, his Father, had a „τοῦ φρικτοῦ ὀράματος” [frightening vision], in which *he saw* his Father, Saint Symeon the Pious<sup>453</sup>.

At the end of the first chapter of *Life*, in I, 9, Niketas presents *the second symeonian ecstasy* without as modern

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<sup>450</sup> Idem, I, 5, 14, p. 8/ Idem, p. 19/ Ibidem.

<sup>451</sup> Idem, I, 5, 13-14, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>452</sup> Idem, I, 5, 14-16, p. 8/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>453</sup> Idem, I, 5, 18, p. 10/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

editors of the text *to include* in subtitle this thing.

On the way to Constantinople, weeping and mourning, being again *alone*, Symeon has *the third divine sight* [if we consider *the first*, described by Niketas, as being *two sights*], in the middle of the mountains<sup>454</sup>.

Here, he was walking on mountain road, and „suddenly *the grace* of the Ghost from above *wrapped him* on the Righteous as *a fire*, that once Paul [Acts 9, 3; 22, 6] and *filled him integer* of joy and unspeakable sweetness, *increasing in him* [ἐπαυξήσασα] *the love* of God and *faith* in his ghostual Father”<sup>455</sup>.

Niketas does not want to make from *the third symeonian ecstasy* it describes *an another revelation* in road to Damascus, ie a muster of *identical sequentiality* with the ecstasy of Paul, but he presents the ecstasy *in the form in which it happened*.

*The annexation of the symeonian ecstasy at the pauline one* does not keep than of the detail to go to *a principal town*, at the fact that it *occurs while the mystic was on road* and at that one that the light *wrapped him suddenly*. But the two ecstasies are *not identical in nature* and nor God did not want *the same thing* when He gave the two.

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<sup>454</sup> Idem, I, 5, 12-18, p. 16-18/ Idem, p. 25/ Idem, p. 251.

<sup>455</sup> Idem, I, 5, 18-22, p. 18/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

If in the case of Paul, the ecstasy was *a converting meeting* with his Lord, in the case of Symeon, *the ecstasy from road* had the role *to increase the love* of Symeon to God and to his ghostual Father, the Saint Symeon the Pious.

We must see in this *ecstatic description* of Saint Niketas *the decisive role* which has the ecstasy in our *ghostual growth*.

*The ecstasy and the ghostual Father*, that God's direct guidance and direct guidance of Father, of his spiritual Mentor, *blends in divine mode* in the formation of Symeon.

Symeon needs *divine-human certitudes* for *to grow* in Christ, the *divine revelations* but and *the personal example*, charismatic, of the ghostual Father. He is *led* by the Ghost, *through divine light* but and the ghostual Father, through the same Ghost, *Who dwells* in him.

If in the two previous ecstasies we had *the cloud* and *the glory*, in *the third* we have part of the image of *the fire*, of πῦρ, which *wrapped* him.

In II, 19, we have part *the fourth ecstatic symeonian experience* described by Niketas.

Is by itself understood that we have another *consecution* of the symeonian sights, as long as in Koutsas's edition this *the fourth ecstatic place* is counted as *the*

*second*<sup>456</sup> and in Hausherr's edition they are not *supertitles* at subchapters.

After an interview with his Father, in which he prophets him *an astonishing increase* in himself of the grace, Symeon enters in his cell and has place *the sight* which we denominate as being *the 4th*<sup>457</sup>.

Symeon makes *a prolegomenon* of the ecstasy, presenting it as *rapid help* came from part of God<sup>458</sup>. Thus, „the light arose as *early morning* [πρώϊμον], and, unexpectedly, wrapped him from above *a bright light* like *a lightning* [ἀστραπή] [acc. Acts 26, 13], which *caught his* mind, raptured it with all and filled it with *a too-sweet joyousness*”<sup>459</sup>.

Niketas presents the 4th ecstasy as *a rapture of the mind* in light, where it is filled with *an extraordinary joyousness*.

Suddenly the night disappears and *the light appears* in the life of Saint Symeon as *a blinding light* of morning, as *a luminous lightning*, which wrapped him entirely.

While Symeon was with his face at ground in behind of this ecstasy and cried, he saw „a frightening miracle”<sup>460</sup>, namely „he saw with the mind *a bright cloud* [φωτοειδῆ νεφέλην] falling in entirely

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<sup>456</sup> To see *the supertitle* from II, 19 out of Ică jr. 4, p. 257.

<sup>457</sup> OC 12, II, 19, 7-8, p. 28/ Life, ed. Iliescu, p. 34/ Ică jr. 4, p. 257.

<sup>458</sup> Idem, II, 19, 12-13, p. 28/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>459</sup> Idem, II, 19, 13-16, p. 28/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>460</sup> Idem, II, 19, 19, p. 29/ Idem, p. 35/ Ibidem.

over him, producing all the pleasure and sweetness in his soul and it filled him with divine grace reducing to the end *the thickness earthly* of the fleshly thought”<sup>461</sup>.

We have therefore, as and in the case of the ecstasies I and II, *an immediate continuity* between the ecstasies IV and V. *The light* is seen as a *lightning* but and as a *bright cloud*, it sanctifies Symeon, in evident mode.

*The 6th ecstasy* described by Saint Niketas occurs also in the night<sup>462</sup>, in the moment when Saint Symeon wanted to write his father and to teach, how to correspond this one with *men Saints* [ἄνδρας Ἁγίους] and, especially, with Saint Symeon the Pious<sup>463</sup>.

Just when Symeon *began* his letter to his natural father, „suddenly, shone him *an infinite light* [φῶς ἄπειρον] from heaven and it *tore* the roof of his house and filled again the soul of him with a *joy* and *untold pleasure*, thus that the immensity of that light, the candlestick [λύχνον] that lighted – because it was night – was dark with all.

And, behold, as from this divine light came a *voice* that said: <the Apostle and the disciple of Christ, the mediator and our ambassador at God><sup>464</sup>.

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<sup>461</sup> Idem, II, 19, 20-23, p. 28-30/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>462</sup> Idem, III, 23, 11, p. 32/ Idem, p. 38/ Idem, p. 259.

<sup>463</sup> Idem, III, 23, 3-6, p. 32/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

<sup>464</sup> Idem, III, 23, 8-13, p. 32/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

Putting in antithesis *the heavenly light* and *the light of the candlestick* has the role to emphasize *the immensity* of the divine light which saw Symeon and this ecstasy is *a new guarantee* from part of God of *the holiness* of Saint Symeon the Pious, the Father of Saint Symeon.

Symeon, after how we find from III, 24, was not *a monk* at this data<sup>465</sup>.

He was still *a novice* in the Monastery of Saint Mammias<sup>466</sup>.

All 6 *ecstasies* presented by Niketas are *anterior* to his monastic life and they had the role *to initiate* him and *to strengthen* Symeon in mystical life and, in the same time, to increase his *confidence* in his Father, in Saint Symeon the Pious.

Symeon enters in the monastic life as a man with *a great ghostual enhancement*, with *a great zeal for holiness* and with *a steadfast confidence* in the holiness of his Father.

God Himself *watched* this *whole interior union* of Symeon with his Father and Symeon *never abdicated* from it. *The whole interior rallying* at life of God and *the full confidence* in his Father were the two *major interior coordinates* of the New Theologian.

The end of the 23rd section narrates the fact, that Symeon wrote that letter to his father *in ecstatic mode*, being in light,

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<sup>465</sup> Idem, III, 24, 1-4, p. 34/ Ibidem/ Idem, p. 260.

<sup>466</sup> Idem, III, 22, 4, p. 32/ Idem, p. 37/ Idem, p.

because God *guided* his hand to write<sup>467</sup>. Niketas uses the expression „dictated from above” [τὴν ἄνωθεν ῥηθείσαν] for that to remind us *the detail*, that the *express* revelation of truths, in written form, is not *a singular thing* but it is *refind* at Saints of Scripture and in the lives of many Saints of the Church.

The light of God made again for Symeon *a day without evening* in the middle of the night and Symeon *writes* those whom God speaks to him, being *surrounded* by divine light.

After his entry into monasticism, our Father lived a life of „an extreme purity” [ἄκρον ἐκκαθαρθέντι]<sup>468</sup>.

In III, 24, Niketas says that Saint Symeon „became entire *attention*, entire full of *the warmth* of the Ghost, entire full of divine revelations and lightenments [θείων ἀποκαλύψεων καὶ ἐλλάμψεων]”<sup>469</sup>.

From here on neither Nikita and nor us can no longer have *an inventory*, however probabilistic, of the symeonian ecstasies.

From III, 26 results that the divine sight it becomes *quotidian* Saint Symeon shortly after what *he became a monk*.

About this *quotidianness* of the sight of the light, Saint Niketas writes: „From

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<sup>467</sup> Idem, III, 23, 17-20, p. 32-34/ Idem, p. 38/ Idem, p. 260.

<sup>468</sup> Idem, III, 25, 1-2, p. 34/ Idem, p. 39/ Idem, p. 260.

<sup>469</sup> Idem, III, 26, 3-5, p. 36/ Idem, p. 40/ Idem, p. 261.

this reason and before all, *gathering himself the whole* from the ones from outside, he stood *at prayer*.

And, at the beginning of the day, as the one *unharméd* [by anything], was *ravished* [ἀρπάζων] *up* his mind and *he united* [συγγινόμενος], in immaterial mode, with *the God the One immaterial*, he did not have the thinking *attracted* of no care, nor *divided* in senses.

For the Divine Himself, before his prayers, *take it soon* and enveloped it *the mind of his soul* in His natural/ proper light [τῷ ἐμφύτῳ φωτὶ] and *it melted* the earthly from it, filling it by *the warmth* of the Ghost and the heart by *all joyousness*<sup>470</sup>.

Saint Symeon *united* with the light *still before* at morning prayer, at when he woke and it, *the light*, removed from his soul every thought and earthly stain.

Niketas accentuated *the role of the light* in the life of Symeon through that, that it makes him daily with *an immaterial mind*, abstracted from all care and earthly reality.

But we have at Niketas and a *trenchant emphasis* of the fact that divine light, which saw Symeon, it is *proper* of God, that it is *of His*, that it is *something natural* for God, it is *proper* Himself.

Life together with God *excludes* any impurity and bodily care. The ghostual

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<sup>470</sup> Idem, III, 26, 11-18, p. 36/ Idem, p. 40-41/ Ibidem.

life is *an immaterial life*, lived in the light, lived as *continues union* with divine light.

The end of the 27th chapter shows us the nights full of grace of Symeon, in which he saw himself „sometimes, coming out of himself, *through divine contemplations* and *he united*, in mystic face, *with God*”<sup>471</sup>.

From IV, 29, 1, we find that this *quotidian filling* with light of Symeon happened in *the two years* of monasticism, which preceded the moment of *his ordination into priest*<sup>472</sup>.

In IV, 30, the chapter dedicated of *his cheirotonia*, Niketas says, that Symeon, „the seer of the frightening visions, that he contemplated with eyes of Cherub”<sup>473</sup>, received *the priesthood* after much *interior resistance*<sup>474</sup>.

In the moment of cheirotonia, „when the most-wise Symeon was made *priest* by the bishop, and he said prayer over him, and he had the knee and the head *bowed* in the face of the Mystery, he saw *a vision* and, behold!, the Holy Ghost descending in the face of *infinite* light, *simple* and *formless* [ἀπείρου φωτὸς ἀπλοῦν καὶ ἀνείδεον], it covered his most-holy head, [Ghost] Whom, in the 48 years of priesthood, he saw Him *descending*

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<sup>471</sup> Idem, III, 27, 14-15, p. 38/ Idem, p. 42/ Idem, p. 262.

<sup>472</sup> Idem, IV, 29, 1, p. 40/ Idem, p. 44/ Ibidem.

<sup>473</sup> Idem, IV, 30, 12-13, p. 40-42/ Idem, p. 45/ Idem, p. 263.

<sup>474</sup> Idem, IV, 30, 6-7, p. 40/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

[κατερχόμενον] over the Holy Sacrifice, brought by him to God, [after] how he himself said to someone, hiding himself, as and how he spoke about another one and [it] is written in his sayings”<sup>475</sup>.

According to this testimony of Niketas, it results that *the number* of the symeonian ecstasies is impossible to say, for that Symeon lived *mostly* in the divine light, he was *enlightened* by grace and he was *filled* by the Holy Ghost.

Symeon receives the priesthood *into consciousness*, he *seeing* the grace that *came in him* and constantly *reviewing it* down over the Venerable Gifts, which he served.

His *interiorization* with the light was and is, with true, difficult to understand by those who did not have any *gracious experience* in their lives.

The reporting of Symeon at Church’s life is *on measure* of his mystical experience and it is seen everywhere in his theological writings.

*The height* and *the correctness* of symeonian theology is not given by *style*, by *erudition* or by *rhetorical emphasis* with which he writes but of *the greatness* of his mystical experiences.

*The experience*, the *mystical* and *liturgical realism* of Symeon, the biblical realism and ecclesial of his work are the expression of *his deep interiorization* with

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<sup>475</sup> Idem, IV, 30, 13-21, p. 42/ Idem, p. 45-46/ Idem, p. 263-264.

God. Precisely because there was, *in real mode*, this *his personal union* with God, Symeon could produce a *conquering theology*, frighteningly *high* and *beautiful*, the divine.

In the 33rd chapter, Niketas describes the image of *liturgist* of Saint Symeon: „he liturgised *together* with *cohorts of the top*, he sitting in the seat of priests, [and] he brought *always* [ἀεὶ] to God the Sacrifice without the blood, *in the sight of the Ghost* [ἐν ὀπτασίᾳ τοῦ Πνεύματος] and with a form of the face like the face of an Angel”<sup>476</sup>.

Symeon *served*, in real mode, with the heavenly Powers, he *saw* the descent of the divine grace *over* the Venerable Gifts and, he being full of grace, he was like *an Angel in the flesh*.

By the adverb ἀεὶ, Niketas wanted to say that Symeon *saw* in every time, into a some mode, *the coming* of the Holy Ghost *over him* and *over the Venerable Gifts* in front of him.

*The sight of the light* by Saint Symeon, according to these biographical details, did not happen only into a *private space*, away from the eyes of others, but it also take place and in the frame of *the liturgical services*, when Simeon was surrounded by people.

Niketas insists on *the pneumatic aspect* of Symeon’s being then when he

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<sup>476</sup> Idem, IV, 33, 2-5, p. 44/ Idem, p. 47/ Idem, p. 265.

served: „the grace of the Ghost made him whole like a fire and almost unapproachable [σχεδὸν ἀπρόσιτος] for human eyes during his Liturgy”<sup>477</sup>.

Niketas sees in Symeon *the attributes* of the divine light, because he was *filled* with the Ghost. He was ὡς πῦρ [like the fire] and σχεδὸν ἀπρόσιτος [almost unapproachable] for those who watched him.

For that he was *filled* with the light, with the holiness of God, Symeon is characterized through the intermedium of *the light divine entitlings*.

The divine light that *spring out* from him, because it was in him, it made Symeon to be like a *Angel*, ie a being frighteningly *beautiful* and *unapproachable* for an unghostual human mind.

Two of his disciples see Symeon in mystical situations.

Symeon from Ephesus, the Ephesian, sees him during the Divine Liturgy dressed in *patriarchal vestment* [πατριαρχικὴν στολήν]<sup>478</sup>, sign that Symeon could be *ordained* whenever as *patriarch of Constantinople*, as long as God *allowed* this thing and Meletius, tonsured as a monk by Symeon, he confesses to Niketas: „Often I saw a *bright cloud* [νεφέλη φωτινὴν] covering him whole, when he stood in altar during

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<sup>477</sup> Idem, IV, 33, 11-13, p. 44/ Idem, p. 48/ Ibidem.

<sup>478</sup> Idem, IV, 33, 14-19, p. 44/ Ibidem/ Idem, p. 265-266.

*Holy before putting.* And, on right word, for those who are *distinguished* through *the height* of virtues, they are worthy and of *the divine glory*<sup>479</sup>.

Niketas demonstrated by this *witnesses* that not only Symeon confessed himself that *he sees* the light of God, but and other *ghostual people*, from around him, ascertained *the presence of the Ghost* in his being.

Symeon could *not hide*, could not hide *the amazing ghostual increase*, for that the Holy Ghost Himself was the One who gave him away and which confessed him as *holy man* in front of disciples, of friends and of his hierarchical superiors and of the people that listen him.

But Niketas is still doing something *essential* in mystical biography of Symeon.

He shows that *the bright cloud* or *the glory* of Trinity that was seen on Sinai, on Tabor, at the bank of the Jordan or in way to Damascus and in island Patmos were not ecstatic unrepeatable evidences in the economy of salvation, but the presence of the Ghost is *quotidian* in the life of those who sanctify themselves, anytime *they live* and wherever *they are* on the face of the earth.

*The sight of the light* not keeps of place, of the historical moment, of social or ecclesial rank, of age, of gender, of

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<sup>479</sup> Idem, IV, 33, 19-23, p. 44/ Ibidem/ Idem, p. 266.

ethnicity or financial situation of the believer, but of *his inner purity*, the holiness of his person, which is *the only requirement* for that the Lord *reveals to us His light*.

Just therefore Meletius sees Symeon covered by *the bright cloud* of glory the Godhead and Niketas says that he was *like fire, like an Angel* when he served.

Everyone perceives Symeon, the full of the Ghost, on measure of *his ghostual growth* and each of them Symeon showed them into *an apart mode*.

In the 36th chapter, we have described another ecstasy of Symeon spent the night. It has a special character from cause *the charisma* that he received it in behind it.

Niketas describes *the ecstasy* in the following terms: „This being, therefore, the work that the brave one had it *in hidden* in every day, into a night, while he stood and offered his prayers to the Lord, he saw *a vision* and, behold!, *a bright cloud* [νεφέλη φωτός] descending from heaven through the roof of house was *placed over* his honorable head and, covering it whole for a *lot of watches*, it filled by *a very ardent pleasure* and *untold* and by *a joyousness* and *a cheerfulness* impossible to said, and from there he heard and *a mystic voice* [μυστικῆς φωνῆς] that taught him *foreign mysteries* [ξένα μυστήρια] and *hidden* [κεκρυμμένα].

Therefore, even and when this cloud has been lifted, he found his heart in *God's wisdom* [σοφία Θεοῦ] shedding the waters of the divine grace.

And then he had not been *himself*, but the grace of God *pulled him whole* to Himself and it made from his tongue *a reed what writes sharp* [Ps. 44, 1] and from his thought *a fountain of the wisdom of God* [Bar. 3, 12].

Therefore, although he was *with all unlearned in the teachings of the outside* [ἀμαθῆς ὢν πάντα τῶν θύραθεν μαθημάτων], he *theologized* [ἐθεολόγει] like the Beloved and the entire nights he traversed, in order, *those of theology* [τῆς θεολογίας ὄλαις]<sup>480</sup>, for that „he was worthy by *the apostolic gift*, saying the word of the teaching [ἀποστολικῆς ἀξιωθεὶς δωρεῖας τοῦ λόγου τῆς διδασκαλίας φημί]<sup>481</sup>, as an organ of the Ghost<sup>482</sup>.

During this ecstasy, Symeon receives *the charisma of the theology*. Now Symeon is *taught* by God, in mystic mode, *the dogmas of faith* and Symeon feels himself *taken in posesion*, inhabited, mastered by the Holy Ghost, Who teaches him all.

Niketas do not mention at a venture *the detail* that Symeon lacked *culture and science* of his time, ie *teaching from*

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<sup>480</sup> Idem, V, 36, 1-15, p. 48/ Idem, p. 51-52/ Idem, p. 267-268.

<sup>481</sup> Idem, V, 37, 9-10, p. 50/ Idem, p. 52/ Idem, p. 268.

<sup>482</sup> Idem, V, 37, 10-11, p. 50/ Ibidem/ Ibidem.

*outside*. Niketas remembers this thing, for to put in prime-plan *the theology as charisma*.

Just for that Symeon is *taught* by the Ghost, for that he received *at above* the theological teaching, he is *the Theologian par excellence* of the Church.

Niketas, as and Symeon otherwise, pointing out the fact that we have *a real theological knowledge* only as *a result* of the ecstatic revelations from part of God, tells us bluntly for all that we can not confide in our own theological deductions, because God *single teaches us* about Himself, that only He can show us *the true theology* and that on it we receive as *a result* of the personal purity.

Theology is *a divine gift* and not *an exclusive product* of human intelligence.

In the 69th chapter, Niketas describes to us *an another ecstasy* of Saint Symeon, in that the divine light *penetrates* his whole body and makes our Father to be *only light*, *only the heavenly fire*:

„Into a day, therefore, how he standing at *a pure prayer* and *talking* with God, he saw *a vision*. And, behold!, the air began *to shine* in his mind and being in cell seemed him that he spends in daylight. But it was night, at the first watch.

And how began *to light* [φαίνειν] at above, as *the brightnesses* of the morning sun...home and all [things] have *passed*

and he thought that *he was not in the house*.

As *out of himself* with all [ἐξίστατω ὅλως], he observed *with all the mind* that light which shows to him: it grew *a little* and made the air *to shine* and brighter and he realized that he ended up with whole body *in outside of the earth*.

And how that light continues to shine *even more clear* and it appeared shining *above him* as the noon sun, he understood that he stood *in the middle of what he saw* and he was filled whole, in all the body, of *the happiness* and of *the tears of pleasure* that invaded him.

For he saw the light itself *touching*, in amazing face, at his body and *entering a little* in the members of him [κάτ' ὀλίγον γινόμενον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν αὐτοῦ]. [...]

He saw so how little by little that light was given *whole his entire body*, the heart and his visceras and it makes him *whole fire and light* [πῦρ ὅλον καὶ φῶς]<sup>483</sup>.

Being taught by *a heavenly voice* about the what were done with him<sup>484</sup>, Symeon understood that „the glory that *enveloped him...[is] the happiness* that has *to be given to the Saints in the eternal face*”<sup>485</sup>.

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<sup>483</sup> Idem, IX, 69, 1-16, 18-20, p. 92-94/ Idem, p. 88-89/ Idem, p. 288.

<sup>484</sup> Idem, IX, 69, 22-23, p. 94/ Idem, p. 89/ Ibidem.

<sup>485</sup> Idem, IX, 70, 1-4, p. 94/ Idem, p. 90/ Idem, p. 289.

This ecstasy *initiates* Symeon in the *eternal existence* of Saints, when all will have the bodies *fully transfigured* and the light *will live* in them in eternal mode.

Presenting the direct action, intensive, transfiguring of light on body, Niketas speaks us, in subsidiary, and about *full filling* of the soul by the Holy Ghost, ie about *the full pneumatization* of human being.

What the Holy Ghost *did* in this case with Symeon was not than that *entrusted to him*, in *personal mode* and *experiential*, about how shown *the full pneumatization* of the *risen body* of the Lord and, through He, of all Saints.

Symeon *foretasted* in ecstatic mode *the state of full deification of man*, and namely our *eshatological condition*, that of *resurrected* beings and *transfigured* by the grace of the Trinity.

Saint Symeon needed *to be taught* by the Ghost opposite of what *had been done* with him. Namely is needed by a *divine express lighting* for that we *understand* the ecstatic sights that we have.

The ecstasies are explained to us *all by the Holy Ghost*, in measure in that God *considers necessary* this thing at personal level.

In the 71th chapter, Niketas authenticates the amazing increase in holiness of Symeon: for he had become „only of the Ghost and he was full of His

divine charismata, he being *extreme clean with mind* and *he saw*, on right word, as *the Prophets of old* [οἱ Προφῆται πάλαι] the visions and the frightening revelations of the Lord.

And he being thus and he having *the apostolic mind* [ἀποστολικὴν τὴν διάνοιαν], since he was *under the work* of God's Ghost and he was *put in motion* by Him, he had *the grace of the word* pouring out through his lips [Ps. 44, 3]<sup>486</sup>.

Putting of Symeon among of Prophets and Apostles, because of his visions, is not, we think, *an exaggeration* from part of Niketas, but *a pertinent observation* concerning at his ecstatic life.

Symeon had *colossal divine revelations*, alike with *Prophets* and *Apostles* and „driven by impetuous [τῆ βιαίᾳ] breath of the Ghost, he made *public* [ἄκων δημοσιεύει], [even without his will], those that he saw in God's discoveries and visions, then when he reached *beyond nature*”<sup>487</sup>.

Symeon had visions from God and also God *pushes him* to make them public and this *revealing* of his theological revelations was *itself the accurate mode*, concrete, at *to do theology*.

Symeon does not leave *confiscated* the theology in the hands of men *unclean*

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<sup>486</sup> Idem, IX, 71, 9-15, p. 96/ Idem, p. 91/ Ibidem.

<sup>487</sup> Idem, XII, III, 8-10, p. 154/ Idem, p. 139/ Idem, p. 318.

*of passions* but he shows through his life, that *to do theology* means *to have a charisma of God* and that *the entire content of theology is ecstatic* and it must be *received* from God for as to be a *credible speech* about Him.

## Soteriology

### 2. 5. The Path of Deification and the Sight of God

In this chapter we try to present symeonian soteriology from the perspective of *three classical stages* in orthodox theology: *the cleaning of passions*, *the unpassion* and *the deification*, which and he accepts it in his writings, as we shall see.

But Symeon stresses continuously the fact that we come to sanctify our lives if we are *in living obedience* to a ghostual Father, which to coordinate step by step our life.

Thereby the personal salvation is seen as *a continuous advance* in holiness, through the experience of *the sight of God* God, *in daily obedience* to a ghostual Father.

## 2. 5. 1. The Emergence of Light in Those Who are Cleansed of Passions

In the Hymn 8, our Father shows that those who love God are loved in turn by God as some *His friends* and to them *He is shown*<sup>488</sup>.

God appears in our life as *a sun* (ἥλιος), as *a real sun*, although it is κεκρυμμένος (secret/ hidden) for all mortal nature<sup>489</sup> but, especially, for the whole mind that *intellectualizes* the reality and the manifestations of God in the world and in the faithful man.

The light is it that *rises* in those of God<sup>490</sup> and, says Symeon, „You are *seen* by themselves and *into* You pop up who that once were dark, unchaste, adulterous and decayed, sinners, tax collectors. [For that] repenting, they are *sons* of Thy divine light (υἱὸν φωτός Σου θείου), light gives birth to all from the light, [from itself], since, with true, the light makes them *perfect*, sons of God, that some who *take/ know* [all], and [are] *gods by grace*”<sup>491</sup>.

The decayed life which we had formerly, washed through the tears of repentance, is not *an impediment* for the *sight of God*.

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<sup>488</sup> SC 156, Hymns, VIII, 1-5, p. 214/ Ică jr. 3, p. 70.

<sup>489</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 6, p. 214/ Ibidem.

<sup>490</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 7, p. 214/ Ibidem.

<sup>491</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 7-12, p. 214/ Ibidem.

The repentance is at Saint Symeon *the interior estate* that makes God to *spring* into our being, ie to give us the sight of His light.

From the passage quoted above reemerge in clear mode that divine light is what that makes us *sons of God* and that light brings us *the perfection*, the holiness.

*The estate of holiness* keeps in fundamental mode of *the seeing of the divine light*.

Just therefore we debate *the sight of God as the fundamental reality* in personal salvation, for that *the holiness is living in grace and sight of the divine light*.

The repentance and the purity are *contiguous* at Symeon. The repentance is not, at fact, only *a distinct thurm* in the *divine-human* process of the cleaning of passions. For Symeon *the cleaning* is *endless/ without final* [ἀτέλειος ἡ κάθαρσις] for that *the desire of cleaning* and the longing *to see the light* are endless<sup>492</sup>.

*Desire of light* comes from *the sight of it* and as we see more light, on both we feel that we have *in noway* the wealth of it *in integral mode*<sup>493</sup>.

The light seen by Symeon is as a *sweet sun* [γλυκὺς ὁ ἥλιος], lived in *unspeakable mode* in our senses<sup>494</sup>.

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<sup>492</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 39-40, p. 218/ Idem, p. 71.

<sup>493</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 50-51, p. 218/ Ibidem.

<sup>494</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 54, p. 218/ Ibidem.

The sweetness of light is not *refelt* by the soul *in opposition* with the body, but, after how we see from the symeonian text, the soul and the body *feel*, they *communicate* in proper mode, real, by the light of God, they resenting it as *sweet*.

The divine sun, the light, comes in us not producing *an interior disaster* but, contrariwise, *a re-binding*, a relationship of us with God.

What *sweetens* our senses, what *sanctifies us* both the ghostual senses and those bodily is *the divine light*, which *attracts* the soul to *an inexpressible longing and divine* [πόθον ἀνέκφραστον καὶ θεῖον]<sup>495</sup> by Holy Trinity.

The light that *comes from above* and that *springs* in our being as *a sun* it does not want *to leave us* on earth, but hangs us, through the longing for God, at the light of the Trinity.

The light springs in us for that *to burn us for longing* and wants that us to keep in our being all what is *shown to us* in ecstasy, all that *immensity* and *amazing wealth* of divine light<sup>496</sup>.

*The sight of light* is but *a spare of us* by God<sup>497</sup>.

When God *has mercy* on someone – and not when we *consider* that we *must have mercy* – „[then], suddenly, after how I saw Him *shining* before my face, thus I

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<sup>495</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 55, p. 218/ Ibidem.

<sup>496</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 56-57, p. 218/ Ibidem.

<sup>497</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 62, p. 218/ Ibidem.

see Him *shining utterly* in me and *utterly fills me* with all joy, of all fullness of desire and most divine sweetness, on me, the humble [His servant]"<sup>498</sup>.

From the confession of Saint Symeon results the fact that Christ, the One full of glory, which the Disciples saw Him *in outside* of their body, he, and all who see the divine light, they see Him *in plenary mode*, full of the Ghost, *in themselves*.

*Christ's ascension into heaven and the descent of Holy Ghost* to those who expected *the fulfillment of the promise* is in fact „a presence of depth and of ghostual elevation”<sup>499</sup> of Christ in those and in our being.

*The sight of Christ's glory or the indwelling of Trinity's light in us* is what that *fulfills us and perfects us* and this dwelling is *real and acknowledged* by us.

About *the sight* Symeon says that it is *a capital event*, defining, in our being: „the transformation/ [our] change is *evident, is a foreign change*. Which what is *made perfect* in me and *hit me* [on me] is *unspeakable*.

For that, if would see someone that sun *dwelt* [in us], that with all [how we see], we see *entering in heart*, and *living* in us in entirety and *shining* also [in entirety], would not be *dead* from cause

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<sup>498</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 63-66, p. 218-220/ Ibidem.

<sup>499</sup> Acc. Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* [*Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*], ed. II, vol. 2, ed. cit., p. 122-123.

of the miracle and should not become *speechless* and [once with he] and all those who *meet* the man who lived it?”<sup>500</sup>.

The divine light produces *a radical change* in our being, *a foreign* one from our daily experience. After that we will not ever be the ones before, whatever we do. *The sight of light* means *our acceptance* by God in the communion of His divine life. It is *a crossing over* our earthly condition, for that we get „the divine glory”<sup>501</sup> and we enrich „from Himself the Source of living forever”<sup>502</sup>.

And this is possible, for that „*the sight of the divine light* does not depend however only of *his spreading* through the body of Christ, but and of *the voluntary opening* for it of the human persons”<sup>503</sup>, how said Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae.

In the Hymn 7, the sun *shines* in the heart of Symeon in immaterial mode (ἄϋλως)<sup>504</sup> and he *wants the light* for that *to compose hymns of thanks* to his Father, Saint Symeon the Pious<sup>505</sup>.

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<sup>500</sup> SC 156, Hymns, VIII, 67-73, p. 220/ Ică jr. 3, p. 71.

<sup>501</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 93, p. 222/ Idem, p. 72.

<sup>502</sup> Idem, Hymns, VIII, 97, p. 222/ Ibidem.

<sup>503</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Personal Relation with Christ in the Light of Divine Infinity, after Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Legătura personală cu Hristos în lumina infinității dumnezeiești, după Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology Studies* [Studii de teologie dogmatică ortodoxă], op. cit., p. 315.

<sup>504</sup> SC 156, Hymns, VII, 3-4, p. 208/ Ică jr. 3, p. 68.

<sup>505</sup> Idem, Hymns, VII, 7-9, p. 208/ Ibidem.

The doxological function of ecstatic experience is combined with experimentation of the relation with God as *longing*, as desire *always ardent* for to see Him.

At Symeon *the longing for God* is πόνος<sup>506</sup>, is suffering, pain, acute weight of its entire innerness.

Just for this symeonian's asceticism is not, more chosen, one *of borne of the physical burdens*, but rather *of the intensity of feeling*, of education in inner waiting of the divine mercy, of borne of *the exigencies of faith and of longing for God*.

*The cleaning of passions* is at Symeon *an evidence* sanctioned by God Himself, for that He looks like *a sun* that *illuminates* fully our being.

In symeonian theology, the sun is not *a literary motive* but *an ecstatic evidence*.

Symeon does not speak of *religious symbols*, he does not portray *symbolic paintings*, ie a continuous series of *metaphors* without *substance divine*, but he reveals *the mode* how is shown *the divine light* in his being.

Just therefore, our exegesis at the opera of Symeon *does not have* and nor must to have ever a character *pure literary* but the one *eminently theological*, for that he talks about *the real presence of light* in his life.

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<sup>506</sup> Idem, Hymns, VII, 17, p. 210/ Ibidem.

The symeonian theology is, with precedence, *the theology of confession*, of *ecstatic confession* and must be *perceived as such*.

*The slip* from this coordinate of ecstatic confession, in *boarding* of his theology, is not destined than to a *cheap sensationalism* or a *literaturisation* too little *valid* for the theological spectrum.

Only if it is perceived as *a clear testimony*, unliar of a holy life, full of divine revelations, the symeonian theology is, with true, *a protreptic* for our lives.

Symeon requires *facts*, ἔργων from us, for that and God saves us if *we show facts*, if we are not *idle*<sup>507</sup>.

But for he *the good works* are not a *scope* in itself, but „all ascesis and all facts that are done by us are that impart us by *divine light* like a *rushlight*”<sup>508</sup>.

*The divine sun* and *human rushlight*, although *total contrasting* into a theology that would follow *the difference of degree* between them, are not without *an inner connection* in symeonian theology.

The divine light, with all its frightening and unthinkable *immensity* for the faithful man, however *does not crush* the *human rushlight*, the human being, but *fills it* with grace. *Union* between God and man *through ecstasy*,

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<sup>507</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 33, p. 278/ Idem, p. 90.

<sup>508</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXXIII, 130-132, p. 422/ Idem, p. 202.

through the sight of the light, it's *a real union*, conscious.

Faithful man understands *what happens* with him. Just therefore, Symeon stresses repeatedly that „ένωσις... γίνεται ἀμφοτέρων ἐν γνώσει” (union of the two [of God with man] is fully into acquaintance/ consciousness)<sup>509</sup>.

*The asceticism* required by Symeon is an interior awareness of ghostual changes that occur with us, the awareness that culminates with *the sight of the light*, in that we never lose *the understanding* of the fact, that what we see is *something real* and not a *mental fantasy*, that is not exceeding the world in which we are.

The sight of the light into consciousness [έν γνώσει] means for Symeon *the acute reception*, overwhelming of *the divine realities* that are facilitated to us in ecstatic mode.

Thus explains the fact why Symeon *problematizes not* what he sees, but *he wonders continually* by *the amazing wealth* of ecstasies that he had.

In the Hymn 34, 79, assimilating the ἀστραπή with an ἥλιος μέγας, Symeon says that *the sight of the light*, however we would show it, as *flash* or as *a huge sun*, does nothing else in us than *interior enlightens us*<sup>510</sup>. But here, in the Hymn

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<sup>509</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 20, p. 428/ Idem, p. 203.

<sup>510</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 78-80, p. 434/ Idem, p. 205.

34, we have a formula that *guarantees*, in our opinion, *the hesychast dimension* of the symeonian experience.

He says that the light *shines* in us and it is *understood* νοερώς ἐν καρδίᾳ, *with the mind in the heart*<sup>511</sup>.

If Simeon had not seen *the sight of the light* as a result of *unceasing prayer*, we have not had in his descriptions *the placements* of the ecstasy in the frame of *assiduous peculiar prayers*.

In the Hymn 35, our soul is *the mirror* [ἔσοπτρον] that receives *the ray of the divine sun*, ie *the rays of Godhead* [ἄκτινας τῆς Θεότητός]<sup>512</sup>. But we are *mirrors* in that not only that *is reflected* the light, but it and *impresses* in us, for that we are *living mirrors*, ghostual.

In the Hymn 42, suitable to the proceeding of *the terminological assimilation* about which we talked, Symeon affirms: „And in union [with You], I see You as on *a sun*, and I see You as on *a star*, and I keep You in my bosom as on *a pearl* and I see You as on *a rushlight* located inside of a vessel”<sup>513</sup>.

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<sup>511</sup> Idem, Hymns, XXXIV, 78, p. 434/ Ibidem. This formula and *the whole boarding of the sight of God* at Saint Symeon, makes us convinced at the fact that Symeon was *a hesychast* and that *the hesychast prayer method*, kept in traditional mode *on his name*, it belongs and not is *no an exaggeration* of Tradition's reception.

<sup>512</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXXV, 55-59, p. 444/ Idem, p. 208.

<sup>513</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 85-87, p. 44/ Idem, p. 230.

All forms under which is seen *the light* and is *indicated scripturally* represents for Symeon a *divine reality* that *reveals ecstatic* the believer.

But exist *the sight* as long as exist *the union* with Trinity's light.

The light *gushing* into our being, *rises* in us, only on the fund of *ardent search*, of God's unquenchable and an *asceticism conscious* by *the work of the grace* in our being<sup>514</sup>, for *to rise* to the communion of life and love of Most Holy Trinity.

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<sup>514</sup> Into an article by youth, Father Professor Dumitru Popescu said about the relation between *the good works* and *salvation* at Saint Symeon: „the facts do not operate the believer's *salvation* from *outside*, *automatic* and *mechanical*, but rather they have a *soteriological* and *ontological sense*”, acc. Mast. D.[umitru] Popescu, *The Good Works after Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, in rev. *The Orthodoxy* XIV (1962), no. 4, p. 542-543.

## 2. 5. 2. The Unpassion and the Divine Light

*The sight of the light* does not mean at Symeon than *the beginning* of conscious ghostual life. *The first ecstasy* does not mean *the human deification* but *the real beginning* of the dispassion, of the purification of passions.

Therefore he is not absolutising *the sporadic sight*, that takes you *by surprise*, namely *the sight of the beginners*, but he speaks about *the advance in purity* and in *the permanentness of light* in us as *the real state*, plenary of the deification.

The Ethical Discours 4, that *holds perfectly on the entitling* of this section, has right *scope* the speech about *unpassion/ apathy* [ἀπάθειαν], about how shows in fact *the unpassion* in the one who sanctifies life.

Saint Symeon begins his speech from *a maximal quota*, for that he asks from the one who speaks about *unpassion* to have the soul loose of „πάσης ἐπιθυμίας πονηρᾶς καὶ ἐμπαθοῦς λογισμοῦ” [all evil desire and of the passionate thought]<sup>515</sup>.

In addition to experience *the state of unpassion* Symeon requests and *an excessive clarity of mind* for to speak on this subject, for that the speaker about

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<sup>515</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 4-5, p. 8/ Ică jr. 1, p. 219.

*unpassion* should not have a „troublesome mind” and not an „unclean heart” when debates it<sup>516</sup>.

Those that are *unpassioned*, says Symeon, and talk about *unpassion* ignite and more by the longing for it<sup>517</sup>, while those who are bound, even and in very little, through any passion, of this world, are far by „its haven”<sup>518</sup>.

*The haven of the unpassion* excludes *the interior darkening* and *the inner fight* with the holiness<sup>519</sup>.

Doing *the first step* in discussing of *the state of unpassion* of the ghostual man, Symeon speaks of its acquisition through νοεράς αἰσθήσεως [the feeling of mind], through θεωρίας [contemplation/sight] and through παντουργοῦ ἐνεργείας αὐτῆς πείραν ὅλως [the work of-all-working of that total experience/ full], of *the presence of light* in our being<sup>520</sup>.

He puts *the whole process* of cleaning the passions thus, on account of *divine illuminations*, of *ecstatic sights* and of *light’s works* in our being.

Symeon focuses on *the ghostual aspect* of the process of *dispassion* and of

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<sup>516</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 10, p. 8/ Ibidem.

<sup>517</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 18-21, p. 8-10/ Idem, p. 219-220.

<sup>518</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 21-24, p. 10/ Idem, p. 220.

<sup>519</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 30-33, p. 10/ Ibidem.

<sup>520</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 34-35, p. 10/ Ibidem.

the reaching *in state of unpassion* of whole being, without as by this *to put in shadow* the whole ascesis in that is integrated and *the body*, in that we are *fully integrated* in our relation with God.

When Symeon speaks about *unpassion* does not dissociate *the soul* from *the body* (after how he does not in frame of the ecstasy), but he *focuses* on the aspect which *he wants to discuss it*, keeping into a *normal balance* both dimensions of the human person.

If for one who has *unpassion* this is a *πεῖραν ὅλως*, a total experience, holistic of our being, a feeling of living work, current of *divine light* in our being, at opposite pole, the one who *doesn't have* and spoken about it he treats it *fraudulent*, venturing in „*many thoughts* and in *diverse analogies*”<sup>521</sup>, without that he has *the interior certainties* of its<sup>522</sup>.

Symeon, no doubt, had in view on experimenters and theologians who self-titled *knowledgeable* of the process of personal sanctification but could not say *something concrete* about *the details* of this divine-human process.

Symeon does not take *revenge* in their face if he talks about this subject, but he narrates *the state of unpassion* which *he lived* and which *he could explain* very coherent and credible.

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<sup>521</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 36-37, p. 10/  
Ibidem.

<sup>522</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 39, p. 10/  
Ibidem.

In face of *analogies* and of *theological phraseology*, Symeon came with *admirable concreteness* of his mystical experience.

Nobody whole at mind could react *negatively* in face of his experience, as long as he gives *clear testimonies*, concrete, at each theological problem that received *general responses*, non-experiential, from *academic theology* of his time.

Symeon is credible in his theological discourse for that he endorsed in meticulous mode the theology of the Church and he could explain it *coherently* thanks to *his ghostual experience*<sup>523</sup>.

In the discourse of face, he says *in trenchant mode* this thing, when he speaks of *authentic sources* which we can base in the treatment of *unpassion's reality*.

The first source *in the treatment* of the subject is *the experience* of the previous Saints, who lived *the state of unpassion* as their proper *quotidian life*<sup>524</sup>. The second source is *our proper mystical*

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<sup>523</sup> In the early pages of his doctoral thesis, dedicated to the theology of Saint Simeon, MR Hilarion Alfeyev said the following: „My belief is that at Symeon we find *a mysticism* that is *absolutely traditional*, in the *orthodox acceptance* of the term and this thing I will *try to prove* throughout this work”, acc. Hilarion Alfeyev, *St. Symeon the New Theologian and Orthodox Tradition*, Ed. by Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2000, p. 4.

<sup>524</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 52-54, p. 12/ Idem, p. 220.

*experience*, that, as long as is *real*, is *identical* in essence with the one of the previous Saints<sup>525</sup>.

Symeon was not only *convinced of the identity* between *his mystical experience*, mysterious and the Saints always, but, moreover, without this *interior certitude* he could not ever write anything and he would not be considered of it as something *authentic*, fully orthodox.

He lived as *a living member* of the Church, fully convinced of *his situation* in interior of the infinite connections that *bind us* to each other<sup>526</sup> and, in the same time, he knowing very well *his helplessness* and *the personal ignorance*.

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<sup>525</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 54-59, p. 12/ Ibidem.

<sup>526</sup> If Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae used the image of „the net of the meshes” (acc. Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology [Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă]*, vol. 1, ed. cit., p. 202. To see *the whole image* in p. 201-202) for to show *the multiple links* between human persons, we propose the image of *endless network of computers*, with unsuspected of many connections, which is connected to *the same source of energy*.

The Church’s members are connected *with all* at the life of the Holy Trinity *from where* comes to us *the divine grace*. If someone is *connected* at grace, if is *wired* at Trinity’s life, he will feel *the same divine power* and *the same divine work* as and his forerunners or as and his contemporaries which are *connected at grace*.

For this motive Symeon *feels connected* at *the life* of God, for that God *shows His glory* in his being, he feels *how works* the grace in him, how *he sanctifies* by what lives and thinks he and he sees that *his experience* is not *a singular*, but it is found and at Saints *before him* and at all *living* members, aware of the grace of them, of the Church.

But, retaking the traditional exegesis at Jn.14, 2, Symeon, based on his great ghostual discernment, affirms that „πολλοὶ μὲν Ἅγιοὶ ὀλίγοι δὲ ἀπαθείς” [many are *Saints*, but few are *unpassioned*]<sup>527</sup>.

Our Father wants to say that Saints, in their earthly life, had *varying degrees of holiness* (if we look, in parallel mode, at their lives) and, likewise, are and in eternity, for that each *grows on measure of his proper comprehension*.

While some have had *a beginning and a certain advance* in life full of grace, namely of *holiness*, others reached yet of here *at the state of unpassion*.

Just therefore Symeon speaks about *unpassion* as about *a high degree of holiness*, without as thereby he excludes from the row of Saints on those who have not acquired yet of here *the unpassion*.

Ἀπάθεια ψυχῆς [The apathy of *the soul*] and ἀπάθεια σώματος [the apathy of *the body*] are not *identical*, says Symeon<sup>528</sup>.

*The apathy/ the unpassion of the body* is not *useful* of the single one, while *the unpassion of the soul* attracts after it and *the body*, for that introduces of it *in the process of sanctification*<sup>529</sup>.

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<sup>527</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 62, p. 12/ Ică jr. 1, p. 221.

<sup>528</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 65-66, p. 12/ Ibidem.

<sup>529</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 66-67, p. 12/ Ibidem.

*Acquiring of virtues and the sight of the light* are those that lead us to *unpassion*, for Symeon, and *no waivers* as such at certain things or passions, that not lead us immediately to something *positive*, to our fill by grace<sup>530</sup>.

For our Father *the unpassion* is a *filling of grace*, of something *concrete* from point of view *ghostual* and is not a *ontological negative state*.

Putting *in antithesis* of the various virtues and states which we have here does not than take out in relief *difference of holiness* of some and of others.

Symeon knows and *the beginning of virtues* and *their completeness* for that he traveled all this *interior process* and he knows to talk about it in *fidelity mode*.

His demarche is that one of known to us the fact, that some *ghostual states* are *in our power* to achieve, to live and others are *divine gifts*<sup>531</sup>.

What is *δῶρόν Θεοῦ* [*the gift of God*] cannot be experienced unless it God gives us, after what we exercise in the virtues that make us *proper* to the *charismata*<sup>532</sup>.

Thus standing the things, Symeon shows that *the perfection of virtue* is „of the men who *walk in the light*”<sup>533</sup> and

<sup>530</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 67-84, p. 12-14/ *Ibidem*.

<sup>531</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 89-96, p. 14/ Idem, p. 222.

<sup>532</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 94-96, p. 14/ *Ibidem*.

<sup>533</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 120, p. 16/ *Ibidem*.

those who are *unpassioned* and *perfect* are those who *have overcome*, in perfect mode, the demons in their being<sup>534</sup>, dressing in brilliant [λαμπρῶς] face in τὴν ζωηφόρον τοῦ Κυρίου νέκρωσιν [killing of life-bearers of God]<sup>535</sup>.

*The death* about that Symeon speaks here, this death which it brings *the divine brightness*, the divine light in our being is *the true definition* of unpassion.

Ἀπάθεια is *not* a state of *interior insensibility* in mystical symeonian theology, a kind of *petrification* of our feeling, in which we do not *react* interior at any stimulus from outside or from within us.

But *the unpassion* at Symeon is a *charismatic state*, coming behind of a *real killing of passions* from our being, that consists in our filling by the light and the happiness into it.

Symeon speaks about *unpassion* as about *the divine state* in that we are filled by all the good from part of God and in which He gives us in *abundant* [δαψιλῶς] mode and *unceasing* [ἀδιαλείπτως] *the incorruptible delight* and *eternal* [τὴν ἄφθαρτον τρυφήν καὶ ἀέναον]<sup>536</sup>.

For our Father, *the unpassion* is a *charismatic state* that occurs *in history*

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<sup>534</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 135-137, p. 18/ Idem, p. 223.

<sup>535</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 137-138, p. 18/ Ibidem.

<sup>536</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 257-259, p. 26/ Idem, p. 226.

and not in outside it, but it represent a *filling of us* by grace.

The characteristics of unpassion are at Symeon ἀρρήτου χαρᾶς [unspeakable joy]<sup>537</sup>, our decorating with ἀρρήτῳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀστραπτύσει θείᾳ στολῇ [*un unspeakable glory and with a divine bright garment*]<sup>538</sup>, in so kind that, those who live this *divine state* refeel it as τὸ πολὺ βάρος τῆς δόξης [a great weight/ burden of glory]<sup>539</sup>, of divine [glory].

The positivity of unpassion and the fact that it represent a *filling of light* and not a *notable absence* of interior reactions, emerges, we believe, sufficient of markedly from the following passage, where Symeon speaks about *interior unification of man* lived in this *state of holiness*: „when the human desire [ἡ ἐπιθυμία τοῦ ἀνθρώπου] was *filled* with all these (of the divine light), uniting [συγκραθέν] the whole *irascible* [θυμικόν] part with *rational* [λογιστικῶ] part and *lustful/ willing* [ἐπιθυμητικῶ], then *the three* make *one* in the sight of the light of *trinitarian oneness* [τριαδικῆς ἐνάδος] and into this they know their Master's own *delight*.

For then will no longer recognize at all their *threefold division*, for they will be

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<sup>537</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 260, p. 26/ Ibidem.

<sup>538</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 264-265, p. 26/ Ibidem.

<sup>539</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 268-269, p. 26/ Ibidem.

in all *one*<sup>540</sup>. The divine light is one that *unifies* ghostual and bodily senses of man faithful and in this *interior unity* he delights of Lord's glory.

Symeon presents *unpassion* as a state of *inner unification* brought to light and preserved through the virtues and personal charisms.

This thing is seen more clearly of *cosmic allegory* from 4, 769-788, where Symeon resembles *on Saint with the heaven*, where *his heart is the disc of moon*, „the divine love” [ἁγία ἀγάπη] is *the light of moon* and „holy unpassion” [ἁγία ἀπάθεια] is κυκλοειδῆς στέφανος [the crown of roundness/ of the circle] of moon<sup>541</sup>.

*The unpassion*, continues here Symeon, is one that *protects them* and *keeps them unharmed* on Saints of bad thought and sin, defends them the enemies and makes them *unapproachable* to their adversaries<sup>542</sup>.

But here is not word about *an external protector shield*, but about *an interior shield*, which manifests as *a desire and fulfilled non-acceptance* of the sin, of the wickedness of any kind.

Symeon uses here *three significant verbs*, in our opinion, for to describe the role of *the state of unpassion* in Saints.

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<sup>540</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 424-429, p. 38/ Idem, p. 231.

<sup>541</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 774-783, p. 62-64/ Idem, p. 241.

<sup>542</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 782-788, p. 64/ Ibidem.

He uses on περιφέρω [to surround], for to indicate the fact that unpassion protects us *from the inside* by all evils outside us; on περιέπω [to treat with great care, to care] for to show *the dynamism* of unpassion in our being and on περιφρουρέω [to guard], for to emphasize *the steadfastness* in which keeps us the state of unpassion.

From symeonian allegory results very clear, that the unpassion is *an establishment of holiness* in our being, a state in which *we can keep* by all kinds of *unfriendly attacks*.

Symeon specificates once again that *the allegory* or *the icon* [εἰκὼν], after how says his Holiness, that we presented it is *a prefiguration* [ἐπινοηθεῖσα] of the things that occur in Saints and not *a fiction*<sup>543</sup>.

The unpassion is *a quotidian interior reality* for one who has it and it manifests as *non-attractiveness* to the bodily, owing to *the ardent longing* for the eternal and of *interior fulfillment* that brought it the light.

Comparing *the icon of the bride* with *the bride herself*, namely making *the difference* between *perception* of reality through an image and *the reality as such*, Symeon defines the unpassion as *an experience* in divine light, as the marked reality of a life experienced *beyond* the senses, the sensuality.

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<sup>543</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 791-794, p. 64/ Ibidem.

He says: those who „joined in *beingly* [οὐσιωδῶς] face with God Himself and were worthy by *the sight* [θέας] and His *impartation* [μεθέξεως], they no longer expect to have *passionate inclination* nor to *the icon of creatures* [τῇ εἰκόνι τῶν ποιημάτων] and nor (any) *passionate (annexation) by the shadow of the seen* [τῇ σκιᾷ τῶν ὁρωμένων].

For their thinking *remaining* in those above feeling [ἐν τοῖς ὑπὲρ αἰσθησιν] and *mixing* with them and (being) *dressed* with *brightness* of the divine nature, they have no feeling (directed) to *those seen, which they had previously*<sup>544</sup>.

Therefore, *the unpassion* is not an *amputation* of feeling of the one ghostualized but, on the contrary, is raising at a *mode of life*, in which the ghostual and bodily senses of man are *imbued* with light and the ghostual man *lives in the flesh* with *feeling* of eternal life.

Our *mixing* with the light or *our union*, in *beingly* face, with God, about that speaks Symeon, represents just *the content* of the unpassion. Our *non-attraction to sin* is not due, in this divine state, to a human effort but to *the immensity* of light, of the grace that *fills us* with all. After this passage, Symeon guarantees those said about unpassion with *his proper experience* of unpassion.

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<sup>544</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 917-924, p. 74/ Idem, p. 245.

He tells his auditorium that this μακάριον πάθος [happy suffering]<sup>545</sup> was given and to him, although he feels between those who are οἱ ἀπερριμμένοι [unexpected/ unwanted/ rejected/ *aborted*]<sup>546</sup>.

After many prayers, said our Father, and he was worthy to suffer *the love for people of God and His grace*<sup>547</sup>.

The scandalization that can produce a such trenchant confession is *void*, as long as the unpassion is *real* in that who gives *details* about it.

Symeon is not only *convinced* by his proper experience of unpassion, but he *acknowledges* and *its importance for the future christians*, who want to seek God and *find Him*<sup>548</sup>.

Our Father positions prophetically in this situation, as one who feels taught *in mystic face by God*<sup>549</sup> and who knows *the real value* of his words for those who sanctify their life, on the one hand and, on the other hand, emphasizes *the decisive role* of his writings in what regards *the benefit* [ὠφέλειαν] and *the encouragement* [προτροπήν] of those who

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<sup>545</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 925, p. 74/ Ibidem.

<sup>546</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 927, p. 74/ Ibidem.

<sup>547</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 927-928, p. 74/ Ibidem.

<sup>548</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 931-932, p. 74/ Ibidem.

<sup>549</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 930, p. 74/ Ibidem.

will seek *the sight of God*<sup>550</sup>. He considers his writings as *a part* of the Church's Tradition<sup>551</sup>, as *authentic transmission* of the divine truth, revealed through *personal revelation* from part of God and as *a testimony* what will impel *considerable* on those who will sanctify their life in the future.

In the end of his *majestic discourse* that I commented, Symeon more gives another *eloquent definition* of the unpassion.

Our Father says that what guards us *unblemished* [ἀμώμους] is *the ignition* into our being of the one flame and greater of the fire of divine's desire<sup>552</sup>.

With other words, the unpassion is the state in which we are *full* of the glory of God and in that the glory *potentiates* us and more *the longing for God*, that we are *the true pyres burning by the longing of God*.

From the symeonian exposure results the fact that the unpassion is a *divine reality* at that we arrive *at self* in the our ghostual increase, if we listen *the exhortations* of the Holy Ghost from our heart.

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<sup>550</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 930-931, p. 74/ Ibidem.

<sup>551</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 932, p. 74/ Ibidem.

<sup>552</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 936-938, p. 74/ Idem, p. 246.

The unpassion is *our filling* of the divine light and *the adaptation* at eternal life still here, on earth.

Any *attempt* to assimilate of it with *the insensibility* or with *a state pure human*, at which we arrive through *self-censorship* is not found in symeonian theology.

At our Father the unpassion is *a divine gift* reached by one who is cleansed of passions, which sees the divine light and he is filled by it, in so kind that he does *not seize* anymore the pleasures of the world, for that he is kidnapped by the pleasure *infinite greater* which produces in him *the glory of the world* what will come.

## 2. 5. 3. The Light and the Salvation as Holiness

Saint Symeon sees *the true fulfillment* of human as *the reach to holiness* and he does not propose us a *lower bar* for the desire of our heart.

For his Holiness *the free will* is one that is able *to target* a such *high* [ὑψος]<sup>553</sup>, because „God wants to make us from men *gods* [θεοὺς], but with *our will*, not without our will”<sup>554</sup>.

*The proper choice and the fulfillment of all commandments* are at Symeon *the human effort*, of course *supported by grace*, which we must submit it for to be *proper* the name of *christian*.

In The Ethical Discourse 13 Symeon says, concerning the conditions of our sanctification, that we arrive to holiness „when we observe with *accuracy* [ἀκριβῶς τηρῶμεν] all that we *promised* Him and will run again for all that we have rejected, not returning us again at *our vomiting* like dogs [II Petr. 2, 22].

By result, if we keep all that He told us and that says to us the Lord Himself, we are really *faithful* [πιστοί], showing *from facts* our faith, and make us *Saints* [Ἅγιοι] and *accomplished* [τέλειοι] as and He [Mt. 5. 48], in the whole celestial

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<sup>553</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, VII, 597, p. 198/ Idem, p. 298.

<sup>554</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, VII, 598-599, p. 198/ Ibidem.

[ἐπουράνιοι], sons [τέκνα] of the heavenly God [Jn. 1, 12], like Him [ὅμοιοι Αὐτῷ] [I Jn. 3, 2] in everything, by *adoption* [θέσει] and grace [χάριτι]<sup>555</sup>.

After how is observed from this quote, Simeon *equalizes all the fundamental terms* of the phrase.

He puts *the equal sign* between *faithful* [πιστοί], *Saints* [Ἄγιοι], *accomplished* [τέλειοι], *heavenly people* [ἐπουράνιοι] and *the sons of God* [Θεοῦ τέκνα].

With other words, in the multiple *entitlements* of holiness we must not see only *a synonymous reality*. *The true believers are the Saints and the holiness means perfection*, the filial communion with God, our filling by *heavenly qualities*.

*The desire to save us, the facts of our faith and the grace, which are subsequent to the receipt of the grace through Baptism, are those that deify us.*

In the same discourse, Symeon sees *the sin as non-fulfillment* of God's commandments<sup>556</sup>, which are *sacred and maker-of-life* [τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ζωοποιῶν]<sup>557</sup>.

This sin of *the non-deification* through the fulfillment of commandments, adds Symeon, has *serious consequences* on a personal level, for that

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<sup>555</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 185-192, p. 412-414/ Idem, p. 386.

<sup>556</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 193-204, p. 414/ Idem, p. 387.

<sup>557</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 193-194, p. 414/ Ibidem.

„separate us from the Church of His servants Saints [τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῶν Ἁγίων δούλων Αὐτοῦ] and we *put off* through sin *the divine garment* which we *clothe* at our Baptism, and that, as we believe, is *Christ* [Gal. 3, 27], and not only that, but we are deprived of *eternal life* [τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς] and of *the shortcoming light* itself [τοῦ ἀδύτου φωτός], of the eternal goodnesses [τῶν αἰωνίων ἀγαθῶν], of consecration [τοῦ ἀγιασμοῦ] and of adoption [τῆς υἱοθεσίας]”<sup>558</sup>.

And in this second passage quoted, Symeon aligns *the eternal life* with *the shortcoming light* and with *the eternal goodnesses*, that proper *realities* of living of the Saints and of the servants of God.

Those who do not *fulfill* the commandments, emphasizes he, they are *self-condemned* to Gehenna<sup>559</sup>.

But heavenly people, the deified are those who „*see with the mind* on the Lord, ...*are limpid enlightened* and *in conscious face* by His light, ...*remain always* in the sight of His glory...[and] they see in themselves on God”<sup>560</sup>.

The holiness keep by *the commandments* but and by *the presence of grace* in our being and *the continue sight* of the divine light.

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<sup>558</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 201-207, p. 414 / Ibidem.

<sup>559</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 219-220, p. 416/ Ibidem.

<sup>560</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 270-273, p. 418/ Idem, p. 389.

Those who *fall from light* and *from the Kingdom of Heavens*, says Symeon, they must *repent* and *cry for to regain them* in themselves<sup>561</sup>.

For not create *the impression* that *he knew not* about what he speaks then when he speaks about *the Saints* and *holiness*, Symeon gives *the real signalments* of holiness in The Ethical Discourse 9.

Says He, if the nations are recognized after *clothes*, ie after *the port* which they have it and after *the language* which they speak it<sup>562</sup>, „the Saints are recognized after *their decency* [κοσμιότητος] and after *the becomingness* of their walking [τοῦ εὐσχήμου βαδίσματος] and after *others* from their outside, but *the distinctive (sign)* [γνώρισμα], *proper* to them, with that they come before us is *the word* that is born of them with all *the exactness* [ἀκριβείας] and *the truth* [ἀληθείας]”<sup>563</sup>.

From these details we find that Symeon puts the equal sign between *holiness* and *knowledge of the truth*.

The Saints are *recognizable* for those who *are cleansed of passions*, namely for those who see with *the eyes of the heart* on the ones from front of them.

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<sup>561</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIII, 278-281, p. 420/ Ibidem.

<sup>562</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IX, 275-276, p. 240/ Idem, p. 314.

<sup>563</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IX, 277-280, p. 240/ Idem, p. 314-315.

The Saints are those who are *distinguished* by other believers just through *the exactness* with that *they understand* and *debate* the teaching of faith and *through the truth* and *the power of their words*.

Those who have *the Ghost in them*, they have and *the true faith* and *the facts* of this belief: „everyone has...the grace of the Ghost [τὴν χάριν τοῦ Πνεύματος] through *the making-of-good* [ἀγαθοεργίας] and *the true faith* [ἀληθινῆς πίστεως]”<sup>564</sup>.

With other words, we cannot have *the grace of the Ghost*, we cannot *feel* Him in us without *the true faith* and *the good facts* conformable to *this divine faith*. For that *the grace to be in us*, we must *confess* and *to fulfill* the divine fund of the Orthodox faith.

But Symeon goes *far* with the string *like endless* of his confessions and presents *his reception*, of the one who is filled *with holiness*, by those who have *nothing to do* with holiness:

„And if they hear about someone that *fought* in lawful manner in the commandments of God, that he has been *humbled* with heart and with thoughts, that he was *purged* from all kinds of passions and he proclaimed to all *the great things* of God [τὰ μεγαλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ] – namely how God made them for him, according to His non-lying promises and

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<sup>564</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IX, 290-291, p. 240/ Idem, p. 315.

how, then when he spoke to the benefit of those who heard him, he said that he was able *to see* the light of God and God *in light of the glory* [κατηξιώθη φῶς ἰδεῖν Θεοῦ καὶ Θεὸν ἐν φωτὶ δόξης], and how he knew *in conscious face* in himself *the quotidian coming* and *the work* of the Holy Ghost [τὴν ἐπιφοίτησιν καὶ ἐνέργειαν τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος] and he has done *Saint* in the Holy Ghost [Ἅγιος ἐν Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι γέγονεν] – immediately, as some *rabid dogs* [κύνες λυσσῶτες] they bark against him and rush to eat him, if is with possible, the one *who says these*”<sup>565</sup>.

The road to holiness begins with *true faith*, with the whole *process* of cleaning the passions and with *personal revelations* of the light and of the divine mysteries from part of God.

*The ferociousness* of his opponents contrasts totally with his *complete entrusting* on own holiness, given by *the presence of light* in his being.

In measure in that Symeon would be talking without probations *guaranteed* to him by God, without *distinction* which brings the light in us, his opponents would have been *legitimate* to challenge, but without to transform in *some dogs* ready to tear a man who speaks to them in peaceful mode.

But then when Symon gives details, when he brings guarantees over guaran-

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<sup>565</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IX, 359-370, p. 246/ Idem, p. 317.

tees about *the wonders of God's mercy* to himself, his opponents were fighting *not only* with Symeon, but, in the first row, *with God*, Who *makes* all those promised by Him in those *who purify* their life by passions.

*The fight* of theological's opponents of Simeon's was a struggle *with the Holy Ghost*, namely with One by whom Symeon spoke.

And in Hymns we find the identification of *salvation* with *the holiness*.

In the Hymn 34, into an apologetic context, Symeon said: „Who would have called *Saint* [ever] if he not would be imparted by the Holy Ghost?” [ἢ τίς ἐκλήθη Ἅγιος μὴ μετασχὼν Ἁγίου Πνεύματος;]<sup>566</sup>.

And as Symeon called *impartation* by the Holy Ghost *the ecstatic sight*, the Saint is *the seer of God*, he is one who feels in him the grace of God.

In the Hymn 42, our Father is *more direct* in *the equalization* of salvation with holiness.

Speaking of *the exclusion* of some from *the impartation* of Holy Mysteries, Symeon switches our attention from what happens with those who *not see now* the Sacraments, in the Church, at *the eschatological plan* of the Kingdom of God: „and now sinners are *shut out* from

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<sup>566</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXXIV, 96-97, p. 434/ Ică jr. 3, p. 205.

the Church and are *off with all* to impart, or, better said, those who are not Saints are *deprived* even and *of the sight* the divine [τῆς τῶν θείων θέας ἀποστεροῦνται οἱ μὴ πέλοντες Ἅγιοι].

How does, alas!, they will *unite* then with *the too-undefiled* body of God and they shall be *members* of Christ [I Cor. 6, 15] *defiled*? There is not such thing, brothers, and will not ever happen!

And those who are *separated* from the divine body, ie the Church, and the choir elected, where they will go? Tell! In what *kingdom*, in which *place* they hope to dwell? Tell me!

For *the Paradise* and *the bosom of Abraham* [Lk. 16, 22] and any *place of rest* is surely of the saved [τῶν σωζομένων]. And *the saved* are, with safety, *all Saints*, according as gives witness and teaches whole Divine Scripture [οἱ δὲ σωζόμενοί εἰσιν Ἅγιοι πάντως πάντες ὡς πᾶσα Θεία μαρτυρεῖ Γραφή καὶ ἐκδιδάσκει].

For even if there are *many* (dwelling-places) [Jn. 14, 2], they are but *one*, ie *inside* the pantry wedding [τοῦ νυμφῶνος] [Mt. 22, 10].

For as how is *a sky* and in it the stars are *distinguished* between them in the honor and glory [I Cor. 15, 41], so is one *bridal chamber* and *a single Kingdom*, for the Heaven, the Holy City and every place of rest are *only God*<sup>567</sup>.

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<sup>567</sup> SC 196, Hymns, XLII, 151-171, p. 48-50/ Idem, p. 231-232.

In the passage quoted now sees very clear, how the existence in the Church requires a holy life, for that you to be *proper* the Holy of God, the Holy Communion and holiness is for *the saved*. And although they differ between them as *degree of holiness*, they live with all in the same Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God does not presuppose *a uniformity* of holiness, for that the holiness keeps *the person* and *its uniqueness*.

The uniqueness of the relation of the Saint with God means *the personal degree* of holiness, which God receives such how it is, as long as is *a together-work* with Him.

Our Father speaks about *salvation* as *holiness* but he does not indicate *standards to achieve* for to be proper to the Kingdom.

Into *a personal definition* of salvation, he says: „the salvation is *absolution* from all evils and, therewith, *the finding eternal* of all the best”<sup>568</sup>.

But, although he speaks here about what we receive *in eternity*, however the absolution of passions, *of the bad* and the finding *of the best forever* to experiences still at now and continues in all eternity.

As far as we are concerned, for us is very evident *the realistic tone* of Saint Symeon in relation to salvation.

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<sup>568</sup> Idem, Hymns, XLII, 205-206, p. 52/ Idem, p. 232.

For his Holiness there is no salvation of *the rank one* for Saints and salvation of *the rank second* for other believers. In his theology, the salvation have the character of the most sustained communion with God, in that all what happens with us is *an interior evidence* and in that the holiness is not *an exterior mirage* to which all run on forever but, rather, is *a conscious interiorization* and a *personal understanding* all more profound of God's glory.

Just therefore it seems to us very realistic and credible expressed his soteriology, for that the salvation is at Symeon a *predatory* interior reality, is *the foundation* of the believer's personal life and presupposes *a continuous supply details* of living it.

Symeon cannot talk about *an unconscious* salvation or *indifferent* of people as long as the gracious link with God presupposes awareness of it, joy, the holiness and the illumination by grace.

Symeonian soteriology is *a natural prolongation* of triadology and of his christology, where, as we showed in the previous sections, God unites Himself through His glory, in conscious mode and full, with he who purifies by passions and who fulfills His commandments from *a great longing* of God<sup>569</sup>.

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<sup>569</sup> Commenting the contribution of Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae at the understanding of the symeonian theology, Father Vasile Pop said into an article of him: „Only loving God and only in the

In Chapters, I, 7, Symeon speaks about *the indwelling* of the Trinity in the perfected as about *a intensification* and greater of their longing after God.

He says: „The indwelling in conscious face and felt of the tri-hypostatic Godhead in the perfect [τοῖς τελείοις] is not *a fulfillment* of their longing [of God] but, rather, *a beginning* and *a cause* of a longing [of Him] even bigger and stronger”<sup>570</sup>.

If to the perfect ones *the personal holiness* seems *a continuous state of non-holiness* is by itself understood that Symeon could not speak about *a salvation* in that *the holiness* is not present.

*To be Saints* means for Symeon *to stand in grace* and *fill us always by grace*, ie to manifest us in normal mode, as some orthodox christians conscious of our relation with God.

What is the most *baffling* for the postmodern reader of Saint Symeon is that, at him the holiness is not put *on a pedestal*, at that reach only some, but it is the most natural print, quotidian, *banal*

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consciousness that is loved by God, the man forward into a life that *never tires* of God”, cf. Rev. Lect. D.Th. Vasile Pop, *The Man and God. Hymns of Saint Symeon the New Theologian in the Writings of Father Dumitru Stăniloae* [Omul și Dumnezeu. Imnele Sfântului Simeon Noul Teolog în scrierile părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae], in rev. *The Theological Horizons* [Orizonturi teologice] II (2001), nr. 1, p. 72.

<sup>570</sup> SC 51, Chapters, I, 7, 3-6, p. 42/ Idem, p. 366.

we could say, of an orthodox christian life at that we can reach everyone.

*The universalistic character of symeonian soteriology and non-typological in the same time manifests as an organic work of the Church, because the entry in Church through Baptism means the beginning of personal holiness in that you can move forward at endless.*

For Symeon no one can *obstruct* our relation with God and the advance in holiness, as long as *growth* means *continuous increase* in the communion with Him and receiving *sustained help* from His part towards to understand Him and more.

In the last passage which I quoted from *Chapters* appears before us a reality of perfection refelt always as *personal imperfection*.

Namely *the indwelling* of the Trinity in the perfect does not mean *a maladive* state of jubilation, of proud jubilation but, on the contrary, gives rise at *a unchecked longing* towards the coverage of that τῷ ἀτελέστω τέλει [end without end] of the love of God.

*Reaching at end*, as says Symeon, reaching at *the perfection in holiness*, which is always *a personal measure* and not an impersonal one, does not propagate in us the feeling that we have reached *at a satisfactory final* from personal point of view but, instead, the one that we have not found *a beginning*

[ἀρχὴν] of our longing and of our love for God<sup>571</sup>.

For that they cannot *to comprise* the perfection of love for God, the perfect have the consciousness that they *do not love* God<sup>572</sup>, for that they do not feel *fully fulfilled* in their love for God.

This consciousness of impetuous love of those perfect, always refelt as *imperfect* and *deficient*, gives rise at the most profound and misunderstood humility for those who are not ghostual men, for that Saints consider themselves *unworthy* of God's salvation<sup>573</sup>.

*The sinfulness* on which imput to themselves the perfect, in definitive, is not just at the level of *the coarse*, in that are deepened the sins of juvenescences and of their ignorance but, instead, it comes from feeling of *their unperfection* in front of *supraperfection* of God's glory.

The experience of divine light creates the consciousness of *the congenital imperfection* of the perfect. They understand in those ecstatic moments, with all their being, that they can never be *proper* to the divine light, for that they will never can *to comprise* the greatness of its discoveries.

The humility of Saints arises *from the greatness of discoveries* [II Cor. 12, 7], as to paraphrase on The Divine Paul,

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<sup>571</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 8, 14-15, p. 42/ Ibidem.

<sup>572</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 8, 15-17, p. 42/ Ibidem.

<sup>573</sup> Idem, Chapters, I, 8, 17-19, p. 42/ Ibidem.

from the deep intimate of them with God, being *a charismatic state*.

It is not with priority the outgrowth of remembrance of proper deeds but, in essential mode, is an understanding of proper power, a reduced power, to encompass the glory of God.

The feeling of the grace is *the earnest* [ἄρραβῶν]<sup>574</sup> and *the full entrusting* [πληροφορίαν]<sup>575</sup> of our salvation.

In symeonian soteriology this enunciation represents *a capital truth* for the authentication of an orthodox believer.

The authentic orthodox believer is the conscious of *the treasure of grace* from himself, which not extinguish *the torch of grace* from him and is *seer* of divine glory through his continual cleansing of passions.

This believer lives in history and is *identifiable* by other confreres, which and they were cleansed of passions and are filled of the Ghost, as gives *testimony* our Father: „and now are *unpassioned* [ἀπαθείς] men, *Saints* [Ἄγιοι] and [men] filled of divine light [πεπληρομένοι τοῦ θείου φωτός], which spend in our midst and kill their until into both all their earthly [members] [Col. 3, 5] of all uncleanness and passionate appetite, that not only that do not think or no more starting sometime, from them-

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<sup>574</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 47, 4, p. 94/ Idem, p. 408.

<sup>575</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 47, 7, p. 94/ Ibidem.

selves, to do the evil, but nor when are *dragged* to this by another do not suffer *any change* of unpassion, which is proper to them”<sup>576</sup>.

Symeon knew *from himself* the holiness and he *saw it* and in those who lived orthodox. He did not feel like *an imperious need* the reporting at the past of Church for to talk about holiness, for that he confessed openly about the holiness of Church’s men contemporary to himself.

His theology speaks about this *continuous reality* of holiness in the Church and, implicit, about *the Church’s holiness*, as Body of Christ.

In the Catechesis 14, that treats just about *the reality* of ghostual experience, Symeon talks about *the absolute consciousness* of the one that purifies the passions, about this *the divine-human process* that occurs in him: the one that puts over his passions „the commandments like some *medicines*, and *the trials* as on a *hot iron*, humbling and crying and requiring boiling the help of God, he *sees clearly* the grace of the Holy Ghost *coming* [ὄρα ἑναργῶς τὴν χάριν τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος παραγενομένην], *snatching them* and *erasing them* one by one, until his soul is made *with completely free* of all this. Because *the coming of the Ghost* does not make him worthy of freedom [to

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<sup>576</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 87, 9-16, p. 108/ Idem, p. 419.

the passions] *just in part*, but in *accomplished face and clean* [τελείως καὶ καθαρῶς]<sup>577</sup>.

The same *awareness* of the cleaning appears and less later, in the catechesis cited anterior, where Symeon affirms in trenchant mode, that „God, He who *dwells* in him, *teaches* on an such man about *the future and the present*, not *through word*, but *through work*, through *experience and reality* [ἔργῳ καὶ πείρᾳ καὶ πράγματι]. Because God revealing to his mind's eye, looks him *how many wants* [He] and *how many are useful* to him [the faithful], and the other [that exceeds him] convinces him *not to seek* and *nor to search*, nor *to spy out with curiosity*, because even those that God *reveals to him* and *shows them* [expressly] he can not look *with shamelessness*<sup>578</sup>.

Our relation of communion with God is the one in the frame of which we learn from *our own illuminations* of the grace.

*The measure of our ghostual knowledge* is given by *the measure* where-with God shows us *those of His*.

What exceeds us, that measure at that we cannot reach noway, is one that *we do not even want it*, for that we can not have *the longing by it* in our heart, if

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<sup>577</sup> SC 104, The Catecheses, XIV, 88-96, p. 210/ Ică jr. 2, p. 179.

<sup>578</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XIV, 150-157, p. 216/ Idem, p. 181.

God would have not attracted us to *the boundless horizons* of this longing.

In the measure in that we feel *an untold wish* to God, at a some *personal intensity* and we see that we cannot more than that, for Symeon this thing means that *we intuited* the measure of our ghostual living.

For that, as said and Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, *the sight of God* „not means that God is *known* in perfect mode. He remains and for the eastern christian always *a mystery*. For never *the light* received from the person of Christ is not *a complete understanding* of His person and of the Holy Trinity”<sup>579</sup>.

Looking *the unbeatable chaining* of the symeonian reasonings, extracted from *direct experience* of holiness, we cannot reach at an other conclusion than of his and namely at the fact that *the personal salvation is a personal advance in holiness*, ie in living *in and through* the grace of God.

Our Father does not grant *the monopoly* of holiness to a certain categories of believers from the Church, but he confesses *one salvation for all*, on

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<sup>579</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Personal Link with Christ in the Light of Divine Infinity, after Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Legătura personală cu Hristos în lumina infinității dumnezeiești, după Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology Studies* [Studii de teologie dogmatică ortodoxă], op. cit., p. 316.

measure of everyone, as *personal sensing* of divine glory, as *a sacred link* with God the Holy and as *an eternal communion* with Him.

For Saint Symeon, the holiness is *the normal state*, quotidian of the christian orthodox, that is learned primarily from *the relation alive*, gracious and ecstatic with God and not *from books* or through *an exterior mimicry* of it.

## 2. 5. 4. The Union with God and the Communional Images

The pre-critical editions and the critical of symeonian operas suffer of what we call *false-puritanical pudibondery* and, equally, and many of the articles which dealt of symeonian opera, then when is puted the problem of *reception* of the communional images, of biblical paradigms or realistic, which illustrates *the relation* between God and believers who see His glory.

From our point of view, we believe that a such ghostual impotence, which manifests as lack of appetency for *the realistic-mystical* expression of Symeon, *fundamented* on the paradigm of the Incarnation, comes from the fact that the authors suffer from *advanced docetism* and of damaging interior *non-alignment* at the mysterious process of deification, where all these become *current personal realities*.

The advanced docetism about that we speak defends in theological terms *the total reality* of the Incarnation in christological dogma but it cannot to accept *its real consequences* and in the frame of personal salvation.

The interior *non-alignment* at the process of deification represents just *the lack* of any interior reporting at the trinitarian God, through the ascesis cleansing

of passions, for to reach at *the sight* of divine light.

But both syntagms, under umbrella of whom we have grouped a whole serie of theologians, that have nothing to do with *real mystical experience* and that contests it in terms *how can the clear*, from different personal motives, these two talk about *the divorce* and *the schizoidy*, really staggering, between the theology *as archiving* of theological datas and charismatic theology, *as direct experience* and *contemporary* of us of Trinity's life.

Saint Symeon precisely against of such theology and of such theologians, that had nothing to do with *the direct link* with God and considered it *superfluous*, gave them the realistic replicas of the union of God with the believers.

His vehemence was not based on *vainglory* and on *the revanchist sentiment* that he must to give a rough replication of their, but on *the direct experience* of the mysteries of deification and on *the zeal* to confess the truth in full mode.

Thus, in the ethical Discourse 1, Symeon speaks of our communion with God, quoting copiously from John 14 and 17<sup>580</sup> and concluding: „*the union* [ένωσις] which [the Son] has it in the natural [φυσικῶς] face with His Father, on this He

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<sup>580</sup> The verses quoted here are Jn. 14, 20; 17, 20; 21; 22; 24; 26, acc. SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 40-57, p. 226-228/ Ică jr. 1, p. 133.

promises to have *in grace* [ἐν χάριτι] and to us, if *we want* [ἐὰν θέλωμεν]<sup>581</sup>.

The same thing will be repeated still two times in the discourse quoted, he said: „the glory which the Father gave the Son, the Son *gives us through the divine grace* [δίδωσιν ἡμῖν θεία χάριτι]; and a thing even greater is that, like He is in the Father and the Father in the Son, so the Son of God will be in us, and we, if we want [εἰ βουλόμεθα], we will be in grace in the Son”<sup>582</sup>, for that „He taught that *the union* [ένωσιν] which He has with His Father, the one we have and we in *similar* [ὁμοίως] face with Him”<sup>583</sup>.

The reality of the man’s union with God connects at Symeon with the full assumption of human nature by God the Word.

Just for that the Logos of God took *the entire* human body and He has made God and man, Symeon speaks about *a fill of light* of each part of our body.

Our deification *does not exclude* any part of the body and the our soul, for that Christ has deified, in full mode, the body and His soul, which He assumed in His pre-existing hypostasis.

From this *integral assumption* of humanity and from its pneumatization, ie

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<sup>581</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 63-65, p. 228/ Ibidem.

<sup>582</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 68-72, p. 228/ Idem, p. 134.

<sup>583</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 118-119, p. 232/ Idem, p. 135.

from the reality resurrected and glorified body of the Lord, Saint Symeon speaks about *a pneumatic soteriology*, in the frame of it the man is integral filled of light and makes like of the Lord's body [conf. Phil. 3, 21].

His exemplifications, in our opinion, are admirable through their concreteness and their theological non-ambiguity, alike with the communal images of Scripture.

In the following we will debate a series of communal images from symeonian theology, which have scandalized on many, but which have not another role, than on that *to touch*, with the utmost rigor, *the divine reality* of our real communion with God.

We have, therefore, *a realism* of the image, of the human paradigm which illustrates the personalist realism of our union with God.

And we begin our descent theological in the personalistic symeonian imagology with the image of *the divine breastfeeding*.

In the ethical Discourse 4, into a context full christologic-pneumatological, where the deified are presented as *dressing* in Christ, ie *in light* and „they see themselves *adorned* with an unspeakable glory and with a divine garment bright”<sup>584</sup> and where the Master

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<sup>584</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 264-265, p. 26/ Idem, p. 226.

„makes Himself to them food and eternal drink and immortal”<sup>585</sup>, in this context Symeon introduces the image of *the divine breastfeeding* about that I was talking, paraphrasing and changing in the same time the pauline image of *the paternal breastfeeding* from I Cor. 3, 1-2.

In concrete, Symeon says: and the Master „is seen by some, as a *bright breast* [φωτοειδής μαστός] puts in the mouth of their mind [τῷ τοῦ νοῦς αὐτῶν στόματι ἐμβαλλόμενος] and that gives to *suck* [θηλάζειν] those, how many are *babes* [νήπιοι] in Christ [I Cor. 3, 1-2] and are not in state to receive *solid food* [στερεᾶς τροφῆς], whom He makes suddenly *food and drink*, and produces them a such *sweetness*, that they do not want or, rather, nor cannot *to wrest* from Him. And to those *weaned* [ἀπογαλακτισθείσι] He behaves like a loving parent of children *guiding* [παιδαγωγῶν] and *educating* [παιδείων] them”<sup>586</sup>.

Commuting such the center of weight from *the ghostual Father* [pauline paradigm] at *the heavenly Father* [symeonian paradigm], the text of face cannot provoke *adverse reactions*, as long as it expresses, very direct, *the reality* of divine sight. The divine light, the initial ecstasy is for beginners as *a breast*, which

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<sup>585</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 270-271, p. 26/ Ibidem.

<sup>586</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 271-279, p. 26-28/ Idem, p. 226-227.

nurtures and develops them towards the receiving of *solid food*, ie of the divine dogmas understood ecstatic.

Symeon does not bring in prime-plan the image of divine breastfeeding for to fall into *a sexual boarding coarser* of the ecstasy, how accuse *those who are ashamed*, about whom we were talking at beginning, but he uses the pauline paradigm at the ecstatic and realistic level of the mystical feeding.

The difference between *νήπιοι* and the ones *ἀπογαλακτισθείσι*, ie between the suckers babes and those who finished with breastfeeding, confirms *the difference of degree* of holiness between those who start on the road of holiness, enlightened being by the sight of the Trinity's glory and those who are guided through light, those the mystery of God.

The image of divine breastfeeding or of the sight of light as *a breast bright* expresses, as was seen, *a distinction* of the mystical experience extreme of important and not a motive of stumbling for the readers of Saint Symeon.

All in the ethical Discourse 4, Symeon builds, on base of the pauline place from Eph. 4, 13, the image of *the perfect man*, where he analyzes each part of the mystical body of this man, ie *of his virtues*. What *scandalizes* again in this description extreme of interesting and of divine is the reality of *the hidden parts* of man.

But precisely this reality of *the hidden parts*, identified with *the sexual organs* of man, represents the greatest virtues of the mystic.

We render the symeonian passage with the cause, as to see the full enunciation of our Father:

„The members and the parts *that must covered* [μέλη καὶ μόρια ἃ ἐγκαλύπτεσθαι χρεών] are *unceasing prayer* of the mind, *sweetness* of the tears that comes from their shedding, gladness of heart and its unspeakable comfort”<sup>587</sup>.

The general context of this imagological paradigm suggests us very clearly, that is not the word about *the internal parts* of the human body, for that these are analyzed step by step, in phrases itself standing, as and these of face, but *the sexual organs* of the man, taken as a paradigm, for *to contemplate the ghostually* [πνευματικῶς θεωρούμενα]<sup>588</sup> his constitutive parts – this emphasizes Symeon – and not bodily and sensual.

If for *kidneys* and *loin*, understood mystically, Symeon cites Scripture in abundant mode [Ps. 25, 2; Eph. 6, 14; I Pet. 1, 13; Eph. 3, 6; I Cor. 9, 23]<sup>589</sup>, for *the sexual organs*, understood mystically, he does not bring any scriptural argument,

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<sup>587</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 375-378, p. 34/ Idem, p. 229-230.

<sup>588</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 370, p. 34/ Idem, p. 229.

<sup>589</sup> Acc. Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 382-390, p. 36/ Idem, p. 320.

but all the arguments which brings are itself virtues as such, that he designates right *secret experiences*, mystical, of ghostual human.

*The unceasing prayer of the mind* [ἡ ἀδιάλειπτος εὐχή κατα νοῦν] – behold, a new argument of *the hesychast* experience of Saint Symeon! – that was *the real frame* in that he sees the light of God, is accompanied by the sweetness of tears, of the joy of heart and of unspeakable comfort, which lives the ghostual man that *lives clean and sees divine light*.

The verb καλύπτω, an extension of the root καλυβ, where comes and καλύβη [hut]<sup>590</sup>, indicates us that those who are *covered*, those parts *covered* are, of fact, very intimate, very personal for us and are guarded from malicious glances, hostile.

As and the sexual organs, *covered* from good shame, correct, all the same and the secret things of ghostual life, tells us, with other words, Symeon, are and must be kept *in the secret* of our hearts, as long as there is not someone who wants to know, with humbleness and longing after the divine truth, those that occur in the deep of being of those who deifies.

The disclosure *without attention* of the divine discoveries, without discernment, without reporting at auditorium is

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<sup>590</sup> Cf. Liddell-Scott *Lexicon*, 21632, apud BW 07.

an act of ghostual *indecenty*, alike to that to expose us the naked body in front of masses of people.

The ghostual exhibitionism, as and the bodily besides, asks persons with that we have *a great communion* or that binds us a ghostual experience *similar* as intensity.

All into a christologic-pneumatological context, in the Hymn 15, Saint Symeon chooses to talk about „the frightening things”<sup>591</sup> of our deification.

These frightening things through their divine beauty and through their greatness non-understood are the consequence of the fact that *the Son took flesh* and gave us on His Ghost the divine and made us on all His *relatives*, a single house of David<sup>592</sup>.

Besides the fact that we are σπέρμα, the divine [seed] of Christ, and more frightening is, tells us, in pressed mode, our Father, that our Lord is together with us and now and in ages and He lives in all who love Him, being in entirety with us<sup>593</sup>.

The adjective ὅλος [integer], followed by a second, of μόνος [single], make crucial distinctions in 15, 134-136.

Symeon insists on the defining value of the two adjectives for to show that our relation with Christ is *integral*, without

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<sup>591</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XV, 115, p. 286/ Ică jr. 3, p. 93.

<sup>592</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 122-124, p. 286/ Ibidem.

<sup>593</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 129-134, p. 286-288/ Ibidem.

rest and that the mystical relation has not intermediaries but is a relation *μόνον μόνος*, of the single with the One single, with *the Single*<sup>594</sup>.

The integrality of relation with Christ of the believer is *a direct result* of the integral assumption and of the integral deification of His humanity, on the one hand and, on the other hand, our communion with Christ realizes through His Ghost, through the sight of the divine light, in direct mode, living only with God and through Him.

Into a natural gradation of the exposure, Symeon announces us things and more shattering than what said so far<sup>595</sup>, the fact that „make us members of Christ [I Cor. 6, 15], and Christ makes Himself our members”<sup>596</sup>.

With this phrase begins *the dilemmatic* passage, where Symeon confesses *the presence of Christ in every part of our body*:

„Christ [makes Himself] my hand, Christ [makes Himself] my foot, of the very-villain, and I, the villain, [make myself] the hand of Christ and foot of Christ. I move the hand and Christ *in entirety* is my hand – for, understand me!, is undivided [*ἀμέριστον*] the divine Godhead –, I move the foot and, behold!, it *flashes* as He.

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<sup>594</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 135, p. 288/ Ibidem.

<sup>595</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 140, p. 288/ Ibidem.

<sup>596</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 141, p. 288/ Ibidem.

Do not say that *I blaspheme*, but receive these and give worship to Christ, That makes you [σε ποιοῦντι] thus!

For if you want and you [σὺ θελήσειας], you would become and you member of Him, and so all the members every one of us will be members of Christ and Christ our members; and all the indecent He will make them decent [I Cor. 12, 23-24], adorning them with the beauty and the glory of the Godhead, and we will make gods coexisting together with God, no-longer-seeing at all the indecency of the body, but all *likening us* with Christ through all the body and every member of our will be Christ integer.

For He becoming *many*, He remains *undivided*, and each is Christ Himself integer. You recognize so unwrong that Christ is and the finger, indeed and [my sexual] organ [βάλλανον] and did you not tremble and were you not ashamed?

For God did not ashamed to make Himself like you, but you are ashamed to make yourself like that One [Ἄλλὰ Θεός σοι ὅμοιος οὐκ ἠσχύνθη γενέσθαι συ δὲ ἐκείνῳ ὅμοιος αἰσχύνῃ γεγονέναι;]?

I am not ashamed, say you, to make me like the One, but when I heard you talking, that the One makes Himself like *of the shameful member* [τοῦ ἀσχήμονος μέλους], has sneaked me in soul the thought that *you say a blasphemy*.

– Evil you think, for these are *not shameful* [οὐ ἄσχημα]. But they are *secret/hidden* [κρυπτά] members of Christ, for they *cover* and for the fact that they are more honorable than others [I Cor. 12, 23], as *secret/hidden* members and unseen by all of the One Mysterious, from That is given the seed [I In. 3, 9] in the divine copulation [ἐξ οὗ τὸ σπέρμα δίδοται ἐν συνουσίᾳ θείᾳ], formed in shattering face in the divine form by the whole Godhead itself, for is God whole He who unites with us [ὅλος Θεὸς γὰρ ὃς συνενούται μεθ’ ἡμῶν], o, shattering mystery!

And is made, indeed, an ineffable wedding and divine [γάμος ὁ ἄρρητος καὶ θεῖος]: God *unites/ copulates/ mix* [μίγνυται] with each of us and – I will say again these – each *unites of pleasure* with the Master”<sup>597</sup>.

To see from this ample quoted text, that Symeon substantiates his theological affirmations on two capital realities: on *the integrality* of assumption of human nature by God and on *the mystical experience* of deification.

Christ was not ashamed to take *the integer human flesh* and to become *man*, deifying and the human sexual organs but we are ashamed to talk about *the integral assumption* of the body by Him and we do not want to see *how happens*

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<sup>597</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 142-177, p. 288-292/ Idem, p. 93-95.

and in us this *total deification* of our body.

For Symeon is not a *blasphemy* to speak about Lord's genitality, as long as the problem in cause is seen as *transfigured reality*, full of light at His Resurrection from the dead.

If the resurrected body of the Lord was full of glory, wants to tell us Symeon and the entire teaching of the Church, then and we will be full of glory, still now, if we deify our whole being.

But it should be emphasized here that our full union with the Lord and His existence in every member of our full of light is a *direct consequence* of the hypostatic union, for that Symeon speaks about a *union* of us with *the deity* of Christ, which is not divided after the number of our members or after the number of people who partake of it.

From this passage is seen very clear *the steadfastness* of Saint Symeon on *the integralist aspect* of the assumption of the human body in the hypostasis of the Logos, without which there cannot be the salvation and the deification of believers.

Symeon defends *the filling of grace* and *the deification* of human sexual organs of the Lord, after how Saints before him had defended, against Apollinarius toward example, the existence of mind and of human reason in His humanity.

Only if God took and deified every human member we can talk about our real deification.

The soteriological symeonian realism is the soteriological realism of Church from always, which is based on *unspeakable hypostatic interpenetration* of deity and of humanity in the person of the incarnate Word and on *the abyssal relation*, through the Ghost, of Christ with all believers.

Just therefore Symeon insists on the reality of union and of our wedding with God.

When Symeon speaks about *συνουσία θεία* or about *γάμος* does not refer at *something exterior* but at *the abyssal relation* which the glory of God provokes in our being.

Citing I Jn. 3, 9 and speaking about *the seed* of God, about the light that *gives birth to us* as sons of God and that *unites us* with the trinitarian God, Symeon does not make than *an extensive exegesis* of the johanneic place.

His entire theological structure is substantiated *scriptural* and *experiential* and it can deduces very easy, if we follow the scriptural quotations that appear in his texts as *motives* of the theological dissertation or as *milestones of identification* of his own ghostual experiences.

*The union, our wedding* with God or *the sight* of His divine light are one and the same reality. The multiplicity of

forms in that talking about ecstasy does not want to draw the attention, than on the fact that *the nuances* of each human characterizations of divine sight represents the unspeakable richness of *meanings* of the direct experience of the divine sight.

The Scripture and the Fathers, using diverse examples for to explain us the divine sight tell us in definitive, that it is a reality *much too overwhelming* that any human example to be able *to deplete* or *to encircle* into a mode proper to itself.

The scriptural and theological discourse about the Kingdom of God and about the sight have the role only *to increase* the longing after their experiencing and *do not replace* experience as such.

Therefore they are *invitations*, continuous suggestionarises of our love of God, for to want to taste *the unspoken* ones of God.

This thing is seen and in the case of the image of *the poor* and of *the princess*<sup>598</sup>.

The princess, embodiment of the divine light, stays in her *bedroom* [κοιτῶνος] [r. 879] and the poor lover *sits out*, humiliated for his miserable condition.

But if *princess*, alias *the divine light*, through a small opening [ἐκ μικρᾶς ὀπῆς]

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<sup>598</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 874-892, p. 70-72/ Ică jr. 1, p. 244.

[r.881] of the heavenly tent, stretches her hand covered with gold, then the lover wants *to have as wife* for ever.

When *the hand* of princess, ie *the light*, withdraws and he does not see anything, the poor lives „an unbearable pain” [θλιψιν ἀφόρητον] [r. 888] and fills of a longing and *more vividly* for the light.

The image of the lover for persons heavy accessible is *an introduction* in the discussion about the crossing from knowledge of God through *the contemplation* of His creation at *the sight* of His glory.

*The contemplation of the creatures*, says Symeon, is *a climb in stairs* at the love, the faith and the pure fear of the Lord<sup>599</sup>. But those who „have united *in beingly face* with God [οὐσιωδῶς τῷ Θεῷ] Himself and were worthy of *the sight* [θέας] and the His *impartation* [μεθέξεως], are not attracted in passionate face or with passionate union of the icon of those created, nor of the shadow of those seen.

For their thinking spending in those beyond of feeling [ὑπὲρ αἴσθησιν] and being mingled with them and clothed with the brightness of the divine nature, they do not have the feeling straightened to those seen as and before”<sup>600</sup>.

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<sup>599</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 911-917, p. 72-74/ Idem, p. 245.

<sup>600</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, IV, 917-924, p. 74/ Ibidem.

Our interior *accommodation* with the divine light is that which *moves/ take out* our feeling from union with the world and unites us with those of eternity.

In symeonian theology, the pas- sional part of our being is not desired to be *destroyed* or *diminished* perhaps, but *directed* towards the divine light and towards the wishing of God and continuous potentiated.

As well as the volitional part of being the believer as well *διάνοια*, our thinking are *redirected* by the sight of light and just in *our filling of light* find us the true natural *movement* of human being.

The ghostual life is not at Symeon a *superior floor* of human existence but *the true mobility* of our being, the true dynamism and the real fulfillment of us in the relation with God. Life in God is *the normal life* of the man and it is *a life of holiness*.

The image of *the cutting of the darkness*<sup>601</sup> is synonymous in its under- standing with *the opening of the bedroom* from before.

The Master of the world put *the darkness of His light* as *concealment/ cover* [ἀποκρυβήν] [r. 166] of Him.

But when He wants *to renew us* the being with all, *to rise us* from the dead through the light of His glory [r. 167-168],

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<sup>601</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 166-183, p. 284-286/ Idem, p. 155-156.

then He „will cut the darkness [διατέμνει τὸ σκότος] and will pass on there our mind and He will *lean* on there as through an opening [ἐξ ὀπῆς] and He will let us see Him into an indistinct face, as can be seen the disc of the sun or of the moon.

From here the mind *learns itself*, or, better said, it *knows* [γινώσκει] and is *initiated* [μυέται], entrusting itself that there is not, with true, another *partial impartation* [μερικῆ μετοχῆ] by the goodies *the uttered* of God” [r. 169-175] than this.

*The cutting of the darkness and the crossing through the opening* are not than two suggestive images of the ecstasy.

*The habituation* with the divine light from the final of the ethical Discourse 1 designates however *the quotidian* experience of the light, that is no longer a *lightning rapture* of us by the light, but a *cohabitation* with the light, a continuous experience with it, according as live it the perfect in holiness.

In this *divine state*, the perfect, says Symeon, learns from light „wonders over wonders and mysteries over mysteries and sights over sights, being *illuminated* by it, as to say so, in all the clock. [...] For if he would want to write this things, he would not reach any paper or any ink,

but he would lack, I believe, and the time to tell them in detailedness”<sup>602</sup>.

The state of the quotidian sight of the light in our being is not *a ecstasy* but *a cohabitation* with light, where the deified „sees himself [in light] and the ones concerning himself and on those nearly of his and he predicts, knowing beforehand [many things].

And he knows that, if he will reach outside of this *prison*, and even and more after *the resurrection* [of all from the dead] and he will see this light of *unbearable* [ἄστέκτον] so as is it, [then he will see] and *the goodies* from that”<sup>603</sup>.

But for to reach at the divine light, as *presence* and *continuous sight* in our being, Symeon puts us before the image *the dead bones* that cannot be reanimated, raised at life than of the Ghost of God.

In the ethical Discourse 7, Symeon shows that *the bones* of all our virtues cannot form *a living man*, a full man, without the presence of the Holy Ghost in us:

„For as, if someone put dead bone [τις ὀστοῦν νεκρόν] near dead bone and articulation [ἄρμονίαν] near articulation [Eze. 37, 7-8]...[this] at nothing uses, if is not the One who makes to see flesh and nerves [over them] and He makes not to

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<sup>602</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 12, 426-431, p. 302/ Idem, p. 163.

<sup>603</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 12, 434-439, p. 304/ Ibidem.

unite the articulations with the nerves, all so if over those dead bones is put flesh and skin and is made from them a body, again neither this will not be of any use, [if] lacking the Ghost, Who makes alive and moves it, ie [if] is devoid of soul”<sup>604</sup>.

*The presence* of the grace in us represents for Symeon *the soul* of our ghostual life.

Everything that we undertake for our salvation is *not guaranteed* than by *the divine light*, which, then when it comes in us, entrustes us by the truth of love and of our zeal for the holy life.

In the image of *the girded oven*, of the soul full by the fire of Godhead, Symeon shows the cleaning and the our filling by light, as *union* with the light and as *brightness* of us through it:

„As *the girded oven* [ἐκκαϊόμενος κλίβανος]...after to gird strong, it makes wiht all transparent and like the fire...so and the soul...after what...were consumed [all bad ones from it, from the cause of light,]...remains only the being of the soul without passions [ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς οὐσία μόνη χωρὶς πάθους]...,[moment in that] the divine fire and inmmaterial unites with it in beingly [οὐσιωδῶς] face and presently this lights and shines and imparts [of light].

[For]...he imparts by the divine light and unspeakable [θείου καὶ ἀρρήτου φω-

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<sup>604</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, VII, 310-318, p. 178/ Idem, p. 289.

τός], and he makes *fire* through impartation [μέθεξις]<sup>605</sup>.

The image of *union* of the divine fire with our being is a *personalization* of all what means *ardent dynamism* in Scripture.

Saint Symeon uses from full the image of *the light* and of *the fire*, as and that of *the divine enthusiasm*, of unspeakable joy for to emphasize the paradigm of the divine sight.

If in the last image presented by us, the fire of the light *ignited* the heart and melted any impurity of heart, in the image of the bride who *unites* with her Bridegroom, the principal print that is fixed us in soul, that is transmitted us to understanding, is *the cleanness of heart*.

In the ethical Discourse 15, the bride [νύμφη], our clean soul, our whole being full of cleanness, „unites to sleep [τῇ ἐνώσει συγκοιταζόμενος] with the Bridegroom Christ and rises together with Him [συνανιστάμενος] towards eternal life or, instead, [she remains] in Him always and she bears on Him, Who [remained] in her”<sup>606</sup>.

*The conjugal union between bride and Bridegroom is real* and it is one from the traditional mystical expressions of union with light.

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<sup>605</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, VII, 521-537, p. 192-194/ Idem, p. 296.

<sup>606</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XV, 34-37, p. 446/ Idem, p. 401.

Symeon does not use only on ἔνωσις in equation, but he precises, as and Paul in Ephes. 5, 23-32, that this *union* is one that is making in κοῖτος, in *the conjugal bed*, ie in *the largest profoundness* of our being.

In the Hymn 15 appears the same image of the bride, of the soul-bride of Christ, where „the all souls become *brides* with which unites [ἐνοῦται] The Creator, and they [unite] the same with Him, and has place *the ghostual wedding* [ὁ γάμος πνευματικῶς], This mingling [συμμιγνύμενος] with them into a proper mode to God”<sup>607</sup>.

Symeon, as and Paul, does not render a *libidinous* image, lascivious of our relation with God, as *a sublimation of sexuality* and as *a hypostasiation of it* in the sphere of our mystical reports with God, but he uses *the realism* and *the dynamics* of sexual union as *paradigm* of union with God, which leaves in us real traces, concrete, deep.

The image of *the conjugal union* is deep scriptural and patristic, Symeon doing nothing, than to give *a personalization* very suggestive, clear, striking in the good sense of the word, for the one who meets it in his writings.

Saint Symeon has the astounding quality of to be *conqueror* in his writings, precisely in that he uses quotidian

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<sup>607</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XV, 221-223, p. 294/ Ică jr. 3, p. 96.

images, extreme of known, banal, which raises them, suddenly, at the deep value of the mystical experience and, through that, he explains *the deepest mysteries* of deification.

*The conjugal union or the drunkenness* – as we will show immediately – realities *very concrete* and, at the first sight, *having nothing to do* with the ecstasy, they become at Symeon *approachs* to the mystery of holiness, of the divine union between God and the believer man for eternity.

On Symeon interests no *the conformity* of the example, of the paradigm with the mystical union, ecstatic, but the one between the senses of paradigm, which he emphasizes it in evident mode.

In the Catechesis 23<sup>608</sup>, where he conforms the joy of seeing the light with the drunkenness which provokes us the wine, Symeon is not attentive than at two aspects: that of *the euphoria* which provokes the mystical sight and of *its realism* in our entire being.

The euphoria of the sight of divine light aligned of the euphoria of the wine is characterized through *the strong attraction* to it [r. 161], through *the delectation* which he feels when he sees the light [r. 164], through *the insatiableness* with that he wants it [r.

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<sup>608</sup> SC 113, The Catecheses, XXIII, 158-201, p. 24-28/ Ică jr. 2, p. 254-255.

165-167], through *the longing* of it [r. 167-170].

But *the realism* of euphoria and of *the presence* of light in entire being of its seer is described by Symeon in terms very direct: „the scintillation of the [divine] wine [στίλβα τοῦ οἴνου] and the radius of [heavenly] sun [ἄκτις τοῦ ἡλίου] that scintillates shining on the face of which he drinks it perambulate until in his bowels/ intestines, until in the hands and his feet and until in his back, making him in entirety fire [πῦρ ὅλον] on the one who drinks it and in state *to burn* and *to melt* on enemies who approach by him from all parts”<sup>609</sup>.

The sight of the light, of the divine wine, presents as *a filling* of us the mystical drunkenness is at Symeon a transformation of us in men full of enthusiasm, of ghostual vitality and bodily, that feel in us the light as *fire*, that strengthens us in the battles with the demons and makes us frightening for them.

*The divin enthusiasm* about which Symeon speaks is not *a human state*, of human inflammation, but is *the shedding* of the heavenly wine, of the heavenly fire in us, ie a divine-human state.

In the final phrase of the passage which we discuss the divine drink, the divine wine does not produce *the*

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<sup>609</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXIII, 185-191, p. 26/ Idem, p. 255.

alteration of us but *the curing* of us<sup>610</sup>.  
*The health* [ὑγείαν] and *the charm of beauty* which gives birth to the ghostual health are at Symeon without κόρον, without *satiety*<sup>611</sup>.

And for that I began this section under the sign of the divine paternity, with strong maternal accents at ecstatic level, speaking of the divine breast-feeding, we conclude our exposure about the symeonian imagology of the union with light all with a maternal confession, in that Symeon presents himself as feeding on himself from the milk of light:

„And remembering us of the joy and of that light and of its sweet pleasure, we cried and complained us as *a suckling baby* who sees his mother and, remembering the sweetness of milk, he bursts in tears, searching again [the bosom] that, as to suck on saturated”<sup>612</sup>.

Thus, the joy of light produces continuous *reminders* of it and provokes us continually at wishes of it and more intense, and more clear and more vivid in our being.

The sight of the light is not a secondary search in the life and in the theology of Saint Symeon, but represents

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<sup>610</sup> Idem, *The Catecheses*, XXIII, 198-201, p. 28/  
 Ibidem.

<sup>611</sup> Idem, *The Catecheses*, XXIII, 200-201, p. 28/  
 Ibidem.

<sup>612</sup> SC 196, *Hymns*, XLIX, 87-91, p. 152-154/ *Ică jr.*  
 3, p. 258.

itself the finding, the refinding of our soul<sup>613</sup>.

To refound us the soul says Symeon here means „to see God, to reach in His light taller than all the creature seen, and to have Shepherd and Teacher on God”<sup>614</sup>.

From this cause, *His sight* what and the images with the help which represents *the union* with Him, through that he ignites and more the longing for Him, do not represent *illegitimate images* in his theology but *percussive anthropomorphic expressions* of some ecstatic experiences that exceed any description.

By every time Symeon has attracted the attention that his images, whatsoever would be they, must not taken *ad litteram*, but they must contemplate ghostually.

Just therefore we cannot be of accord with they that *scandalize* by his mystical images, as long as they do not ask *interpreted literally* but after their mystical meaning, which reveals us the profound realities of our communion with the Most Holy Trinity.

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<sup>613</sup> Epistles, I, apud. Ică jr. 3, p. 317.

<sup>614</sup> Ibidem.

## 2. 5. 5. The Divine Light and the Ghostual Father

Maybe into another unfolding of all exposure we had to start with this theme which we approach now<sup>615</sup>.

The importance of *the ghostual Father* in the life and the theology of Saint Symeon is *capital*, as long as he considers *his calling* at the mystical life of the Church, *the receiving* of the light and *the forwardness* in its sight as *tracks* of the entrust in his Father and of his veneration until at end.

The divine light is *the gift* of God but to it we reach led by the ghostual Father, of the man filled of the Ghost, that teaches us those of the unpassion.

In the Hymn 1, Saint Symeon calls his Father *Apostle of God*<sup>616</sup>. The title

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<sup>615</sup> Saint Justin Popovich, speaking about *culture* and *holiness* in his profound evaluation of european culture, said: „Outside of Saints do not exist teachers and pedagogues perfect, nor a true culture without holiness. Only the Saint is the true pedagogue and teacher; only the holiness is the true light. The true culture, the true enlightenment are nothing else than the irradiance of holiness. Only Saints are truly enlightened”, acc. Archim. Justin Popovich, *The Man and the God-Man. The Abysses and the Acmes of Philosophy* [Omul și Dumnezeul-Om. Abisurile și culmile filozofiei], introd. study and trans. by Rev. Prof. Ioan Ică and Deac. Ioan I. Ică jr., preface by Prof. Ioannis N. Karmiris, postface by Panayotis Nellis, Publ. Deisis, Sibiu, 1997, p. 83.

For Saint Symeon the ghostual Father is *a Holy man*, a man in whom is *evident* the grace of the Holy Ghost.

which he confers to Saint Symeon the Pious is not one gratuitous.

In the Hymn 15, speaking about the assuming and the deification of humanity by Christ in His divine-human hypostasis, Symeon shows that his Father reached *an unpassioned man* still of here: Christ „has made integer man, being integer God with true, the One, not divided [after natures], [ie] perfect man in all. Same being God and on the entirely [God] in all integer members.

So has made and now, in the last times, Saint Symeon the Pious, the Studite.

This is not ashamed by the members of any man, neither to see on others naked, neither to be seen he himself naked. For he had on Christ integer and he himself integer was Christ. And all his members and the members of any other, in part and on all, on which he was seeing as on Christ and therefore he remained *unmoved* [ἀκίνητος], *unharmmed* [ἀβλαβής] and *unpassioned* [ἀπαθής], as the one that was himself integer Christ”<sup>617</sup>.

Symeon the Pious is *the Apostle of the Lord* just for that he reached unpassioned as and the Apostles, but he received as and the Apostles, through divine discovery, the true teaching about God.

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<sup>616</sup> SC 156, Hymns, I, 49, p. 160/ Ică jr. 3, p. 53.

<sup>617</sup> Idem, Hymns, XV, 202-213, p. 294/ Idem, p.

*The ghostual Father* is not only an orthodox liver or anyone of the priests confessors – as though this would be his single mode of marking – but, for Symeon, that one becomes the ghostual Father, which *confirms* for him God Himself, in different modes and un-interrupted.

The institution of the ghostual paternity is not one of *human right*, does not reclaim it anyone when he wants and how he wants, but it is one of *divine right*, is guaranteed by God, Who gives His grace to those who love Him.

In the previous chapter we showed how God led him to Symeon the Pious, how he received through the prayer and his intercession the divine sight, fact for that Symeon has never *recanted* of his Father through that have come to him the life and the salvation.

The gratitude and the thanksgiving of Symeon for his Father is immense, is overwhelming, is vivid and on it we refind at all the step in his writings.

In the Hymn 18 we have a such of muster of gratitude full of ghostual pathos to the person of his Holy Father:

„Who led me [ὠδήγησεν] pulling me to these beauties? Who raised me at unpassion from the abyss of the world? Who separated me from the father, the brothers [Mk. 10, 29] and the friends, the relatives and the pleasures and the joys of the world?

Who showed me the path of repentance and of mourning, that I found the day that has never ended? An Angel was, not man. And yet man [Ἄγγελος ἦν, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος. ἄνθρωπος δ’], who mocked [ἐμπαίζεται] by the world and trampled upon the dragon [Ps. 90, 13] and the demons tremble in the presence of him”<sup>618</sup>.

Symeon expresses his gratitude *in ablaze mode*, stormy, ie *ghostually*, through the Holy Ghost, Who was in him but he does *not exaggerate* in noway when he qualifies him in such terms on his Father.

For that, through him, he lived the unpassion which he saw at his Father, Symeon sees in him angelical qualities, although he recognizes that the one was *man*, but a man who defeated on demons and tread in foots the vile passions.

*The paradoxical humanity* of the inghostuated man makes *the object of gratitude* of Saint Symeon. He venerates on his Father just for that *he proves* to be *a man with the divine life* and for that God Himself presents him on Father right *a norm of piety*.

God shows in ecstatic mode to Symeon that his Father, Saint Symeon the Pious, is the man that he needs, for that he is *His friend*. God sends on Symeon at His beloved, at Saints, as to learn from them, but, in express mode, He sends at

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<sup>618</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XVIII, 124- 132, p. 84-86/ Idem, p. 114.

the Saint from *his proximate nearness*, for that to grow ghostually through the submission and the obedience to that.

*The disclosure* of the Father has right scope *the immediate communion* with this one and is *the entrusting* of the fact, that and now we can live in holy mode if we fulfill the will of God.

But we know *the thrilling shout* of Symeon to the weakness of his century: „Do not say that is *with infirmity* to receive the divine Ghost, do not say that is *with possibility* to save ourselves without Him, do not say that someone can impart of Him *without knowing it!*

Do not say that God does not let Himself seen by men, do not say that the men do not see the divine light [φῶς θεῖον] or that the thing is with infirmity in the present times! Never is not with infirmity [Οὐδέποτε ἀδύνατον] this thing, friends, but is very with possibility [λίαν δυνατὸν] those who will, but those whose life gave them the cleaning of passions and made them clean the eye of mind”<sup>619</sup>.

This *shout* to contemporaries and followers is, on the one part, a *fundamental distrust* in the suppression of the endless chain of holiness in the Church and, in the same time, an *absolute confidence* in the fact, that God will bring to every man who seek Him the ghostual Father that he needs.

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<sup>619</sup> Idem, Hymns, XVII, 125-134, p. 288/ Idem, p. 170.

Symeon cannot conceive the Church without Saints and, in the same time, he cannot see the salvation and the holiness outside of the cleaning of passions and of the sight of the divine light.

The ghostual Fathers are *gifts* of God in our lives, but on them we need to seek through our cleaning of passions, through our searching perpetual as to find authentic ghostual life.

For *the meeting* with the Father must to sanctify us the life, as to understand him and to follow him.

In the Epistle 3, Symeon substantiates the sending of the Father in our life on *the uncurbed love* of God for our salvation: „if He gave death on the His Son the One-Begotten that to save us through Him, how is with possibility really, that then when we ask Him *to send us* or, as to say better, to show us *a servant* of Him, Holy and true, as to lead us to salvation and to teach us His ways; how is with possibility, I say, *to hide* a such man from us and to deprive us of *a guiding*? No, no! Not is with possibility”<sup>620</sup>.

*The intimation* of the true servant of God, of the ghostual Father is *a gift* of God but which we receive it due of the excess of zeal and of the interior cleanness. The same happened and with the centurion Cornelius, says Symeon<sup>621</sup>,

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<sup>620</sup> Epistles, III, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 328.

<sup>621</sup> Idem, III, apud Idem, p. 328-329.

which received *advising* through Angel and through Apostles due of his godly life.

For *to recognize* on Father, concludes Symeon, the one that *sends us* God in special mode for us, „we need of more zeal and bearing of care”<sup>622</sup>.

*The entrance* of the Father in our life is *providential* and through him we learn *the ghostual mode* through that to approach us to God.

*Our approach* to the Father and *the relation* with him is, in the same time, *an advance* in our relation with the God of our heart.

In the ethical Discourse 6, Symeon regards on the ghostual Father in his hypostasis of *ghostual doctor* [τὸν πνευματικὸν ἰατρὸν]<sup>623</sup>.

This „receives [on his patient], keeps him, comforts him, shows him all the love and the simplicity, as to entrust him that he will cure him with *the medicines* [φαρμάκων] which he asked them and he will fulfill his lust”<sup>624</sup>.

The ghostual Father utilizes *the medicines* which *shows to him* the Holy Ghost, ie he heals on patient *together with* the Ghost.

He is *an authentic medic* as long as he works *with* and *through* God’s power

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<sup>622</sup> Idem, III, apud Idem, p. 328.

<sup>623</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, VI, 279, p. 140/ Ică jr. 1, p. 272.

<sup>624</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, VI, 298-301, p. 140-142/ Idem, p. 273.

and, in the same time, is *an intercessor* of us to God and *a good counselor*<sup>625</sup>.

*The ghostual experience*, in this hard and thrilling process of the healing of passions, is *the principal trump* of the ghostual Father.

If we find on the Father, „we receive through him *the forgiveness* of our sins”<sup>626</sup>, for that he leads us at the authentic mode of cleansing of passions and in the same time is *our guiding* towards the sight of God.

Then when Symeon reports his ghostual experience at the experience of his Father, he sees his own experience as being on full *tributary* to person and to love of his Father:

„To us...as to speak like a fool [II Cor. 11, 23]...[God] revealed to us through His Ghost, ...through *the intercessions* [ἰκεσίαις] of The Felicitous and our Holy Father Symeon, as to see, like says the Apostle, the graces that were given to us by God [I Cor. 2, 12]. [...]

And the fact that He took *face* in us [Gal. 4, 19], the One who is with true God, what else is then that He premakes us and He forges us again with all on us ourselves and He changes us at face in the face of His divinity?

Thus I knew that was and Saint Symeon the Pious, who lived as *ascetic* in the Studion Monastery and the itself

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<sup>625</sup> Epistles, I, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 310.

<sup>626</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 317.

experience giving us *insurance* about those regarding at him [τῇ πείρᾳ αὐτῇ τὰ περὶ τούτου βεβαιωθέντες].

For through *the discovery of the Ghost* that was in him, he sealing us our faith in him, we guard on it without contradictions.

More, igniting from his light, as from a lamp, the candlestick of our soul, we guard it unextinguished, guarded being by *the prayers* [εὐχαῖς] and *the intercessions* [προσβείαις] of him, from which *freshened* being our faith in him increase and will increase – I speak with boldness in God! – bearing its fruit hundredfold in itself the the divine light”<sup>627</sup>.

The light *came* in the life of Symeon through his Father and *is kept* in him through the intercessions of him.

Symeon confesses with much conscientiousness this thing and he considers it *a great welldoing* in his life and not as on *a curtailment* of his personality.

The true relation *ghostual Father – ghostual son* is one that raises reciprocal on two in face of God and of themselves.

The Father does not feel condemned *at stagnation* if he cares on his ghostual son but, contrariwise, he grows ghostually through this divine work of birth of the new ghostual man and the ghostual son

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<sup>627</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IX, 226-232, 246-259, p. 236-238/ Ică jr. 1, p. 313-314.

does not feel *injured* in his human dignity for that *he listens* to Father, but just through his obedience *he acquires* his true freedom and dignity in the face of God, ie on that of to be *master* over his passions.

The ghostual Father borns through many interior torments on his son into the Lord.

In the Epistle 3, Symeon himself, which was modeled into the Ghost by his Father, he says, at his row, to an apprentice: „My beloved in the Lord, I received you at my bosom when you come to me and I modeled you, with much warmth, apprentice through teaching and with many painstakingings I made you, again, *after the face* of Christ through repentance and I born you, again, *ghostual child* through great patience, strong painstakingings and tears of day with day, even if you did not know nothing through how many *attempts* I passed for you”<sup>628</sup>.

The patience and the torments provoked by the misunderstanding and the lack of sapience of the ghostual son, the care to tell him *the truth of salvation* and the mode in that *you lead him* to the divine light on this represents *the torment* of day with day of the ghostual Father.

The ghostual Father *palpitates* at every move for his son, he *carries* in his

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<sup>628</sup> Epistles, III, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 323.

heart and he *suffers* for his unfulfillments, after how he *enjoys* of his successes.

Not only the son shows *a total transparency* and *a boundless love* towards Father, but and he is *a door* always open towards his heart and *a guiding sun* in his face.

In the same Epistle, Symeon shows that and the Father must to say *the greatnesses* which he receives from God to his spiritual children, as *thanksgiving* brought to God for *the gifts* received from Him:

„In the same face and all who have received a ghostual gift from God, have before of all the duty *to share it* to their ghostual sons, and, more then, and to the friends, to the acquaintances and to his servants, to the rich and to the poor.

Yet and if he has received word of wisdom, word of acquaintance, the gifts of healings [I Cor. 12, 8-9], the guidance of souls, power of help or the discernment of salvation”<sup>629</sup>.

The special relation of the Father with his ghostual sons asks that the first to know the receiving of a vision or of a gift to be they. The ghostual son must to hear from the Father how illuminates God on him and through this to understand how illuminates God and on he himself. *The identity* of the illumination with the Father but *on his*

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<sup>629</sup> Idem, III, apud Idem, p. 325.

*measure*, creates in the ghostual son a special soaring towards increasingly, towards all more cleaning and holiness, for that he observes that the holiness, the growth in holiness is that brings multiple understanding and gifts over gifts from God.

The ghostual Father is the one that „comprises those of the Ghost”<sup>630</sup> and he can explain from his *together-feelings* with the Ghost of God.

Those who *have not received* the grace of God as the Apostles and who *have not seen* the light of God<sup>631</sup>, says Symeon, those *cannot help* on someone as *to be born into the Ghost*.

Here Symeon does not speak of a purely human competence, that of being a good pedagogue or a good interpreter of Scripture, of the Fathers and of the canons of the Church, but of *the presence* of the Ghost in us and of *the experience* of the sight of the light which are *the materials* through that we rebuild the human being and we make from it a ghostual being.

Therefore and *excludes* from start Saint Symeon, from any work of man’s ghostual rebirth, those who were not *sanctified* through the Ghost.

The ghostual Father is *irreplaceable*, is the personal marvel, living, predatory from our life and his *departure* from us or

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<sup>630</sup> Idem, III, apud Idem, p. 334.

<sup>631</sup> Idem, IV, apud Idem, p. 351.

his *move* at the Lord leaves an immense void, that we cannot fill it with anything else.

The end of the 4th Epistle, this trenchant, the shaking confession of the spiritual torments aroused of the love of God and of the ghostual Father, gives us the possibility to see *the interior dramatic dimension* of life holy and of the struggle for *the correctness* of theological life:

„[...] I am *hated* for the love of Christ. [...] I am condemned by all because I want *to honor* my Father and my ghostual Teacher. [...]

I am proclaimed by them *heretic*, because I teach on all to seek *the grace of above* and *the coming* in conscious face of the Holy Ghost and that without it not makes the forgiveness of sins, nor can anyone to release of passions and of the irrational lusts, nor to make *son* of God, nor to sanctify accomplished without the grace of the Holy Ghost. [...]

[For] the devil has risen on me his servants and he leads war with me as *to cease* to proclaim in words and to do with the deed the commandments of the Evangel and of the Apostles and to endeavor *to renew* the evangelical living which was outdated somewhat and became despised, as the men not to have *boldness* that they can be saved without to receive the grace of the Holy Ghost

and without unpassion, and to deceive without to receive Him and to perish”<sup>632</sup>.

Saint Symeon feels outraged unjustly of his confreres malicious and envious on his ghostual experience and on the love toward his Father and, in the same time, he knows that his persecution is for righteousness, for the remembrance of the true evangelical living to his contemporaries.

If from a such theological passage, some commentators has pulled the conclusion that Symeon is *a precursor* of the protestantism, this affirmation proves itself one gratuitous. Symeon has not pushed never on his disciples as *to make* a new Church (evident thing from point of view *historic*), in which to live after *the example* of evangelical living, as Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, but he fought against *a false opinion*, generalized in the Church of his time, about the true orthodox living.

Symeon shows through the icon of his Father, of him and of his apprentices Holy that *the true evangelical living* and *orthodox* was not lost in the Church, but that just this *the authentic living* began to be *persecuted* by the Church’s men, which do not live at *the height* of its exigences.

In conclusion, those who were *not born* through a ghostual Father, through

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<sup>632</sup> Idem, IV, apud Idem, p. 357, 358.

a Saint which binds in uninterrupted mode of the string of Church's Saints, cannot know the relation so much deep and overwhelming of the Father with his sons, what and of God with us, His sons.

Saint Symeon shows on the ghostual Father right *the guarantor* of authenticity of ghostual life on earth and as the one that *reborns us*, through the Ghost, on each in part.

## Sacramentology

### 2. 6. The Holy Mysteries of the Church and the Feeling of the Divine Grace

Symeonian sacramentology has a direct connection at the reality of God's sight, for that in the Holy Mysteries you *feel* the presence of the divine grace, if you are received *in ecstatic mode* on the Holy Ghost.

Saint Symeon deals of all the Mysteries of the Church more or less, without as to write in express mode a special work about the Mysteries of the Church.

But his opera, after how we will see, has multiple and enough of important sacramentological traces, from which we can understand *the role* and *the importance* which he gave them in the mystical life of the Church<sup>633</sup>.

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<sup>633</sup> Father Gheorghe Sima, into an article from his period of youth, dedicated of Saint Symeon, said that at him, „the Holy Mysteries have...a christologic character, pneumatologic and ecclesial and are not simple symbols and ceremonies”, acc. PhD Student Gheorghe Sima, *The Work of the Holy Ghost in the Mystery of Repentance at Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Lucrarea Sfântului Duh în Taina Pocăinței la Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in rev. *Theological Studies* [Studii Teologice], XLII (1990), no. 3, p. 50.

## 2. 6. 1. The Holy Baptism and the Sight of God

We have remembered several times before now the defining role of Baptism in our life, the role of *the sacramental gate* through that we enter in the communion with the Most Holy Trinity.

The Holy Baptism is the moment of our entry *in the relation* with God and, in the same time, the moment of our creation as living members of the mystical body, secret of Christ, ie of the Holy Church.

And we begin the commentary at the sacramental theology of Symeon with a place very concise, in that speaks to us about *what represents* the Baptism in our life but and about *the ghostual life*:

„From the divine Baptism we receive *the forgiveness of sins* [τὴν τῶν ἡμαρτημένων λαμβάνομεν ἄφεσιν] and we are, in the same time, *release of curse* [τῆς πρώην κατάρας ἐλευθερούμεθα] and through *the coming* of the Holy Ghost we are *sanctified* [ἁγιαζόμεθα].

But *the perfect grace* [τὴν τελείαν χάριν], after how was said: „I will dwell and I will walk into them” [II Cor. 6, 16], we do not [receive] then [οὐ τότε].

For this thing is of those who have a *safe faith* [τῶν βεβαιοπίστων] and show it from *facts* [τῶν ἔργων].

Because, after Baptism, we incline towards evil facts and of shame and [through these] we cast with all this consecration [τὸν ἁγιασμὸν εἰς ἅπαν ἀποβαλλόμεθα].

But, through *repentance* [μετανοία], *confession* [ἔξομολογήσει] and *tears* [δάκρυσι] we take, on their measure [κατὰ ἀναλογίαν], first *the forgiveness of sins*, and, together with this, and *the sanctification of above of the grace*<sup>634</sup>.

The passage which we have quoted is an inexhaustible gold mine for the understanding of *the role* of Baptism in our life.

In the first row, we find that we cannot *cleanse* from sins and we cannot *fill* of the Ghost through ourselves or only *believing* in Christ.

Saint Symeon binds *the forgiveness of sins*, *our cleaning* from the curse of sin and *the coming* of the Holy Ghost in us by the moment of *receiving* of the Holy Baptism, moment in that *we enter* in Church.

The Baptism is for him a *consecration* of us. *The sanctification* is all one with *the coming* of the Ghost in us, which means *the forgiveness*, the deletion of sins from our being.

*The forgiveness* and *the release of the curse* are not *aprioristic* to the coming of the Ghost in us but just *the coming* of the

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<sup>634</sup> SC 51, Chapters, III, 45, 9-19, p. 93/ Ică jr. 3, p. 408.

Ghost means the cleaning of sins, the deleting of the curse from us and our indwelling by the Ghost.

The sanctification, our filling of holiness is *a coming* of the Ghost in us, ie *a discovery*, a sacramental experiencing in us of the coming of the Ghost.

Symeon is categorical in what regards *the coming of the Ghost* and he speaks of sanctification which the Ghost produces in us as about *a personal reality*.

He who baptizes refelt *in the deep* of his being the coming of the Ghost, this personal discovery, the personal *interiorization* of God with us, through the intermedium of His glory.

But exists *a difference of degree*, emphasizes our Father, between *the feelings* of the grace by those who are baptizing, by *beginners*, in comparison with those who are *sunken* in holiness or are *perfect* into it.

The new-baptized infants or the new-baptized adults not having *a safe faith*, a faith shown through facts, ie a continue life of holiness, assumed, it inclines to evil and facts of shame.

Through a such careless life or through the apostasy, the unknowing and the forgetfulness of faith into that we baptized, we experience *the casting* of proper holiness, of the lose of feeling of the grace from our being.

Saint Symeon uses in this passage the verb ἀποβάλλω, an expressive verb,

that announces that we *cast*, leave, abandon something, in our case, something from us, something that *defines us* in fundamental mode as *members* of the Church: the presence of the grace from our being.

*The coming of the Ghost* in us and *the keeping of Him* in us represent just what *we receive* from God and what makes us living members of the Church.

În the measure in that we, says Symeon, *cast* this holiness, we cast it with all, wholly [ἅπαν], we cannot enjoy by *its return* in us, than through repentance, the sacramental confession of sins and tears.

The holiness being *the presence* of the Holy Ghost in us, *His indwelling* in us and *His remaining* in us, just therefore at Symeon the holiness is *fluctuating*, is an interior reality extreme of dynamic, that represents *our con-habitation* with God.

For Symeon the holiness *is lost* through sin and *regain* through repentance. But the repentance brings in us a *coming* of the Ghost *on measure* of our *opening* to God – therefore Symeon uses in text the expression κατὰ ἀναλογίαν – and, once with it, and *the cleansing* from sins.

Into a such soteriological perspective, in that *the holiness is the together-habitation* with God in our being and where it can be lost *into a twinkle* and can be refound *immediate*, through repen-

tance, confession of sin and tears, through the pain for those that we have made and through *the re-receiving* of the Ghost, we understand why Symeon insists so much *on the reality* of the feeling of grace, of continuous feeling of God in us.

The ghostual life is a life of the permanent feeling of grace, which integrates and *the awareness of loss* or of *attenuation* of its feeling through our sins but and *its abundant receiving* through our facts of piety.

The entire symptomatology of *the presence* of God's grace in us has to do with ghostual life, mystical of Church and, after how we see at Symeon, the ghostual life *begins* with the Holy Baptism and *continues* on all the par-course of our life and in eternity.

If *we cast* on the Ghost from us, if we disembarass of Him through sin, *on the measure* of our repentance, of our return, the Holy Ghost *returns* in us and is *always* with us.

The connexion between Baptism and the ghostual life or, better said, *the continuation* of divine life in us, planted at Baptism in our being, is made through continuous repentance for our sins.

Speaking about repentance in our life, he says that this is a work ὑπεμφαίνει<sup>635</sup>, an open reality, temporal indeterminated.

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<sup>635</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 46, 1-2, p. 94/ Ibidem.

The Baptism is the moment in that our souls receive *the earnest* that will be *brides* of Christ<sup>636</sup>.

But Symeon emphasizes the fact, that we must take *the earnest* from Baptism, ie *on the Ghost* in our being and to have Him in conscious [γνωστῶς] face in ourselves<sup>637</sup>.

The receiving of *the earnest* at Baptism does not presuppose however and the consciousness of *secure salvation* of our person, nor *an indifferent* comportment to ghostual life or *one triumphalist* opposite of the errors of other kinds of believers, which are in outside of the Church.

*The earnest*, emphasizes Symeon, *the presence* of the Ghost, must be refelt of our entire being, through „the work of the commandments and the acquiring of the virtues”<sup>638</sup>.

Just in *the frames* of ghostual life, of life lived through the commandments and virtues, we feel *the safe presence* of the Ghost in us.

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<sup>636</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 47, 3-4, p. 94/ Ibidem.

<sup>637</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 47, 10-12, p. 94/ Ibidem.

A romanian commentator of symeonian theology remarks the fact, that „*the secret feeling* of the presence of grace or of *the work* of Ghost is in indissoluble correlation with *the sight* of the Christ's glory in light and love”, acc. Rev. Lect. PhD student Călin-Ioan Dușe, *The Mystery of Holy Baptism at Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Taina Sfântului Botez la Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in *Theological Horizons* [Orizonturi Teologice] I (2000), no. 3, p. 164.

<sup>638</sup> SC 51, Chapters, III, 48, 15-16, p. 94/ Ică jr. 3, p. 408.

Symeon puts *the earnest* in the direct link with *the stable feeling*, firm [ἀσφαλῆς] of the Ghost.

*Our current dwelling* by the Ghost is possible only through our total attachment to His presence and through a life of holiness. Our bonding by the Ghost, our inflaming feeling and the confession of abyssal relation with Him represent and our personal holiness and the ecclesial character of our being.

*The salvation and the holiness* are at Symeon our living experience, continuous, of our relation with God, into that *initiated us* the Holy Baptism and which *we keep it* through a tireless fight with the sin and through the fulfillment of all His commandments.

Speaking of *earnest* or of *ring* [τὸν δακτύλιον]<sup>639</sup>, ie *of receiving* of the Ghost at Baptism, Symeon speaks in Chapters III, 50 about Baptism as about *a our betrothal* with Christ.

If in Baptism *we betrothed* with Christ through the Holy Ghost and our christian life is a life lived *in beautiful fidelity* to our Bridegroom, then the Kingdom of Heavens, says Symeon, and the eternal goods, we receive them after we leave from here, after our dormition, having through earnest the certitude of eternal marriage with our Bridegroom<sup>640</sup>.

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<sup>639</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 49, 24, p. 94/ Idem, p. 409.

<sup>640</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 50, 27-33, 1-4, p. 94-95/ Ibidem.

Into a such perspective as the symeonian, our life in Church is a life of *intense longing* for our Bridegroom, of calling and feelings in cleanness for Him, in unceasing calling of Him in our being, for *to prepare us of the great crossing* to Him and to *our eternal wedding* with Him.

The personal eschatology transforms thus into *a crossing in rejoicing*, into an eternal wedding with our Bridegroom and of Church in its integrality and not into a loneliness without finish, excruciating and aberrant.

The death is *an entrance* in joy for one who has lived in holiness, is the complete fulfillment of personal life and an eternal forwardness in the communion with the Bridegroom Christ.

From symeonian perspective the life *has sense*, one eternal, for that the joy of communion with God transcends history and makes from the the sacramental act of Baptism, spent in history and, in the same time, in eternity, *an opening* and *a real entrance* and *abyssal* of us in eternal life.

Symeon also deals of Baptism in this third series of chapters and in the chapters 89 and 90.

In the chapter 89, the Baptism is evaluated from the point of view of freedom of the human will.

Our Father tells us, that „*the power to determine on ourselves* [αὐτεξούσιον]

and *the freedom* of our choice [αὐτοπροαίρετον] are not removed [ἀφαιρέται] [from us] through Baptism, but it gives us the freedom to not be *tyrannized* against of our will [ἄκοντας ἡμας τυραννείσθαι] by the devil.

For after Baptism stays in our power either *to remain* from proper will in the commandments of the Lord Christ, into Whom we baptized, and to walk on the path of His commandments, either *to deviate us* from this straight road and to return us at the adversary [τὸν ἀντίπαλον] and the our enemy [ἐχθρὸν], the devil, through the evil facts”<sup>641</sup>.

The Baptism, regarded under the aspect of *our deparasiticalness* of demons and of their tyranny is *a chasing* of the demons from us through the coming of the Ghost and *of our dwelling* by grace but, in the same time, is and the moment of proper independence, experienced as *real dependence*, deep of God.

*The true freedom* of man, reminds us our Father, we do not receive it through birth, ie through natural descent, but it is *a gift* of God that we receive it in Baptism, from He Himself.

The exercising in the true freedom means the exercising in the fulfillment of the commandments and in our feelings into the Ghost, for that „those who succumb after Baptism to the wills of the

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<sup>641</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 89, 8-16, p. 109/ Idem, p. 420.

wicked and make the things willed by that, those are alienated [ἀπαλλοτριούσι] on themselves of the holy womb of the Baptism”<sup>642</sup>, ie of the eternal life of the Ghost.

The verb ἀπαλλοτριόω [to remove, to alienate], as and the verb ἀποβάλλω, of that I remembered previously, are verbs that represent, in distinct mode, in the writing of Symeon, our personal action through which we choose *evil*, against us, through which we choose *the communion* with demons. Our alienation from God is *a personal choice* but one evil, not good, through which we renounce at *the dignity* of sons, friends, of communions of God, in the favor of maliciousness and of inconsistent rejection of our recordation at the life of God, at *the true life*.

*Our removal* of the holiness of the Baptism means *our casting* of the Holy Ghost, of the One who is *live* in us from Baptism.

But through the ethical Discourse 10 we approach and more of discussing of the interior relation between *the grace* of Baptism and *the sight* of the divine light.

Speaking here about Baptism, our Father attentionates on his listeners that *the receiving* of the Baptism, without *the feeling* in us of the Ghost, is *a catastrophe* for our life<sup>643</sup>. We cannot be, he says here

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<sup>642</sup> Idem, Chapters, III, 90, 17-19, p. 109/ Ibidem.

<sup>643</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, X, 166-170, p. 270/ Ică jr. 1, p. 327.

in accentuated mode, we cannot be, „in *unfelt face/ imperceptible* [interior] [ἀνεπαίσθητως], sons of the day and of the light”<sup>644</sup>.

As to be *the sons of glory* we must perceive with the eyes of the heart, to see the light of God. And for that *to save us* must not *to enter only* in the water of Baptism and *to boast us* that we are *orthodox-christians*, but and *to live* and *to keep* the Ghost in us: „because our salvation is not only *in the water* of the Baptism, *but and in the Ghost*”<sup>645</sup>.

If we baptize us in water must to show that is *live*, in daily mode, the Ghost of God in us and that we have *the facts* of the Light.

With other words, *the orthodox-christian life is the ghostual life*, the state of *to-be-always* in the grace of Trinity, the experience, in quotidian mode, *with* and *through* the glory of God.

*The treating* of sacramental reality of Baptism is not at Symeon *one sweetish* or *relativistic* from point of view dogmatic-theological.

The contrary, *the realism* of Baptism, the living experience of the real act of our union with the Ghost, is *a characteristic* of our whole life.

Symeon does not report at his personal past as to speak about Baptism.

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<sup>644</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, 169-170, p. 270/ Ibidem.

<sup>645</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, 188-189, p. 272/ Idem, p. 328.

He reports at the Ghost *from him*, that attests the fact, that in his childhood he *was baptized* in Christ, that he was united with Christ and with the Ghost through Baptism.

The consequences of Baptism are *quotidian* for Symeon. In the same discourse quoted anterior, in the ethical Discourse 10, in the frame of polemic in going with a certain mentality *incitizenly* then and now in Church, Symeon says something *surprising* for those who see in fixed mode, non-dynamic, *the action* of the Holy Mysteries in our life.

He says that „not all the baptized receive through Baptism *on Christ*, but only those who have *safe faith* [βεβαίόπιστοι] and have prepared themselves *in the perfect knowledge* [ἐν γνώσει τελείᾳ] or into *an anterior clearing* [προκαθάρσει] and thus they came at Baptism”<sup>646</sup>.

The instinctual reaction at the hearing of a such theological statement, based on the premise of *static evidence* of Baptism is *an error*, if we do not let Symeon to explain us until at end what he has to say in definitive about the feeling of the Ghost at Baptism.

For Symeon, the Baptism is not *an act ended* once with the *otrust* of service and the evidence of grace received then is interior one, overwhelming. For our Father the Baptism is *a real receiving* and

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<sup>646</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 324-328, p. 282/ Idem, p. 332.

*conscious* of the Ghost in our being, ie of *the interior dynamism overwhelming*, that makes us extreme of enthusiastic and of vigorous in the experience of the ghostual life.

After how we have seen anterior, Symeon is not against the pedobaptism, but he confesses, without denial, *the receiving* of earnest of the Ghost through Baptism.

The phrase aforesaid of Symeon does not refer *at the Baptism of the babes* but at those who have *matured* in faith and who have received on the Ghost *into consciousness*, in ecstatic mode.

In the support of the conscious experience of the Ghost in our being, he brings right testimony A. Ap. 8, 14-17<sup>647</sup>.

His commentary at this lucan text and at Gal. 3, 27 is that „*just received* the Holy Ghost, [those] have received on the Lord Jesus. For is not *one* Christ and *something else* the Ghost”<sup>648</sup>.

Symeon does not propose us *a renunciation* at Baptism but *a consciousness* and *a reliving* of union with Christ through the Ghost. The sight of light that emanates, gushes from the divine-human person of Christ, ie the ecstatic sight, is *a reliving fully assumed*, a direct reconfirmation, coming from part of God, of the earnest of Baptism.

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<sup>647</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 330-336, p. 282-284/ Ibidem.

<sup>648</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 342-344, p. 284/ Ibidem.

The ecstasy *does not replace* the Baptism but *acknowledges* its extraordinary latencies, on the measure of power of faith, of the increase in faith and holiness of the believer.

But, in the measure in that the Baptism was received by us *in babyhood* and we parted without knowing, through our sins, of the feeling of the Ghost, the sight of divine light is not only a *reconfirmation* of the earnest received but it is refelt in personal mode as *the first true knowledge* of God.

Symeon emphasizes this thing of many times and we have shown this. Just therefore, he folds on the lucan text aforesaid, he emphasizes that the receiving of the Ghost *into consciousness*, in ecstatic mode, means of fact *the full awareness*, firm, that we have *received* on Christ and on the Ghost, that we have received *the grace* of Trinity.

And after what we have said all these, our underlinings at the text from 10, 324-328 its find their total ghostual transparency, because, as says here, only „those who have *safe faith* [βεβαιόπιστοι] and have prepared themselves *in the perfect knowledge* [ἐν γνώσει τελείᾳ] or into an *anterior clearing* [προκαθάρσει]”, fell, in evident mode, that they are *inhabited* by the glory of the Trinity.

*The increase in grace* and *the ecstatic sight* represent *the safe faith*, proven ecstatic, of which speaks us

Symeon and *the perfect knowledge* is a fruit of the ecstatic sight, of entrusting, *re-entrusting* from part of God, that *the earnest* of sight and of eternal union with Him *is in us*.

From the moment when Symeon enters on evangelic terrain in the ethical Discourse 10, we assist at a tour of force citational in the support of *conscious indwelling* of Christ in us.

He cites Jn. 1, 1-5, for to show that God is *everywhere* through the light of His glory<sup>649</sup>. From Lk. 10, 22 results that the Son discovers Himself *to anyone He wills*<sup>650</sup> and from Jn. 1, 12-14 results that *we become* in real mode the sons of God through faith and Baptism, and that *we can see* the glory of God in our being<sup>651</sup>.

However not are only these scriptural quotations through which he substantiates the theology of feeling of glory by the baptized, but these *come in relief* in his discourse.

Connecting I Pet. 1, 16, Lk. 6, 36 and A. Ap. 1, 5<sup>652</sup>, ie the interior dimension of holiness as *likeness* with God with *the receiving* of Baptism in the Holy Ghost, Symeon says that those who are *baptized into the Ghost*, ie those who *see* the

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<sup>649</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 370-379, p. 286/ Idem, p. 334.

<sup>650</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 401-403, p. 288/ Ibidem.

<sup>651</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 419-425, p. 290/ Idem, p. 335.

<sup>652</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 436-445, p. 290-292/ Idem, p. 335-336.

divine light, „they make *light* and know on the One who *born* them, for they and see Him on This one”<sup>653</sup>.

But the ecstatic sight *presupposes* the Baptism, for that in both cases we meet us in real mode with the One who recreated us on us, through the Ghost, with Christ.

The distinction on that always makes Symeon between *pedobaptism* and *ecstatic sight* is it that then we received the earnest without to have *a certain increase* in faith, that allow us the sight of His glory into acquaintance, while the ecstatic sight presupposes *an acknowledged knowledge* of the One who recreated us ghostually in Baptism.

But Symeon does not leave us to understand that in the case of Baptism, from the cause of babyhood mind, we do not receive the Ghost. He tells us that babies *receive* on the Ghost but they cannot receive Him interior at *the intensity* which requires the engaged ghostual life, the relation of great love with God. This theological discourse is *a surprise in chain* for those who want to know *the baptismal theology* of Saint Symeon.

Symeon testifies powerfully that the receiving of the Holy Ghost in ecstatic mode makes you *faithful* with true<sup>654</sup>.

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<sup>653</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 446-447, p. 292/ Idem, p. 336.

<sup>654</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 488-489, p. 294/ Idem, p. 337.

Those who *have not* on the Ghost in them<sup>655</sup>, says Symeon [to read: those who *do not feel* in them, in real mode, on the Ghost], „they are not faithful from heart”<sup>656</sup>.

The ecstatic sight is a *reactualization* of the Baptism with other words, after how the tears are at Symeon a *second Baptism*<sup>657</sup>.

If we do not *reactualize* permanent our union with Christ, our communion with Him, if we do not *feel* always His glory in us, then we have casted the grace of Baptism and His union with us.

Therefore says Symeon that is a *blasphemy* to affirm that believers receive Him and have on Christ in them in *unfelt* interior face, *unseizable* interior<sup>658</sup>.

If we do not actualize the Baptism we do not feel anything in our being and we are *non-believers* in fact, for that we do not *show* any gift from God in our life.

If we can show that in us is *the earnest*, that is *the Ghost*, then we show that we are *agreed* by God, that He *loves us* and that He *has given us* something that *is always* with us, ie the divine grace.

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<sup>655</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 498-500, p. 294/ Ibidem.

<sup>656</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, X, 500, p. 294/ Ibidem.

<sup>657</sup> About *tears as our second baptism* or as those who *continually cleanses us*, to see Ică jr. 2, p. 33; p. 34\*\*; p. 35; p. 38; p. 40; p. 53\*\*, p. 64; p. 65-66; p. 67; p. 69; p. 70; p. 71 etc.

<sup>658</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, X, 501-502, p. 296/ Ică jr. 1, p. 337.

The faith as *living relation* with God is an *irreprehensible reality* in symeonian theology. Neither the apology for sight is not at him a *standard one*, in which we all see the same thing and at the same intensity.

Taking as *paradigm* the ecstatic sight of the Holy 40 Martyrs from Sebaste of Armenia and a affirmation of the Holy Martyr Eustratius from the time of his tormentings, Symeon makes a *distinction of degree* not only between *Baptism* and *ecstatic sight* as until now, but and between *the sight of beginners* and *of the perfects*.

*The sight* of the light, says him, not received nobody before *to clean* and neither received it before *to see it* in ecstatic mode<sup>659</sup>.

But, if for beginners, „is made to them at beginning a *brightness* and a *divine lightenment*, but which immediately passes”<sup>660</sup>, fugitive, only for the perfect ones will be *full*, quotidian.

The distinction between the ecstasy of the beginners and of those perfect is an *explanatory paradigm*, we believe, of distinction between the receiving of the Ghost at *Baptism* and the receiving of the Ghost in *ecstasy*.

In both cases *unite us* with Christ through the Ghost, only that the re-

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<sup>659</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, 522-524, p. 296/ Idem, p. 388.

<sup>660</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, X, 527-528, p. 296/ Ibidem.

ceiving of Christ by babes is *for short time* and *at a low measure*, on when the ecstasy is *an acknowledgment* of Christ at a degree *more high* of ghostual understanding.

In the end of the Hymn 15, Symeon attacks fugitive the problem of the Baptism but explains us on full in what regard *our ecclesial identity* received through Baptism and reminds us and how quickly produces *the loss* of feeling of grace: „receiving on God through Baptism on when we were *small* or, better said, making us sons of God on when we were *babies*, sinning we were immediately *thrown out* of the house of David and happened it to us without *to feel something* and to run [back at Him] through repentance”<sup>661</sup>.

*We threw us out* of the Kingdom, ie of the house of David, as long as we do not stay *at the height* of exigencies of faith and of interior feeling of the Holy Ghost.

In the Epistle 1, our Father reiterates *the gracious reality* of the Baptism expressed here, naming on the Ghost *wealth* and *divine inheritance*, acc. Col. 1, 12, Eph. 3, 8, II Cor. 4, 7<sup>662</sup>, and specifying the fact that these „are given to the baptized *immediately* by the divine Baptism”<sup>663</sup>.

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<sup>661</sup> SC 156, Hymns, XV, 253-257, p. 298/ Ică jr. 3, p. 96-97.

<sup>662</sup> Epistles, I, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 306.

<sup>663</sup> Idem, I, apud Ibidem.

But in the Epistle 4, he presents our life as on *an assumed life* for God, for that *we promised us* then when we were baptized<sup>664</sup>.

Our returning at an evil life, sinful, is for Symeon *a violation* of our promises made at Baptism<sup>665</sup>.

For him our road after Baptism is *a road together* with Christ, is a life lived in the Ghost and any deviation from it makes through *a return* through repentance at *the union* with the feeling of Trinity's grace.

In conclusion, symeonian soteriology is, in the same time, *sacramental* – for that it begins once with the Baptism – and is, alike, and *ecstatic*, for that *the sight of the light* represents *the explicit knowledge* of Him who saves us.

The earnest of Baptism is not than *reconfirmed* through ecstasy and *understood* on measure of our ghostual development. But *the reaching at light* presupposes our entry in Church through Baptism and an interior growing *intimation*, through the fulfillment of divine commandments, *of divine grace* received at Baptism.

Symeon sees the Baptism as *an entry* in communion with God and as *a quotidian actualization* of it<sup>666</sup> until the

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<sup>664</sup> Idem, IV, apud Idem, p. 346.

<sup>665</sup> Idem, IV, apud Idem, p. 347.

<sup>666</sup> Speaking about *the authenticity* of theological experience, Father Daniel Benga said into an article

full union and for eternity of each of us with God.

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relative recent, that „any authentic religious experience cannot take place *than* in the ecclesial space” and that the orthodox theology being „through excellency a *charismatic* theology and *liturgical*” is „always living, [is] a form of ierurgy or [a] holy work, something that changes our life”, acc. Rev. Lect. D.Th. Daniel Benga, *Attempts of Orthodox Theological Epistemology* [Încercări de epistemologie teologică ortodoxă], in rev. *The Orthodoxy* [Ortodoxia] LVI (2005), no. 3-4, p. 91\*\*, 93.

## 2. 6. 2. The Holy Communion, the Feeling of Grace and the Ecstasy

As and in the case of Baptism, Saint Symeon explained, from soteriological point of view, *the divine consequences* that arise in our being the conscious union, full of longing, with the Body and the Blood of the Lord.

The discussion about Holy Communion has right fundament our union with Christ and with the Ghost, with entire Trinity in Baptism and the keeping our relation alive, incandescence with the God of our salvation.

But, before all, the symeonian eucharistic theology characterizes our sacramental union with Christ right *a real experiencing*, personal of mystery of divine-human person of Christ.

The impartation with eucharistic Christ is the personal event *of deep personal communion* of the faithful with Christ, through which we acquire *a proper understanding*, interior of christological dogma, for that we live the real communion with Christ, the personal dimension of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

*The eucharistic realism* of Symeon comes from *the realism* of divine-human person of Christ.

For that Christ is alive, forever alive and He Himself gives us *as eternal life*,

just therefore the interior reception of eucharistic Christ is an exciting one, deifying for us, for that is *His indwelling* in us and the unspeakable joy that He is *in personal mode* with us and not just *substantial*.

For Symeon, the Eucharist is not understood in terms of *substantiality* or of *replacement* of Christ with the Holy Eucharist but, contrariwise, the Eucharist is, for Symeon, one that strengthens our link of communion with Christ, Who is in a personal mode in relation with us.

In the ethical Discourse 4, as to begin with a suggestive passage, Symeon initiates an eucharistological discussion starting from the image of loving father, that stays at the table with his sons<sup>667</sup>.

Then when the heavenly Father (Symeon moves the center of attention from the paradigm at the reality suggested by this) wants *to sit at the table* with His sons and *to enjoy with them*, He does not give them *something different* from Himself but *He gives Himself* to them, according Jn. 6, 33, as Bread, that comes down from heaven, for to give life to the world<sup>668</sup>.

Symeon does not quote *at happening* on the Evangelist John with 6, 33. For Symeon, The Holy Eucharist is not a *symbol* or something in that *is not*

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<sup>667</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 280-281, p. 28/ Ică jr. 1, p. 227.

<sup>668</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 285-289, p. 28/ Ibidem.

*communicated* to us the life of Christ but, in Eucharist, Christ communicates to us *His glory* and He is *with us*, with those who are imparting with Him in eucharistic mode.

However the Eucharist *does not replace* on Christ as person, *but Himself Christ* crucified and risen, Who ascended at heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father, unites with us in the Eucharist.

As and John the Theologian, Symeon the Theologian speaks about *the impartation* with eucharistic Christ in the terms of *interior communion* with Christ, through which Christ remains in those who impart with Himself and the believers remain in the deepest relation with Christ. Through Eucharist *we unite* and *are* with the Son of God incarnate, Who is *the real food* of His sons, of the members of the Church and Who is *with* His Church in any moment.

Priests and bishops of the Church *prepare* the Precious Gifts and *bring them*, put them before, on altar, as these *to be sanctified* by the descent of the Ghost. These are the fruit of the earth and of our work.

However, once with their sanctification, we do not speak about *bread* and *wine* but about *eucharistic Christ*, of His Body and Blood the ones deified, those filled of divine light.

However never Symeon does not identify in substantial mode *the Eucharist* with *Christ* but he speaks about the impartation with Christ as about a impartation, alike, of humanity and divinity of the person of Lord.

Says Symeon here, in the trace of johannine citation enunciated: „and *from* Him and *with* Him feed unceasing until at satiety [κόρον τρέφονται ἀενάως], *preparing* through impartation for eternal life and *sanctifying* the soul and the body”<sup>669</sup>. The impartation is *for sons*, for the sons that stay at the table of love with their Father the Beloved. The impartation leaves *real traces* in our being, for that it sanctifies us, prepares us for eternity, for our continuous impartation of His sight and it longer has *a defining role* which surprises Symeon: Holy Communion *saturates*, delights in continuous on those who impart in repeated mode of it.

As and in the case of Baptism, Symeon insists *on the absolute positivity*, on the beneficial stunning aspect, at personal level, of receiving of the Holy Mysteries, on the fact that they fill us of the glory of God, that they sanctify us, fill us of all the joy and the gratitude.

*The deprivation* of the impartation with Christ, says Symeon, is received by the sons, who abuse of their freedom<sup>670</sup>,

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<sup>669</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 289-291, p. 28/ Ibidem.

<sup>670</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 292-293, p. 28/ Ibidem.

as a *deprivation of good*<sup>671</sup>, of the good which they *lived* in them being in enthusiastic mode, then when they sat at the table with their heavenly Father.

Those who are *restored* through repentance, as *living* members, awakeners of the Master's table, come with more boldness, says Symeon, and with more longing to Christ and with trust in the glory of God<sup>672</sup>.

Is easy of observed the fact that, in this passage, our Father sees the deprivation of the Holy Mysteries as a moment of *interiorization* and of *conscientization* and more of necessity of union with God, which lives it and the one who *does not see* the light, which is *private* from the sight of the divine light.

With other words, *the true love* of Christ conscientizes and more then when we live *our remoteness* from Him as *the greatest personal drama*.

When we feel *how good* was for us with Christ and *how bad* we feel without Him, then we understand, into an overwhelming mode, His direct role, of irreplaceable and deifying, which has Christ in our life.

The ethical Discourse 1, this theological overwhelming panoply, brings us and closer *of the core* of sy-

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<sup>671</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 297, p. 28/ Ibidem.

<sup>672</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, IV, 307-309, p. 30/ Ibidem.

meonian eucharistic theology, ie of interior feeling of grace.

Speaking about Lord's resurrection from the dead, Symeon leads the discussion towards our deification, through the impartation of Him.

If then when raised, Christ has deified first *the soul* and then made as His body *to be full of glory*<sup>673</sup> and, in consequence, He descended in Hell and rose *the souls* of Saints from there, but not and *their bodies*, thing reserved of universal resurrection<sup>674</sup>, all alike, says Symeon, „when we *take* the Ghost of the Master and of our God, make us *together-sharers* [συμμέτοχοι] and of Godhead and of His being.

For eating His Tooclean Body, ie the Divine Mysteries [Θεία Μυστήρια], we make indeed *concorporal* [σύσσωμοι] and *related* [συγγενείς] with Him *entirely* [όλοκλήρως], like says and the Divine Paul: „we are *bone* from His bones and *meat* from His meat” [Eph. 5, 30]; and again: „From the fullness of His divinity we all took and grace upon grace” [Jn. 1, 16 and Col. 2, 9]. Reaching so these, makes us, through grace, like Loving of people God and our Lord Himself, renew with the soul, made incorruptible and living as raised from the dead, ie seeing on the

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<sup>673</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 3, 69-74, p. 200/ Idem, p. 123.

<sup>674</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 3, 74-78, p. 200/ Ibidem.

One who reckoned fit to make Himself like us and seen being of Him, we who have vouchsafed make us like Him [ἀξιωθέντες ὁμοιοὶ γενέσθαι αὐτῷ], as someone sees from afar the face of his friend, talks and speaks with him, and hear his voice”<sup>675</sup>.

*The receiving of the grace at Baptism and the sight of the light in ecstasy do not exclude the receiving of eucharistic Christ. The receiving of the Holy Ghost means the beingly union with God, from where the insistence of Saint Symeon in to name the ecstasy a beingly union, at the interior level of our being, with the glory of God.*

The union with the glory of Christ presuppose and the sacramental union with Him, the One eucharistic.

After how tells us the text just cited, *the union with the Holy Mysteries, with eucharistic Christ means our transformation in together-relatives with Christ, for that we are concorporal with Christ, for that Christ is in us and with us. As and the union with the glory of Christ, the union with the glory of eucharistic Christ, which is the same eternal glory of the Trinity, means the union, the unmixed mixing with the humanity and the deity of Christ. Our entire body and soul unites with the integral humanity of Christ and with His divinity.*

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<sup>675</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 3, 82-98, p. 202/ Idem, p. 123-124.

Our eucharistic concorporeality with Christ is *plenary* and *not partial*, accentuates Symeon. The impartation with Christ is *the experience*, at the actual ecclesial degree, *of eternal union* with Christ, our Bridegroom.

Just therefore Symeon speaks of our full *likeness* with the person of Christ through the impartation with Him, which is *coinhabitation* and *the real union* with Him.

Make us like Him: this is *the direct result* of conscious impartation and full of His person. The consequences of impartation are astounding, for that make us like Him, incorruptible, resurrected with the soul, seeing on Him *as living*, as the One living Christ, Who stands with us *the living*.

The feeling of the deity of Christ, of eternal life what emanates from Christ, means real experience, shakable beautiful and deep of presence of God in us.

*His feeling* in us, as the One we rise from the dead and our transformation through Him, our transfiguration through Him, starting from our soul and continuing with our whole body, means His undeniable *evidence* in our life.

The impartation *into consciousness*, ie through the sensing of His divinity, united in inseparable mode with the Body and His Blood is *the certainty* of our faith, the reactualization of our union with Him and the consciousness that this

union will increase all more in this life and in throughout eternity.

In the expectation of eternal union with our Bridegroom, our longing of Him is saturated of the impartation with Him, the One eucharistic and this impartation, in paradoxical mode, opens us an appetite and more for the wish of His sight, of eternal union with Him.

The sacramental impartation with Christ not means *a slighting* of necessity of His sight but, contrariwise, it is the abyssal ecclesial event that *stimulates* His search, the desire to see Him *as He is*.

The Holy Eucharist is neither a *closure* of Christ in history or a *deprivation* of Him of transcendence, but the impartation with Him fills us *of life of everlastingness*, while we are still men of history and, on the other part, makes us to experience very deep His transcendence, just in this immanence thrilling and saving for us, through which we impart us with Him at the Holy Liturgy.

Christ vouchsafes us, how says Symeon, on each of us of *the likeness* with Him, of the pneumatization of our entire being, without thereby to become *sole possessors* of the Ghost or of Christ.

Each of us filled with the glory of Christ and sanctify us through it and our source of holiness is *the eternal glory* of the Trinity.

In the measure in that *recant us* of Fount of our life, of the glory of the

Trinity and we believe that we can save by ourselves and we despise the ecstatic unions and sacramental with Christ, we experience the devastating vacuum of helplessness, of loneliness and of self-destruction, as closing in the narrow circle, suffocating, of egoism.

Therefore Symeon stresses unchecked, that *the true union* with the eucharistic Christ is not *an egoistic act* or a personal relation with God, which give us *a primacy* to others, but it descends us into a greater self-knowledge, in which we live intense our relation with God.

The receiving of the Holy Mysteries *opens us the being* to love all, for that emphasizes us the opening of our love to God, through the experience of His love to us, which we live it *in our being* and not *from outside* of us.

Little farther, all in the ethical Discourse 1, Symeon prolongs the discussion about *Matrimony* with the one about the reality of union with Christ through the sacramental impartation of Him.

Christ, says he, gives us Himself towards impartation „from His flesh and from His bones, which He showed Apostles after He rose from the dead, saying: „Touch and see that the ghost has not flesh and bones, how you see Me having” [Lk. 24, 39], and from those itself He gives us to eat [Jn. 6, 56], and through this impartation/communion [τῆς κοινω-νίας] makes us *one* with Him. [...]

[Therefore] *the Church of believers*, ie of sons of God inwritten in heavens [Heb. 12, 23], cannot be a *full* body and *entire* [δύναται εἶναι εἰς σῶμα ἄρτιον καὶ ὀλόκληρον] for God, without its Head, Himself Christ God and cannot live *the true life* and *incorruptible* [ἡ ζῆν τὴν ὄντως ζωὴν καὶ ἀνώλεθρον], if it is not *nourished* by Him, in every day, with the Bread the one of all days [Mat. 6, 11], without which we have no life [into us] and we cannot increase until [at the stature] of perfect man, until at the measure of age of His fullness, [which is] of all those who love Him”<sup>676</sup>.

Is observed how Symeon reports, on the one part, at the eucharistic Christ as at *the real Body* of the Lord, about which testifies the Evangel, without to make *abstraction* through this of the person of Christ or *to reduce* on Christ only at Eucharist, and how, on the other part, he sees the Church right *the mystical Body* of Christ, in which each believer is a living member, *recognized* and *attested* in heavens by God, who must keep the life into it, through the daily impartation with Christ, the Head and the Bridegroom of Church.

Believers *live*, stresses Symeon, from *the life* of Christ, which *flows* through them, thanks to their union with Him. Without the life of Christ, without the

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<sup>676</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 6, 138-144, 166-173, p. 232-234, 234-236/ Idem, p. 135-136.

feeling of life of Christ in us, we cannot be *living members* of Christ, for that we do not feel in us *His life*, ie *His deity*.

And without *the daily impartation with Him* we cannot raise at *the stature* of perfect believer, of man in which is alive, in evident mode, Christ God.

In the 10th chapter of the ethical Discourse 1, Symeon explains what means our impartation *with worthiness*<sup>677</sup>.

To eat *with worthiness* the Body of the Lord, says he, means *to receive* and *to have* in us His body took from the Ever Virgin Mary and *to feel* in us *the reality* of deity of the Son of God, ie the deity of Him who sits of the right hand of the Father<sup>678</sup>.

If we say that Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God is God and man, then, conformable of symeonian logic and of truth, of reality, we must impart with Christ *the One most glorified*, ie with Christ the One full of Father's glory.

For that now, Christ „is no longer known after flesh [II Cor. 5, 17]...but He is [in Eucharist] in body in unbodily face [ἄσωμάτως ἐν σώματι], mixing in unspeakable face with beings and our natures and

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<sup>677</sup> About *the impartation with worthiness* Symeon longer talk and little farther, in same discourse, in 10, 172-174, p. 264, where reiterating the problem of *personal worthiness* at the impartation with Christ, he shows that *the worthiness* consists in the impartation of *eternal life* of Christ, of consuetization, thus, of divine presence of Christ in our being.

<sup>678</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 58-62, p. 256/ Ică jr. 1, p. 144-145.

deifying us as on some what are concorporal with Him and flesh from His flesh and bones of His bones [Eph. 5, 29].

This is the great thing of His unspeakable *oikonomia* [τῆς ἀφράστου οἰκονομίας] and of His descent more above of word in us, this is the mystery full of all frightening, which I wavered to write it and of which approach I trembled”<sup>679</sup>.

Symeon intuit, in impeccable mode, *the personal sense* of *oikonomia* of salvation made in the person of Christ. *The work* of Christ in us means just *our full deification* – alike of full deification of His humanity – through our impartation of Christ full.

We cannot impart only of what we see but and of what we feel, from enough, in our interior union with Him, that is His deity, which sanctifies us in full mode.

In this sense named Symeon *the Holy Eucharist* as being *the Body of the Lord*, but not as a human body unghostual, empty of the Ghost, but full of the Ghost, fact for that is ἀσωμάτως.

If in the case of ecstatic sight is experienced the glory of Christ, as cleansing light, lightening, sanctifying, in eucharistic impartation with Him we experience His glory as being likewise: cleansing of passions, lightening, sanctifying of the body and of our soul.

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<sup>679</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 10, 67-75, p. 256/ Idem, p. 145.

Imparting us with Him we receive „the grace of the Ghost, ie the fire of Godhead...[that gushes] from nature and from His being”<sup>68o</sup>.

The eucharistic impartation, as and the ecstasy, makes us *close*, somewhat, to His unapproachable person, through the glory that gushes from it.

In the sight and the feeling of His glory we experience *the unapproachable* life of God and His transcendence, without as it to subsume, into something, to His gracious immanence, to Christ’s descent at us, through His glory and trough the giving the Body and of His divine Blood toward our impartation.

Through His immanence *lived* by us, we feel *how great* is His transcendence, His real misunderstanding and His un-comprehension by us.

But His transcendence becomes for us a real one, felt interior, in personal mode, on measure what unite us with His glory or impart us with Him, the One eucharistic.

Only in the Church, with other words, we know who is God, how shows our God the unapproachable, how fells He through the faith and the holy life into Him and which are the life and His love real.

The ghostual experience is *the crucible* where *melts* and *rebuilds* the

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<sup>68o</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 10, 123-125, p. 260/ Idem, p. 146.

being and our life and where *the feeling* and *the sight of God* bring us a *real attitude* and *theology* about the life of God.

In the ethical Discourse 3, Symeon puts *the equal sign* between *the content* of ecstasy and the eucharistic impartation.

Although one is *the ecstasy* and another is *the eucharistic impartation*, however Symeon finds them a common denominator: *the person* of Christ.

Says he, into a grandiose mode: „*The unspeakable words*, spoken to Paul in Paradise, ie the itself eternal goodies which the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard and at the heart of man has not ascended, which God has prepared those who love Him [I Cor. 2, 9], is not find closed on a height, are not bounded by any place, are not hidden in any deep, are not kept at the head of the earth or of sea, but they are *before you* and *before your eyes* [Rom. 10, 6-8; Deut. 30, 12-14].

But what are these? Together with the goodies what are put the one part in heavens [τῶν ἀποκειμένων ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἀγαθῶν], Itself the Body and the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we see and we eat and we drink in every day, are in recognized face *those goodies*.

Because in outside thereof you will not find anywhere nor any *a single thing* from those said, even if you pervades running the whole creation.

And if you want to know, that those said are *true*, make yourself *Holy* through the work of commandments and so impart you by the Holy ones and you will know then exactly/ with the detail, *the power* [τὴν δύναμιν] of those said to you”<sup>681</sup>.

Although symeonian theology is *preponderant ecstatic*, however, as we see, the ecstatic *does not elude* at him *the real presence* of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

Symeon does not ignore the Divine Eucharist but identifies it with *the eternal goodies* seen by Paul in ecstasy. Through the impartation with eucharistic Christ and through the sight of the glory of Christ does not occur with us *something different*, but, in both cases, we fill us by *the holiness* of Christ and we become *conformable*, alike Him.

But in both unions with Christ we must be *proper* the reception of His glory through *a life of holiness*. The terminal phrase from the quoted text, after how is seen very well, urges us to holiness, if we want to do *a hermeneutic* of interior presence, of eucharistic Christ, in our life.

For to talk about the presence of Christ, reminds us Symeon and if we want to make Theology in ultimate instance, we must talk about the God, Which we feel *in us* but and *above us*,

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<sup>681</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, III, 426-441, p. 420-422/ Idem, p. 209-210.

Who is always together with us, but is, in the same time, *in outside* of all creation and not by a God *lost* in sidereal horizons, Who does not have *touching* with the world and is not present in the world through His grace<sup>682</sup>.

The polemic of Symeon with non-experimental theology, fixedist, we find at all the step in his charismatic theology.

Responding those surprised by his affirmation [that the Holy Communion is *itself the content* of ecstatic sight], Symeon cites Jn. 6, 43-44, affirming, that nobody cannot recognize, to understand His divinity, if not will attract him the Father toward this divine understanding<sup>683</sup>.

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<sup>682</sup> Into a recent interview, Father Professor Dumitru Popescu emphasized the capital importance, in actual orthodox theology, of reliefation *of the presence of God* in the world, saying:

„If you say that God *does not exist* in the world, categorical that then the world becomes a matter which manipulate it how you want. Today we live into a times in that *the deterioration* of circumambient environment and *the disequilibriums* of world economy appear to aggravate all more. [...]

[But, if] God created the earth *from love* for man, in consequence the earth belongs to God. We are not our own masters and neither of the body and neither of the air or of the earth. All comes from God. Just the perspective *of presence* of the Ghost of God in the world can glimpses an existence *more viable* for man and for creation”, Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Church Must to Assume the Culture of Times, but Without Making Compromises* [*Biserica trebuie să-și asume cultura vremii, dar fără a face compromisuri*], interview realized by Ciprian Bâra, in the newspaper *The Light* [*Lumina*], no. 21 (2008), p. 8.

<sup>683</sup> SC 122, *The Ethical Discourses*, III, 456-468, p. 422-424/ *Ică jr.* 1, p. 210.

If only those *taught* by God can believe in the Son of God<sup>684</sup>, all likewise, says Symeon, only those who *impart* with the Holy Mysteries of the Lord *have the eternal life into them* and on these will raise them the Lord in the day of then<sup>685</sup>.

Our Father goes and farther in his unbeatable syllogistical, conquering and he connexes *the impartation* with the Holy Mysteries with *the interior understanding*, personal, of the interior reality of the Most Holy Trinity.

Starting from Jn. 6, 56-57, Symeon says that „the our union/ communion [τῆς κοινωνίας] with Him, through Eucharist, makes in evident mode [διαρρήδην] [for us], as *the union* and *the life* which has that One with the Father.

For as that One is united *in natural face* [φυσικῶς] with God and His Father, all so and us...through the eating His Body and trough the drinking His Blood we will unite with Him and we will live in Him *through grace* [κατὰ χάριν].

And that we do not reckon, that all keeps of bread seen, from this reason He said, in more rows: „I am the Bread that *comes down* from heaven” [Jn. 6, 51]. And He did not say: „That *came down*”. [...] But He says: „That *comes down*”, ie evermore comes down, and always, and

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<sup>684</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, III, 474-475, p. 424/ Idem, p. 211.

<sup>685</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, III, 495-498, p. 424-426/ Ibidem.

comes and in the clock of now *at those worthy* [ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀξίους]”<sup>686</sup>.

Our union through grace with the Son is all just as *close*, of indestructible, as and that between Him and the Father.

Experiencing *the interior link* with the Son, reminds us Symeon, we understand from experiential point of view and at our level, the natural link, interior and personal of trinitarian persons.

Triadology and Christology, in evident mode, are understood *at personal level* in symeonian theology, through our link with Christ and in the impartation of Him.

The union with eucharistic Christ is *beingly, essential and revealing*. Without it we cannot have *true life* into us, we do not know what means *the living link* with God and we cannot understand, in personal mode, nor *the hypostatic union* of natures in the person of Christ and nor *the beingly link*, of indestructible, of trinitarian persons.

The ecstatic sight confirms *the overwhelming reality* of eucharistic impartation and the eucharistic impartation with Christ *centers* our longing *on the sight* and *the feeling* of Christ in our life.

Little lower, in the same discourse, Symeon invites on those that *reduce* the Eucharist *at what is seen*, at an understanding, the interior contem-

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<sup>686</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, III, 507-517, p. 426/ Idem, p. 211-212.

plation of eucharistic Christ: „As you do not surmise *nothing bodily*...this *little bread* [τὸν μικρὸν ἄρτον], small piece that was *deified* [τὴν ὀλίγην μερίδα θεοποιηθείσαν], to see it with eyes of the mind *made entire like* the Bread which comes down from heaven, Who is true God and bread and drink of eternal life, lest, remaining in unbelief and only at the bread seen in all senses, to eat not *the heavenly Bread*, but only on *the earthly* and to be devoid of life, *uneating ghostually* [πνευματικῶς μὴ φαγών] the heavenly Bread, as says Christ Himself: „the Ghost is Who what *makes living*, the body does not use at nothing”<sup>687</sup>.

As *to feel* on Christ in the Holy Eucharist we must *see* on Christ in it and in the same time, when impart us with Him, *to fell* how this union with Him is *real* and *deifying*. Otherwise, unbelieving that Christ is *there* and without *to feel* His divinity in us, impart us only in appearance with Him, for that we have not *seized inward* His power the life-creating, the glory of His divinity.

Without *the feeling* of His divinity impart us only with bread and wine (for that we believe that *we receive* only that which *we see* that we receive), lacking us of *the true consequences* of impartation.

Symeon attracts the attention that we must be, first, *united* with Christ

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<sup>687</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, III, 528-538, p. 428/ Idem, p. 212.

through the love and the faith in Him and through the fulfillment of His commandments, for that to feel Him in us eucharistically and to feel how *to scatter* in all our being His glory and makes us *gods through grace*.

We, those who impart us, in conscious mode, of Christ entire and make us one with Him, are called by Symeon „to let us *ravished* in the Ghost, in itself His true life, in the third heaven, or, rather, in itself the heaven of Holy Trinity, for that seeing and hearing simultaneously those spoken and that remain *unspoken*, taste them and smell them and touch them beautiful with *the hands* of soul [ie with *the ghostual senses* of the soul o.n.], to exalt praise of thanksgiving to the God the loving of men”<sup>688</sup>.

The impartation is *the prelude* of ecstasy, the deepest and clearest motivation for *to cleanse us* of passions and *to wish* the sight of God.

The impartation and the sight open, doxological, towards the adoration of God or these two modes of real union with God increase us the interior dimension, doxological, of our relation with the Creator, the Saviour, the Sanctifier and our Judge.

The dramatic consequences, at personal and ecclesial level, of interior

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<sup>688</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, III, 558-564, p. 430/ Idem, p. 213.

*unintimation* of eucharistic Christ, reveal us, in their true monstrosity, in the ethical Discourse 10, where Symeon stresses the following: „And if not stay thus the things, if we do not make *partakers*, still being in body, of the *eternal goodies* and neither we, the chosen, do not receive the grace, follows that Christ Himself is just a *Prophet* and not *God*.

And all which tells His Evangel are a *prophecy* about future things and not a *gift* of the grace. And, in similar face, the Apostles prophesied and have not fulfilled those prophesied, and did not take neither they [nothing] and neither have shared and others. [...]

But if those who eat His body and drink His blood *have eternal life*, after His divine word [Jn. 6, 54], and we eating these not feel in us nothing more than *the felt food*, nor receive in conscious face *another life*, then impart us with a *simple bread* and not with God.

For, if Christ is God and man, and His Holy Body is not *only body* [ἡ Ἁγία Σὰρξ Αὐτοῦ οὐ σὰρξ μόνον], but body and God in inseparable face but and unmixed, He is seen, through body, and then through bread, for sensible eyes, but unseen, through Godhead, for sensible eyes, but seen by eyes of the soul.

Therefore and says somewhere: „Who eats My Body and drinks My Blood remains in Me and I in him” [Jn. 6, 56].

And He did not say, that remains in them and they in Him, but „in Me”, ie in My glory, in My light, in My deity”<sup>689</sup>.

The eucharistic theology of Symeon is, as shown here, the promoter of ecclesiality and of the experience of interior union with the Son of God incarnate.

If through the sacramental impartation of Christ, in Church, we fell *the divinity* of Christ in our being, then, pulls the conclusion Symeon, Christ is *the Head* of Church, we are *living members* of Him, into *a full contiguity* with Him.

For our Father, the impartation with the Holy Eucharist is *a propaedeutic* of christology and of triadology, which are understood only by real members, authentic, conscious of the Church.

In the ethical Discourse 14, Symeon rediscusses the reality of *conscious feeling* of eucharistic Christ. Speaking about *the impartation* and about *the sight* in the same time, about *the ghostual understanding* of Holy Mysteries, our Father says: „If you do it *in feeling* and *consciousness* [ἐν αἰσθήσει καὶ γνώσει], then impart you of some as these *with worthiness*. But if do not impart you so, forsooth you eat and drink of them *with unworthiness*.

If imparted you *in clean sight* [ἐν θεωρίᾳ καθαρᾷ] from the ones from which

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<sup>689</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, X, 738-745, 758-773, p. 312, 314/ Idem, p. 344-345, 345.

imparted you, behold that made you *worthy* by a meal as that. And if became not you worthy, will not you *enclose* and will not you *unite*, noway, of God.

Thus, *not to reckon* those who impart *with unworthiness* of Divine Mysteries, that through these they *enclose* and *unite* pure and simple of God the unseen.

For this thing will not be done, noway, nor will spend with them ever.

Because only those who, in the impartation [μετουσίᾳ] of Divine Body of the Lord, they worthed to see and to eat, with the eye and the mouth of mind and the discovery of unseen Godhead, into a *ghostual touching* [by the glory of God o.n.], they know [then], that *good* is the Lord [Ps. 33, 9], as some who do not eat and drink only a felt bread in felt face but, in the same time, [they feed], in ghostual face, from God, they feeding with twofold senses, from one *in seen face* and, from other, in *unseen face* and they unite, in both of these, with Christ the twofold after nature, making them con-corporal [Eph. 3, 6] and sharer of glory and of His divinity [I Pet. 5, 1].

Because so *unite* with God those who eat this Bread *into consciousness* and *sight* of Mystery and drink from this chalice with *the feeling* of soul and of heart. But those who make this *with unworthiness* are vain of the grace of

Holy Ghost, feeding only the body, not and their soul”<sup>690</sup>.

Thus Symeon attentionates us, that *the simple consumption* of the Holy Mysteries does not mean *union* with Christ, the true impartation of Him, but only if *we see* with the soul and with our mind His glory in us and if *we rejoice divinely* of the feeling of grace, which deifies us in conscious mode.

*The real impartation* can be *demonstrated* through the direct and personal possibility, from interior, of narrating of its consequences in our being.

Those who cannot says *nothing* about the personal soteriology, wants to say, in definitive, Symeon, are those which do not impart *in conscious mode* of eucharistic Christ, who have never seen His glory and who not yearn after the eternal union with Him.

Therefore, Symeon converses again with presupposed *upset* and *deranged one* by his words, with the one *does not experience*, at all, *the wonder* of real impartation with the Lord and he tells to this one with condescension:

„But do not be *troubled*, beloved, listening the truth shown to you by us. For if you confess that the Body of the Lord is *Bread of life*, who gives life and we know that His Blood gives life those who impart of it, and is done in the one drink

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<sup>690</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIV, 224-247, p. 438-440/ Idem, p. 397-398.

it *source of flowing life to eternal life* [Jn. 4, 14], how, tell me, impart you of these *not add nothing more* to the soul, but, even if you feel, maybe, little joy, after short time you remain again so how you were before, not having in you *any addition* of life or *gushing spring* or *seeing* a some light?

For those who have not reach to cross beyond of the feeling [of those of here], this Bread is shown to them in felt face, alike a simple eating, while in ghostual face it is *uncomprised light* and *unapproachable* [φῶς ἀχώρητόν καὶ ἀπρόσιτον].

All so and *the Wine* is and it, in similar face, *life* [ζωή], *fire* [πῦρ], *living water* [ὑδωρ ζῶν].

So, if eating and drinking *the divine Bread* and *the Wine of rejoicing*, you will not know that *you live* the incorruptible life [οὐκ ἔση γινώσκων εἰ ζωὴν ἔζησας τὴν ἀνώλεθρον], that you received insed you the Bread as on *a light* or as on *a fire* and that you drink the Blood of Master as *a flowing water* and *speaking*, if do not have reach at *the sight* [θεωρία] and *the impartation* [μεθέξει] with nothing from all these, how reckon that you made *partaker* of life [τῆς ζωῆς κοινωνός]?<sup>691</sup>.

This passage is one of the clearest examples, for to exemplify the fact, that Symeon identifies *the experiencing of*

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<sup>691</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, XIV, 248-267, p. 440/ Idem, p. 398.

union with the Holy Eucharist with *the sight* of His everlasting glory.

*The authentic eucharistic experience* is not than *the concrete touching* of essential of ecstatic experience: *the real union* with Christ. For those who *do not impart* mystical, mysterious and real with Christ, the impartation has not *real consequences*, identifiable interior.

But for those who perceive *with their whole being*, that *the union* with eucharistic Christ is a union with the humanity and the deity of Christ, with Christ the full of glory, this is the generator of the greatest fulfillment and of interior joy and *the real mode* in which spend *the salvation* and *our sanctification*.

The holiness is an interior process, *on full conscientized* by the one in which spends and about it *you can talk*, if you *experiment it* in act.

These capital truths of personal soteriology are said outrightly by Saint Symeon. He does not leave place to any ambiguity in the understanding *of living relation* with God, for that the relation with Him is, as it says and the significance of term which indicates it, *an uninterrupted link* with God.

In the Hymn 30 Symeon retakes the distinction between the union with Christ *through the ecstatic sight* of His glory and the union with Christ *through*

*the ghostual impartation* of Body and His eucharistic Blood:

„This *thought union* [νοερὰν ἔνωσίν], [the ecstatic], I already said it in different mode and manifold and *the felt union* I say that is one of the Mysteries. For cleansed through repentance and through flowings of tears, imparting me by a body deified as God, become through this unspeakable union and I god. [...]

[After how] the body and the soul...are one in two beings, through following, these which are one and two, imparting of Christ and drinking His Blood, uniting through both beings and natures with my God, become and they *gods through impartation* and are called with the same name, with the name of Who of which imparted in beingly face [οὐσιωδῶς μετέσχον]<sup>692</sup>.

Symeon can speak *with power* about the reality of deification, for that this is a *personal reality* for his Holiness.

It was not *an abuse of daring* for Symeon and not a *grandomania*, the fact of to talk about *his relation* with Christ, as long as this relation is *real one* or *must be thus* for all the baptized in Christ.

Symeon does not put *the monopoly* on a genus of unwonted experience, to which can accede only some of us, but for our Father the union with Christ and the

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<sup>692</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXX, 463-472, 474-487, p. 372-374/ Ică jr. 3, p. 188-189.

sanctification through Him is *a personal characteristic* of any orthodox christian in part.

Symeon speaks decent about things which should be *quotidian* for all and being *quotidian*, would be our true subject of discussion, pressing and our all-inclusive subject of discussion.

But for that does not stay the things *even so good* in Church, Symeon speaks, through the Ghost, and reproves the human ambitions and the human daring of any member of it, but, especially, of clergy, saying to the bishops, which were not experiencing the glory of Trinity and, of otherwise, to the whole clergy, that „remain you *unknown* My frightening and divine Mysteries, [you, those] who fancied that you hold *a bread*, which is, of fact, *Fire*, which despises Me as on a *simple bread* and seem you that you see and eat *just a eating* not having My unseen glory”<sup>693</sup>.

From this passage is observed, that Symeon not only that *identifies* the content of ecstasy with the eucharistic impartation with worthiness, but he asks from those who impart to seize, *to fell* the grace and *to see* the light of God.

Is evident *the effort* of our Father of *conscientizing* the abyss of ignorance from the mind of those, which, then and now, they believe that imparting us

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<sup>693</sup> SC 196, Hymns, LVIII, 92-96, p. 284-286/ Idem, p. 292-293.

means to eat something, on Christ, but does not feel *any remarkable transformation* in our life.

Symeon says unconscious and non-experimental, that *unintimation of the Ghost* cancels all their ecclesial effort and shows them *dead members*, ruptured from the trunk of Christ's Church, even if they, from formal point of view, are *inside* of Church.

The ecclesial eucharistic experience is *a personal event* with capital followings, as and the Baptism and the Chrismation, and any *elusion* of discussion about *the feeling of grace* in the frame of committing of Holy Mysteries means, of fact, *an annulment* of the personal soteriology.

This thing he repeats in the Epistle 4, where Symeon says to his apprentice, that the one „does not know in the feeling and the knowledge of soul, that he *remains* in God and God *in him*, that one, with safety, did not impart in worthy face with the Mostclean Mysteries.

For how is *with possibility* as that one, which is united with God *not to know* this, out if he is not very callous? And if the one who eats the Body and drinks the Blood of Christ *has eternal life* and at judgment will not come, but has moved from death at life, [then] is evident, that the one who *does not know* that he *has eternal life* and he did not pass from death at life, as the one who

passes from a darkish room into a luminous one and brilliant, one like this did not know *the mystery* of God's iconomy, nor was delighted of eternal life"<sup>694</sup>.

The eucharistic experience, in conclusion, does not mean *a scriptic taking at acquaintance* about what happens then when impart you, but consists *in the understanding* of what is spend with us in the act of sacramental union with the Lord.

*The real union* with Christ God means to feel His divinity in us, His glory, to deifying permanent and *to be conscious* of the gradual deification, daily of our being.

Saint Symeon accentuates in his eucharistic theology *the identity of experience* between *the ecstatic sight* and *the eucharistic impartation*, at which we are called in corpore and which represents *the real manifestation of the ecclesiality* of our life.

*To be in the Church*, tells us he, means to live through all pores of our being *the wonder of our deification*, ie our full raccordation at the life of the Trinity.

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<sup>694</sup> Epistles, IV, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 352-353.

### 2. 6. 3. The Holy Confession and the Interior Experience of Grace

Although we have tendency to evaluate *only* the Epistles 1 and 2 for to find the details related of the Mystery of Holy Confession in symeonian opera, however a detailed research of his opera demonstrates us, that Symeon presented not only *the repentance as Mystery* but and *the repentance as component part of ascesis*.

He speaks about *contrition*, about *repentance* as interior ghostual state both *before, in* and *after* the sacramental confession, *antecedent* to the impartation with the Holy Mysteries, *present in us* when impart us but and *posterior* of this real union with the Lord.

Symeon cannot have *a vague consciousness* of proper sinfulness and nor cannot stipulate *an emancipation* towards the sacramental act of the confession of sins, as long as, for him, *the sin was a mortal virus*, which affected our entire being and without the cleansing of sins cannot reach at the sight of God.

In the Hymn 34, he says with sorrow, that „those who have sinned *led to corruption* not only the body, but and itself their soul and...we are corruptible and with the body and with the soul, as some what are kept, in the same time, of the corruption of death understood with

the mind [τοῦ νοητοῦ θανάτου], as well as the sin”<sup>695</sup>.

But those who have sinned are we all, entire humanity, from which Symeon not excludes noway, but he sees as *the most sinful* among all.

The universalism of sin reclaim the universalism of personal soteriology<sup>696</sup> and *the sight of sins* is not only a *re-memorization* of our faults but and a *charism*: „the soul that has begun *to be kindled* of the divine [grace] sees first in himself *the darkness of passions* [τῶν παθῶν ζόφον] rising as *a fume* in the fire of the Ghost and sees as into a mirror *the blackness* produced in him by fume and he laments and feels that *thorns of thoughts* and *the brushwoods of pre-judgments* ignite and premake perfect in *ash*”<sup>697</sup>.

For that the sin is entered *in every fiber* of our being, the cleansing power of grace is felt through repentance as that what *regenerates us* in total mode.

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<sup>695</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXXIV, 36-40, p. 430/ Ică jr. 3, p. 204.

<sup>696</sup> Father Dușe said, into an article about the sight of light at Saint Symeon, that this „surprises suddenly *the ontological minus* of the human being in his separation of God, [but] and *his integrity* through the conscious and loving relation with God through the deifying grace”, acc. Rev. PhD student Călin-Ioan Dușe, *The Sight of Divine Light after Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Vederea luminii dumnezeiești după Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in *The Theology* [Teologia] IV (2000), no. 4, p. 118.

<sup>697</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, VII, 526-531, p. 194/ Ică jr. 1, p. 296.

Saint Symeon is *attentive at the consciousness of sin* that we must have. He knew that we cannot cleanse us from sins, if we do not *feel* in our being *the sin*, if we do not know *why must* cast from us in real mode.

For that *the feeling of grace is an interior presence*, Symeon insists all just as more and on *the interior feeling of sins*, which are interior realities, *palpable* for our consciousness and not are some *inventions* of our proper fantasies or *reminiscences* of a mentality of darkish middle age.

The sins are *interior presences* and therefore, our Father draws attention on the fact of *not to be disregarded* to these *fatidical presences* for the health and our life: „you know, that those who do not repent and not guard *exactly and with much fear* His commandments, they will not have *any avail*, but God will punish them with much worse than on the pagan nations and the unbaptized.

Not deceived, my brethren, and no sin does not seem *small* and not to be *despised* by you, as and how would not make *a such great harm* for our souls. Because the grateful servants [of the Master, ie the Saints] do not know *any difference* between *a small sin* and *a great sin*, but, even if they fall only with the look or the thought or the word, they reckon that *they fell* from the love of God, thing that, I am convinced, is and true.

Because the one what cogitates a *small thing* in outside of the will of God and does not repent immediately, banishing the attack of thought, but *receives* and *keeps* this thought, this is reckoned *sin*, even if he *does not know* that this is a *bad thing* [τὸ μὲν ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ κακὸν εἶναι τοῦτο λογίζεται]”<sup>698</sup>.

The scrupulousness opposite of sins of Saint Symeon is a *divine charism*, for that only the Holy Ghost can show you which are *your sins* with true, which is *the interior abyss* of your decadence.

Even if we do not know *which are the sins* and *what is the sin* in front of God and we do not know that *we sin*, the *sin deepens in us* in continual mode.

Our Father asks *to take act*, through repentance, about *the real interior world* of our being and there *to call* the Ghost of God, Which *burns* in integrality, as a *divine fire*, says Symeon, *all the darkness* of our sins.

From *the knowledge of sins* and from *the complaint for them* begin our preparation for the sacramental confession.

In the frame of the Mystery of Confession, we must come with *the complaint for our sins*, with *the pain* for them and with *the feeling* of the immense longing after *the forgiveness* of God.

The finale of Catechesis 3 presents the repentance as on a *continuous victory*

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<sup>698</sup> SC 96, The Catecheses, III, 249-264, p. 300-302/ Ică jr. 2, p. 48.

of personal falling and as *deifying state* for us, which is *at the opposite pole* of desperation: „*wound towards death* is all *unrepentant sin* [ἀμετανόητος] and *unconfessed* [ἀνεξαγόρευτος], as and the fact of to fall someone into desperation [ἀπόγνωσιν], thing that keeps of the choosing and our volition.

For, if we would not be *surrendered* on ourselves to recklessness and desperation, demons could not do *nothing* against us.

But even and after what we were *wounded* [of sin], if we want, we can make us *more brave* and *more skilful* through a *kindled repentance*.

For the fact of to rise and to fight again after what they were *wounded* and they *died* is a thing *proper* to those very brave and courageous, worthy and full of all admiration.

Because to preserve us *unwounded* does not keep of us, but *to be immortal* and *mortal* keeps of us”<sup>699</sup>.

The repentance is, at our Father, the interior coordinate of our ghostual manhood, the continuous victory over the personal fallings.

*The longing after the forgiveness* of God, whereof I was talking, is expressed here best, for that *any victory* over us from the part of demons is *a motive in plus* of interior mobilization, of raising

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<sup>699</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, III, 347-358, p. 308/ Idem, p. 51.

and more virulent against of proper passions.

But, above of this, at Symeon, *the repentance* and *the sacramental confession of sins* (for that he never separates them), make us *immortal*, ie *keep us* in the glory of God.

In the Catechesis 4, Symeon emphasizes *the interior presence of grace* in the frame of repentance and *the role of tears* in personal salvation: all those of the cleansing of passions „works them *the divine fire* of the puncture together with the tears or, rather, through tears.

But without tears...no thing from these has not made and nor will be made sometime in ourselves or in any other. [...] [For] *without tears* and *without unceasing puncture* has not *cleansed* ever any man or has made *Holy* or *received* the Holy Ghost or saw God or knew Him dwelling in him or he saw on This ever *dwelling entire* in his heart, without to be *foreruned* the contrition and the puncture and unceasing tears, gushing always as from a fountain, as *to flood* and *to wash* the house of soul and *to bathe it* in the dew and *to cool* the soul comprised and kindled by the unapproachable fire [I Tim. 6, 16]<sup>700</sup>. The divine grace is received and kept in us through repentance and the repentance is the road towards the sight of God.

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<sup>700</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, IV, 439-452, p. 350/  
Idem, p. 65-66.

The forgiveness is asked through repentance and the forgiveness means the receiving and more abundant of grace in us, without which we are not *living members* of Christ.

At our Father, the repentance and the sacramental forgiveness of our sins and the unceasing weeping for our interior nakedness are alike some *gates* of the altar, which open to us towards our sacramental union with Christ, our God:

„*The Holy of Saints!*, say, in every day, some and they herald the others crying with great voice. [...] And the others hear on those saying these.

What is it, so? Who is not *Saint* is, indeed, and *unworthy*? No!

But who does not *herald* [ἔξαγγέλλων] in every day *the hidden* of his heart, who does not show *repentance worthy* [μετάνοιαν ἀξίαν] for them and for all made into nescience, who does not weep ever and do not walk grieving and not cross with zeal those said before, this is *not worthy*.

And who do all these and spends his life *in sighs* and *tears* is very worthy *to make sharer* of these Divine Mysteries not only *in day of holiday* but *in every day*, and, even if is *daring thing* to say this, still *from the beginning* of repentance and of his return.

Because this *is forgiven*, as one who wants *to insist* until end in deeds as

these, walking in humbleness and in broken heart [Ps. 50, 10].

For making so and being thus, he *lightens* the soul in every day [φωτίζεται τὴν ψυχὴν ὁσημέραι], helped at this *by the impartation* of those Holy and he rises *more rapid* towards a *cleanness* and *perfect holiness*<sup>701</sup>.

*The daily confession* of sins, merged with *the daily impartation* with eucharistic Christ, is for Symeon an authentic experience of the state of repentance but and of ghostual fulfillment.

*Our worthiness* in the face of impartation with the Lord is not formed by *our good deeds*, but *from the recognition of self*, the recognition of our ghostual poverty in the face of His unspeakable abundance.

The one *integrates* into repentance as in *the normal flux* of his life is, for Symeon, *worthy by the daily impartation* with the Lord, for that *his forgiveness* means *the real assuming* of proper helplessness.

For this continuous assuming, in that does not slip *not a bit* of self-justification, he lights daily through impartation and he rises rapid, very fast, towards a perfect holiness.

Saint Symeon does not something else in this passage than to transmit us his total *dipping* in the eucharistic

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<sup>701</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, IV, 604-622, p. 362-364/ Idem, p. 70-71.

communion and ecstatic with God. He himself was the one who practiced the confession of sins and the current impartation with the eucharistic Christ and, in the same time, he was filled of divine sights, which lead at *an astounding increase*, in short time, of his life.

Saint Symeon is an authentic recordman of eucharistic experience and ecstatic, for that he proved through his increase, that these two paths *are connexed* and that the Church is *the frame* of experience of God's glory and of increase, stunning of rapid, in holiness.

The repentance *attracts* and *keeps* in us the divine grace, but the interior feeling of grace keeps, in the same time, and of sacramental forgiveness.

Through the passage from the Catechesis 33, which we will quote immediately, we pass from the repentance *as habitual state*, effervescent of the orthodox christian at the problematic concerning at *the confessor priest* and at *the feeling of grace*, both in priest, what and in the one who confesses to him.

In the catechesis above mentioned, our Father sketches, in antithetic mode, *the ghostual profile* of the true priest confessor: „one which *seems* to have into himself – if this is *with possibility* – all virtues, but does not have in him *the light* of the Holy Ghost, neither sees *well* his deeds, neither is *entrusted* in perfect face,

if they are *on the liking* of God, that one is *not worthy* to receive foreign thoughts [οὐδὲ λογισμοὺς ἀλλοτρίους ἐστὶν ἀναδέχεσθαι ἄξιος], even if *would be done* by people *patriarch*, until he *will not have light* shining into himself.

For says Christ: „Walk until you have the light, as catch not you the darkness. And he who walks into darkness does not know where he goes [Jn. 12, 35]”<sup>702</sup>.

*Cannot confess*, says Saint Symeon, the priests and the hierarchs who do not feel in them *on the One who forgives* or *through Which* they forgive, ie *on the Ghost*.

*The worthiness of confessor* is given by God *as a charisma*, trough a virtuous life and through the interior entrusting, that God *wellwishes* into us.

*The relation* of personal communion with God and *the presence* of grace and of light in our being are those which *guarantees us*, as priests confessors, *the real clearing* and *cure* of those who confess to us, for that *through the Ghost* we realize all operations of the interior renovation of christians. Therefore, Symeon urges the clergy of Church, in his integrality, to ask on *the old* and the *archieuses* of Church, as to learn<sup>703</sup> *how*

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<sup>702</sup> SC 113, The Catecheses, XXXIII, 33-43, p. 250-252/ Idem, p. 339.

<sup>703</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXXIII, 218-221, p. 264/ Idem, p. 344.

to make us „alike with God through experience”<sup>704</sup>.

For him *the ghostual experience* is *the interior frame* in which we must receive *the cheirotonia* and only through the Ghost *we can see and to cleanse from sins* on those who confess to us.

Our Father *does not contest* the sacramental cheirotonia of the unworthy and their presence in Church (for that *just against* of their unstraightening he spoke), but he stresses the fact, that *the worthies/ the apostolic dignities* [τῶν ἀποστολικῶν ἀξιωματῶν]<sup>705</sup>, which we receive through cheirotonia, are not received *with true* in our being, if *we do not have* and the interior perfection which these ask from us, ie *the knowledge* of the mysteries of God [τοῦ Θεοῦ μυστηρίων]<sup>706</sup>, of the road of personal deification.

Exists, thus, for Symeon, members of the clergy which have entered through *the cheirotonia from men*, how says he, without receiving and *the feeling of grace* in their being, the conscious feeling, uninterrupted, deifying, ie and *the cheirotonia of God* and these *serve* those of the Master *without as to feel*, in active mode, *how deify them* through the grace of God

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<sup>704</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXXIII, 221, p. 264/ Ibidem.

<sup>705</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXXIII, 223, p. 264/ Idem, p. 345.

<sup>706</sup> Idem, The Catecheses, XXXIII, 224, p. 266/ Ibidem.

and *how deify* and on those whom they serve.

Our Father makes, on right, this *fundamental distinction* between the members of clergy *legal cheirotomed*, for that *he could not stipulate* [how he has not made it neither *at Baptism* or in the frame of discussion about *the sacramental impartation*] *a receiving* and *a work* of Mystery, without as the one who *serves* or the one who *receives it* not feel nothing in its frame.

For Symeon a Holy Mystery *is personal experienced* in real mode, through it *unite us* with God's glory and all participants at it, ie both the clerics and the believers, *live from full* its deifying irradiance.

On the base of *the living reality* and *plenary* of sacramental experience, Symeon will talk about *the charisma of the forgiveness of sins*, where merges both *the sacramental forgiveness*, de facto, but and the ghostual ability of *to integrate* on the one which was confessed in the process of his full clearing of passions.

In the finale of the ethical Discourse 15, putting in antithesis *the interiority* of unworthy priest confessor with of the one in which *dwells* the Ghost of God and Which is his priestly *worthiness* itself, our Father says:

„If the one quiets and the first-standing of others and the teacher of others does not know all this [of deifica-

tion] the thread of hair/ full, then nor the one who *seems* that *quiets* is not hesychast, but sits in nescience, closed only with the body and nor the one who seems that is *first-standing* is not *first-standing*, but, walking in the path which he does not know, or rather, outside of this path, he throws them, together with him, in the precipice of eternal fire.

Nor the one who seems that *he teaches* is not a *teacher* of others, but he is a *liar* and a *deceiver*, for that he does not have *in him* the true wisdom, on our Lord Jesus Christ.

But what must be said really, about some as these, in which regards [the power] of *to bind* and *to loose* [τοῦ δεσμῆν καὶ λύειν], when those who have *in themselves* on the Holy Ghost, Who *forgives* sins, tremble not to do something *against* the thought of the One who is *in them* and *speaks* in them?

But who is so *crazy* and *taken of a boldness* so great, that *to say* and *to make* the things of Ghost before as he *to receive* the Ghost and *to serve* those of God *without* the power of God?"<sup>707</sup>.

Is observed very limpid the fact, that Symeon speaks here about *the feeling of the Ghost*, in they themselves, by clerics and about *a real bearing* of the grace of priesthood, into consciousness, by each in part.

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<sup>707</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, XV, 180-196, p. 456-458/ Ică jr. 1, p. 405-406.

*The Cheirotonia*, so after how lived it Symeon, means *the real coming*, felt interior, conscientious of the Holy Ghost in the frame of legal cheirotonia, when we stand in knees, under the hands of cheirotoner archiereus and *the keeping*, throughout our entire life, *of real feeling* of this divine fire, who descended upon us then.

For that Symeon has experienced in real mode and he was experiencing *the presence* and *the work* of cheirotonia's grace into him and in those whom he shepherded them and he increases them into ghostuality, he knew that it is and should be *a common experience*, quotidian, for each cheirotoned cleric, by Christ, in Church.

*The feeling of grace*, repeats invariably Symeon, is *the true impartation* of God and of Mysteries of His Church and without this does not exist *the christian life*, but *a surrogate of life*, a pseudo churchly life, lived in parasitical mode.

Just therefore, Symeon asks from himself and from all members of the Church *a real experience* with God, which is made through *the continue repentance*:

„For was not ever heard, nor is written in the Divine Scriptures *to receive* someone *the sins of other* and *to account* for him, without as the one who has sinned to be shown, first, *fruits* worthy of repentance, proportional with *the kind of*

*sin* and without to have put at its basis *his fatigues*<sup>708</sup>.

If the profile of *true priest confessor* must be that of a *bearer of the Ghost* into consciousness, the profile of *true penitent* is that of a *worker, together with the Ghost*, at the straightening of self.

Both human members of the Mystery of Holy Confession are, in symeonian theology, *conscious* of the presence of grace in their being and of the absolute necessity of God's forgiveness, refelt *as abundant filling* of Holy Ghost.

Their personal relations with God are intersecting with their relation of *confessor – ghostual son*, making from this latter the most expressive inter-human relation, substantiated *on the presence* of Trinity's grace in their life, but and on that of *conscience of common responsibility* for their salvation.

Every detail of the relation with God and of relations which imply the ghostuality sits, in symeonian theology, under the seal of the presence of grace and of the largest and of plenary personal fulfillment.

Saint Symeon asks *ghostual experience* from the confessor priest.

The confessor cannot be „one *inexperienced*, lest through much cutting and through the cuts and the burnings which are not *at their time* throw you in

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<sup>708</sup> Epistles, I, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 309.

the deep of despair or through his compassion *beyond measure* leave you ill...and so give you to eternal damnation<sup>709</sup>.

He must know *to give canons*, in correct mode, to his ghostual sons, through the fact that he sees, through the Ghost, their true interiority and possibility of understanding and straightening.

But *the authentic* confessor, as *intercessor*<sup>710</sup> at God of his sons, can do it in real mode, ie seizing interior *God's desire with those*, just for that he is *full* of Holy Ghost and he knew *into the feeling of soul*, that he is *loved as a friend* of the Emperor of all<sup>711</sup>.

For our Father, *the confessor* is the one who won *real boldness* to God through *the sweats* of his asceticism and which has become *an authentic intercessor* at God *due to communion* with This<sup>712</sup>.

He knows and feels that is *in him* the Ghost of God and, in the same time, through This, he can see souls of others and he prays for them with *the authenticity* of a real intercessor.

But the confessor-intercessor to God not only that he *asks mercy* for his sons but he *and receives it* into consciousness, seeing, in gracious mode, the straightening or the unstraightening of his sons.

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<sup>709</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 310.

<sup>710</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 311.

<sup>711</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 311-312.

<sup>712</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 312.

The passages from the Epistle 1, which *discommode* in large measure on the representatives of non-experimental theology, refers to *the transmission* of charisma of the forgiveness of sins in the Church.

The first of these is this: „That is *allowable* to a monk, which has no priesthood, *to confess us*, this thing you will find *making himself by all*, since has been given by God to His inheritance *the garment and the attire of repentance* and were named *monks*, as stays written in by God instilled writings of the Fathers...

But before these, *only archiereuses* have received *the power to loose and to bind*, through succession, from the Divine Apostles.

Once with the crossing of time the archiereuses, becoming *reprobates*, this frightening undertaking *passed* to the priests, who had *a taintless life and were made worthy* by the divine grace.

After which and they reaching *mixed*, and both archiereuses, as and priests *likening* the rest of the people and of those many who fall, as and now, in the ghost of wandering and of empty speaking and they perish, it *passed*, as said, at *the chosen nation* of God, ie at *monks*, not because *it would have been taken* from priests or archiereuses, but because these *have alienated* on themselves from it”<sup>713</sup>.

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<sup>713</sup> Ibidem, apud Ibidem.

The passage presented, read *through immersion* in its interior logic, speaks to us not about *a crossing*, in corpore, sacramental, of power to forgive the sins from archiereuses at monks, but about a crossing, *preponderant*, identifiable historical, *of feeling of grace* from archiereuses, then at priests and, in the end, at monks and we say, today, *at the people* of the Church.

And is not the word here about *a transformation* of sacramental priesthood into *a popular* priesthood, as in protestantism (how it would want *to interpret* this passage and those which we will quote in its prolongation) but about *the keeping* in Church *of charisma* and *of science* of authentic clearing of sins, which *have it* and *know it* the charismatic Fathers, bearers of God, which, through *the receiving of confession of thoughts* and through *the noting* of believers *in the act of continual ascesis*, under *their advising*, make them cleanse themselves, in real mode, of passions.

Saint Symeon, *as authentic priest* of Church, who *has felt* and *has saw the coming* of priesthood's grace over him at his cheirotonia, he could not deny *the cheirotonia* and *his cheirothesia into confessor*, ie *the coming of the Ghost* in his being, when he experienced it *into a direct mode* and *plenary*.

But he could neither *deny* the historical reality of the Church and

neither we cannot do this, as long as it is *more than evident*, that not all those who are cheirotoned *feel* and the presence of the Holy Ghost in them or *have life* of Saints.

When he speaks of the power *to bind* and *to loose the sins* he does not refer at *the cheirothesic act*, through which *a priest* becomes and *confessor* [felt as a *pure formal* sacramental act, if we do not feel *how works* the Holy Ghost through us] but *at the charisma*<sup>714</sup> which the Lord *has given* the Apostles and which these *have conscientized it* through a life of deep holiness<sup>715</sup>.

*The personal holiness*, wants to say Saint Symeon, is the one receives *the charisma* of forgiveness of sins.

We reproduce of the second passage from the Epistle 1, which goes on the same *interior line* of receiving of charisma [nor cannot be otherwise] and which cannot be understood *in authentic mode*, until we do not see all symeonian syllogistical on this theme:

„The Saints Apostles *have transmitted*, through succession, this authority those who held their seats...and the apprentices of Lord have guarded *with exactness* this authority. But, after how I said, once with the crossing of time, the worthy *were mixed* with the unworthy...[that many showed them-

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<sup>714</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 313.

<sup>715</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 314.

selves] hypocriting hypocritical the virtue.

For, since when those who held the seats of Apostles showed themselves *bodily* and *lovers of pleasure* and *of glory* and *were inclined* to heresies, the divine grace *has left them* and this authority *has been taken* from them. Therefore, leaving they and all other which must have those who serve the Holy, has asked them only *to be orthodoxies*.

But I believe that they were not *neither any* this.

For *orthodox* is not only those who have not introduced *new dogmas* in the Church of God, but and those who *have earned* a life in accord with the right word [of teaching].

On one as this the patriarchs and the metropolitans from various times, or have searched him but they not found him, or finding him they preferred, in the place of him, on the unworthy, asking only to expose, in writing, the symbol of faith and accepting only this: as he not to be *neither a zealous for good*, *neither to fight* with someone from the cause of evil, pretending that thus *holds the peace* in Church – but thing that is worse than any enmity and cause of great unseating.

Therefore, from this cause, the priests were made *worthless* and have reached as the nation...knowing and covering each other the passions, have

reached worse than the nation, and the nation worse than them.

But some of the nation showed themselves *better* even than many priests, *lightening* in that dark devoid of light *as some charcoals*. [...]

And, because between people remained only *the attire* and *the coat of priesthood*, the gift of the Ghost passed at monks, as at some who came, through facts, at *the life* of Apostles, and [this] was made known through signs.

But and here the devil *has worked* on those of him...and the monks have reached *worthless* and they have made with all *unmonks*.

Thus, neither the monks *only with the coat*, neither those *cheirotone*d and *entered* in the rank of priesthood, neither those honest *with the dignity of archieria*, ie the patriarchs, the metropolitans and the bishops *has not been given* by God pure and simply, so, only from the cause of cheirotonia and of its dignity, and *the power to forgive the sins* – not to be! –, but they were *permitted only to serve* the Holy, and I reckon, that many of them not any this – lest, *grass* being, not to be *burned!* –, but only those, which between priests, archiereuses and monks are numbered *through cleanness* together with *the choirs* of Christ's disciples"<sup>716</sup>.

*The decadence* of majority of the members of Church is explained by our

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<sup>716</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 314-315.

Father through the prism of *loss* of feeling of grace, which has been *removed* from them, for that they do not have a *life of holiness*.

Is observed that Symeon has no accents of *protestant avant le temps*, through which to ask *the abolition* of the sacramental priesthood, but he shows that, although, in functional mode, the Church has *sacramental hierarchy* and respects a certain *orthodox conduct* and a certain *conformity*, more formal, with *the orthodoxy* of Church's faith, than personal experienced, few are those which have a *saintly life* and feel *what spends with them* in the Mystery of Cheirotonia or in all the Mysteries and the services of Church.

But, in the same time, on measure what Symeon *ascertains* the lack of gracious experience at the members of clergy contemporary himself, he not preaches a *forsaking* of Church by the Ghost and neither a *loss* with all of reality of holiness from Church, as long as his life and his mystical experiences *prove* a strong raccordation at the life of Trinity and at life of Church.

He has not a ecclesiological theology *vacuumed* of holiness, after how we will see into a subsequent section, and neither sees a *rupture* of the Church, from his time, of *the initial life* of the Church or of *the direct action* of the Most Holy Trinity.

Saint Symeon has no a vocation of *protester*, after how *would* want to bring him out a protestant hermeneutic, but one of *mystical Theologian*, of verbalizer of holiness of christian living in Church, that is *proper* and *absolute necessary* in any century.

In the third passage that we will quote from the Epistle 1, will see *and better* the mode in that Symeon *restored* for his generation and for ours, *the understanding* of the power to forgive the sins, under both dimensions, ie not just historic and not just charismatic, but *historico-charismatic*<sup>717</sup>: the one who listened of his ghostual father and „*he spat* on all the glory from world... realizing all the virtue which we hear it reading in the Holy Scriptures and *he crossed*, likewise, all the work of those good, he has experienced in every day the progress, the change, the rank [on which he has it] and he was taken towards the height of divine glory...[that one can] know on himself that he has reached

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<sup>717</sup> Father Dușe noted into a article about the Holy Confession at Saint Symeon, that „for him the Confession constituted *an indivisible all*, a charismatic act”, for that the repentance, so how saw it Symeon, as „permanent state” or as on *a personal reality* with „eschatological character”, „is that leads to *theology*, understood here as *a contemplation* of God, reached on the tallest steps of purity and of unpassion”, acc. Rev. Lect. PhD student Călin-Ioan Dușe, *The Mistery of Holy Confession at Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [*Taina Sfintei Spovedanii la Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog*], in *Theological Horizons* [Orizonturi teologice] II (2001), no. 1, p. 115, 107\*\*, 108.

*partaker* of God and of His charismata and he will be *known* so and by those who see well, nay even and by those with weak view. [...]

For all those who *have guarded...the* commandments of God until at death... [they have found their souls] *in the light thought with the mind* and so, in this light, they saw *the unapproachable Light*, on the Lord Himself. [...]

[For that Christ *comes*] to those who seek Him, how knows *only* He Himself... [and He gives them] *the grace of seeing* on He Himself.

This means *to find* your soul: *to see* on God, to reach in His light *taller* than all the creature seen, and to have as *Shepherd* and *Teacher* on God, *from Which* he will know, if you want, and *the power* to loose and to bind and, knowing it exact, he will worship the One who gave it to him and he will communicate it those who need it.

Some like them know, child, that is given to them *the power to loose* and *to bind* by God the Father and by our Lord Jesus, through the Holy Ghost: those who are *His sons through adoption*, Saints and slaves of Him.

To a Father like this [to Saint Symeon the Pious] I was *apprentice* and I. He did not have *the cheirotonia from men*, but he *inscribed me* in apprenticeship with the hand or with the Ghost of God and he *commanded me*, to which

was put *long ago* in motion towards this, with strong desire, by the Holy Ghost, *to receive beautiful* the cheirotonia from men, after *the model* followed of custom”<sup>718</sup>.

Is observed from this last citation, that Symeon requires from those who want *to enter* in sacramental hierarchy of the Church *the experience of receiving of the Ghost*, ie of the sight of light, for to receive, afterwards, and *the legal cheirotonia*.

*The Father confessor* must have, in the same time, *the legal sacramental cheirotonia* and, simultaneously, *the legal cheirothesia into confessor*, but and *the interior presence*, conscientized of the Holy Ghost, through Which he has, with true, the power *to bind* and *the loose* the sins of men.

In the last part of the passage quoted is seen, how *the charisma of forgiveness*, about which speaks Symeon, is not *the sacramental*, through which the priest looses or binds the sins of men, but, instead, is *the charismatic power of to introduce* on someone, through the Ghost, in the true experience of the cleansing of passions.

Saint Symeon the Pious *was not priest*, says Symeon, but he *introduced him*, through the Ghost, in the communion with God, Which cleanses us from passions.

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<sup>718</sup> Epistles, I, apud Ică jr. 3, p. 316-317.

*The charismatic Fathers* about that speaks Symeon here, those who have *the power* to bind and to loose, can be and *from outside* of clergy, between monks and laymans, but this power to bind and to loose is not *the sacramental*, on which we know it in the Mystery of Holy Confession, but *the presence in them* of the Holy Ghost, on which they can transmit it and to us, whence we can ignite and us *the lamp* (how said, at a time given, Symeon) and through this become *our true cleaners* of sins.

They cleanse us from sins not through *the sacramental forgiveness* of the Holy Confession, but just through *ghostual contagion*, through the receiving from them *of the feeling of grace*, which is in their being and through that we can clean and us of sins.

Saint Symeon is *full grateful* to his ghostual Father, after how I said, for that, through him, he received on the Ghost, has acquired the sight.

The entrance *in the communion* with God, through the apprenticeship to a charismatic Father, means the entrance in *full forgiveness* of sins and *in the deleting with all* of the passions.

Become us, we believe, very evident *the accuracy* of our commentary, in the light of the finale of Epistle 1:

„To seek, so, better, with tiredness, such of men, who are *disciples* of Christ, and with the anguish of heart and many

tears to pray Him entire days, as to get down *the veil* from the eyes of our hearts *as to recognize them*, in the case in that will find *one like this* in this evil generation and cunning, for as, finding him, to receive through him the forgiveness of our sins, obeying us the commandments and his orderlinesses from all the soul, so how and that one listening the words of Christ was made *partaker* of the grace and of His gifts and received from Him *the power* to loose and to bind the sins *ignited* being by the Holy Ghost<sup>719</sup>.

Is observed how Symeon sees *the power* to forgive the sins of the charismatic Fathers just in *the science of to lead*, toward to clean of the passions, through ascesis.

If in sacramental mode, wants to tell us Symeon, we receive *the forgiveness of sins* made by us, the charismatic Fathers teaches us, through the Ghost, not only how to cleanse us the sins, but and how *to separate us*, interior, of our passions, how to reach, through the Ghost, *at unpassion* and *deification*.

But we cannot, in no case, to accuse on those two Saints remembered, on Symeon, *the Father*, and on Symeon the New Theologian, *the Apprentice*, that *have usurped* the dignity and the charismatic power of cheirotonia and of legal cheirothesia, but, contrariwise, we must see in their effort of to render right,

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<sup>719</sup> Idem, I, apud Idem, p. 317.

measured and total understanding of charism of forgiveness of sins, an effort of *restoration*, extraordinary of benefic, of understanding of charisma of forgiveness in the Church, which presuppose, as the Father confessor to be a ghostual Father with *legal cheirotonia*, but and with *the real experience*, overwhelming of the Holy Ghost.

Is not *enough*, reminds us our Father, the New Theologian, to receive the legal cheirotonia from the hands of a *father bishop*, but we must receive, and *from God*, the entrusting of this cheirotonia, through *the sight* of His light and through *the profound communion* with God, through which to be *the speaking mouth* of God in the Church.

Symeon connexed *the sacramental forgiveness* with the forgiveness of sins *through asceticism* and *through the sight of God*.

In the Epistle 2, Symeon debuted with a discussion concerning at epithymias, at the practical canons given the penitents.

In the face of sacramental confession, says him, *must not to despair* from the cause of the crowd of personal sins, but neither *to have a thoughtless boldness*, ie on the one *to expect* the forgiveness of proper sins only for that *have fulfilled us* the canon given by confessor<sup>720</sup>.

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<sup>720</sup> Idem, II, apud Idem, p. 318.

The forgiveness does not come only for *the formal fulfillment* of canon, but through *the entrance* in the quotidian circuit of repentance, where repentance become *our daily work*<sup>721</sup>.

Giving *the examples* of repentance of Saints David, Manasseh and Peter, Symeon concludes, that these „have received *the forgiveness* only from the repentance, the crush and the puncture of their [heart] and from the tears which they have shed from the deep of their soul and from the condemnation of their conscience”<sup>722</sup>.

Therefore, says he, „the forgiveness of each sins does not make *from his works*, as does not boast someone [Eph. 2, 9], but from *the love of God* and *from grace*”<sup>723</sup>.

Our Father does not approach the confession only from the prism of the confession of sins and of the receiving of blessing and of priestly absolution, but he debates *the ghostual fund* of forgiveness, ie *the direct action* of God in the forgiveness of our sins.

If, often, the Mystery of Confession is looked *from bottom to top*, from the forgiveness through confessor, which presuppose *the concomitant forgiveness* from part of God, Symeon looked the forgiveness of sins *from top to bottom*, ie

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<sup>721</sup> Ibidem apud Ibidem.

<sup>722</sup> Idem, II, apud Idem, p. 319.

<sup>723</sup> Ibidem apud Ibidem.

from *the presence* of God's grace in the one that confesses, on the measure of his repentance, which is followed of *the absolution of sins*, sacramental, through confessor.

More briefly, Symeon asks to feel *the direct forgiveness* of God through repentance and then to come to receive *the absolution of sins* in the Mystery of Holy Confession, refelt as *a full forgiveness* and as *a union* with Christ, as *living member* of the Church.

Thus the asceticism and the repentance *precede, accompany* and *continue* the state of liberation of under the weight of the sins and of ghostual joy, ie the state initiated by the sacramental absolution of sins, which integrates it in the quotidian ghostual life.

The repentance asks *the unreturn* at the committed sins, says Symeon, ie *a continuous asceticism*, a continuous guarding as to live *in the will* of God<sup>724</sup> and *the full forgiveness*, refelt plenary in our being, is that, when we have arrived *to hate* in us the sin in perfect mode, ie then when strengthen us in those good and we have made strong through the different attempts of our life<sup>725</sup>.

*Our rupture from sins*<sup>726</sup>, how says Symeon, is *the target* of frequent confession of proper mistakes and,

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<sup>724</sup> Ibidem apud Ibidem.

<sup>725</sup> Idem, II, apud Idem, p. 321.

<sup>726</sup> Idem, II, apud Idem, p. 322.

through it, what and through the frequent impartation, we come to cleanse us and to sanctify us in full mode our being.

For Symeon, as we have seen, *the full forgiveness* has a double aspect: *the feeling of grace* and *of forgiveness* from part of God through repentance, direct connexed with *the feeling of sacramental forgiveness* of sins and through looking of epithymias as *stable exercise* in the perimeter of repentance.

Symeon *do not undermine* the trust in the legal cheirotonia of Church and nor in the Mystery of Holy Confession, but, on the contrary, as *priest* of the Church and *experiencing* of the Ghost, who saw *how is cheirotone*d by the Ghost through the hand of bishop, Symeon asks from all *holy life*, ie *the experience of the Ghost*, for *to serve* and *to feel* the grace of the Holy Mysteries and services of the Church.

In conclusion, Symeon is not a *destabilizing* of the hierarchical order from the Church, he does not instigate at *the democratization* of priesthood and at *the elimination* of hierarchical sacramental steps, but he shows that, *in the lack* of charismatic hierarchy, which should serve the Mysteries of the Church and be lightened by the Ghost at every step, God, and not Symeon, has given those who *live holy*, which are or not in clergy, to

*continue to lead* on men, in accurate mode, at the life of holiness, through asceticism and the receiving of the Holy Ghost into consciousness.

## 2. 6. 4. The Holy Matrimony and the Holy Priesthood *as Sacramental Paradigms* of Union with God

We wanted *a synchronous discussion* of the two Holy Mysteries for *to highlight* their role paradigmatic for the union with God<sup>727</sup>.

If in the case of matrimony, the interior unity of those two grooms is *analogous* to the union between Christ and the Church and it presupposes *as foundation* the personal union with God of each of them, in the frame of cheirotonia, the man who receives *the grace of the priesthood* and *unites* in direct mode with God, from Which he receives the divine grace, he makes, into consciousness, *the servant of God* in the Church and *the intercessor to God* of the speaking flock entrusted himself.

These two fundamental ideas are processed by Symeon in his sacrament-

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<sup>727</sup> Father Alexandru Joița, into an article about the Holy Ghost, substantiating on a relevant quote, we believe, from *the Panarion* of Saint Epiphanius, affirms that: „The Mystery of Priesthood is *equivalent*, in spiritual plan, of the Mystery of Matrimony”, acc. Rev. PhD student Alexandru Joița, *The Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost in Church* [Lucrarea sfințitoare a Sfântului Duh în Biserică], in *Theological Studies* [Studii Teologice] XXXII (1980), no. 7-10, p. 646.

For that in the frame of matrimony the couple *beget sons* and *educates them*, says this, in the frame of cheirotonia, the bishop is the one who gives birth *at fathers* and the ghostual fathers, the priests, are the ones who give birth *at ghostual sons*, acc. Ibidem.

ological theology into a personal mode and very expressive.

Thus, in the Hymn 27, Saint Symeon puts in relation on *the monk seer of God* with *the married man*, for to show *the real mode* of union between the believer and God: „who has made from his cell *heaven* through virtue, that one understands and sees Him sitting in it on the Creator of heaven and of earth, to Whom he worships and coexists always together with the unbygone light, with the unevening light and with the unapproachable light, of which it does not separate noway [οὐ οὐδαμῶς χωρίζεται], of which it does not depart at all neither the day, nor the night, nor when eating, nor when drink, nor in sleep, nor on the road or when he changes the place.

But so how *he lives*, so and *he dies* or, still and more limpid, he coexists everlasting together with Him, with the soul.

For, *how will be disparted* the bride to bridegroom or the husband to his wife, with which has *harmonized* [συνηρμόσθη] once for always? Tell me, the Legislator does not guard, really, the law?

For the One who said: „And will be the two *one body*” [Gen. 2, 24; Mat. 19, 5], how not will be in entirety *a ghost* [I Cor. 6, 17] together with him, [with the soul]? For the woman is *in man* and the man *in woman*, and the soul is *in God* and God *in*

soul and so He unites and He is known in all the Saints [ἐνοῦται καὶ γνωρίζεται ἐν τοῖς Ἁγίοις πᾶσιν]<sup>728</sup>.

The seer of light is always together with the light, for that it is not seen *in outside* of him, but *inside of him* and his displacement through cell or in outside of it *does not disturb* the presence of light from him, for that no *the physical movement* or *the walk* take us off from the living relation with God, but *the sin*.

*The union* of the seer of God with the light is *an interior harmonization* with it, after how *the marital* relation between the two is *a reciprocal inwardization*.

If the marital union forms *a single body* from the two, ie it makes on the two not to have *a singular* mode of life, but *common*, in which both partners assume, deepen and bearing interior one another, all the same, says Saint Symeon, is and *the union* of the seer of God with the divine light, in which he is *seized* by light and he carries it in himself, on measure what is *worn* of exhortations to holiness, to full purity, coming from the part of light.

The husband *carries* his wife in himself, for that he carries in himself all the love, the respect and all the prayer of the everlasting fulfillment for his wife, ie her face, her relation with him, after how the ghostualized carries in himself the

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<sup>728</sup> SC 174, Hymns, XXVII, 39-56, p. 282/ Ică jr. 3, p. 168.

light of God, carries in himself on God through His glory, into *a beingly union* with himself, in which he has deepened step with step, through holiness.

Through this illustrative annexation, Symeon *does not propel* the sight of God only in monachal life, depriving thus of it on laymans, but he puts in analogy *the ghostualized monk and the married couple*, for to show *the abyssal communal dimension* of the relation between man and God and of the relation of love existent in the married couple.

Symeon ends the passage quoted with the underlining *of real union* of Saints with God, of rhythmation of their life with the glory of God, the interior rhythmation, which *is refound* and in the married couple and in which the couple can increase, fitting to the grace of ghostual love and of fidelity between them received in the Holy Mystery of Matrimony.

Symeon does not speak about *any couple* and neither *not presuppose*, that can be done *a real rhythmation*, ghostual, of the two, without the grace of God. He envisages *the ghostual marriage*, the real orthodox marriage, in which the two are ghostual humans and which increase in conscious mode in the union with God and in the interior union between them and between them and their sons.

In the ethical Discourse 1, Symeon will reset in discussion the interior union,

the relation, extreme of deep, of the married couple, into a christological context and ecclesiological communal:

„That one, [Christ], taught that the union which He has with His Father, on the one we have it and us in similar face with Him, and the disciple and His Apostle said that it is as the union which the man has with his wife and the woman with her husband. [...]

And wanting to show in overwhelming face our union with God, he continues saying: „For this – ie for Christ – will leave the man on his father and on his mother, and will cleave to his wife, ie of Church, „and will be both one body” [Eph. 5, 31], ie that of Christ and God.

And that this is *the meaning* of the word and we do not speak these starting from reasonings, same [Apostle] adds and says:

„This mystery great is, and I speak about Christ and about Church” [Eph. 5, 32]. With true, so, great and beyond than great is and will be the mystery this, for that the union and the communion, the intimacy, *the kinship* which the woman has it with her husband and the man with his wife, same, in worthy face of God and beyond any thought and word, has it the Master and the Maker of all *with entire* Church, as and with *a single woman*, uniting with her in taintless face and beyond unspeakable, being and conliving

with her in inseparable face and indissoluble, as loved one and embraced by Him”<sup>729</sup>.

Thus, on the one part, Symeon speaks about *our mystical union* with Christ, which is *analogous* with the union between the Father and the Son and, on the other part, he speaks about the communion of ghostualized marital couple, which is analogous of *the mystical union*, extrem of deep and of perplexing, of God with us.

Synthesizing the double symeonian analogy we arrive at the paradigm of *the real union* between God and man, which is possible only on the basis of *creational conformity* of man with God.

Symeon, like Paul, does not speak about the relation between man and woman in the frame of couple married and about our relation with God as about some *nonspecific realities* of man but, on the contrary, he highlights *the fulfillment* of man in the frame of the relation of reciprocal communion.

But Symeon is attentive to emphasize *the difference of degree* between the relation of spouses and the relation of the ghostualised with God.

If in the frame of matrimony, the communion keeps of *interior rhythmation* of the two, which presupposes, mostly, and the sexual relations, as mean

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<sup>729</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 118-121, 144-162, p. 232, 234/ Ică jr. 1, p. 135, 136.

of interior approach, the relation of God with the seers of His glory, says Symeon, excludes *any impurity*, for that He unites with us „în taintless face and beyond of unspeakableness”, ie in mystical mode, through the sight of His light.

The deep sense of matrimony is *the union* of the two between them underlain on the union with God *of each in part*. But, in the same time, the experience of matrimony gives us *strong motivation to communion* with all our brothers into Christ in the space of Church.

The Mystery of Holy Cheirotonia is, also, the sacramental frame of union of the cheirotoneo with God, through which this becomes *the active servant* of God for his brothers, being the active receptacle of divine will.

Both Holy Mysteries have the vertical dimension of union with God *deep sticked* in the horizontal dimension of unity, on the one part, in the frame of family, of small Church, where the two assume and bear reciprocal in their being and, on the other part, in Church, in the Church extended, where the priest, and the hierarch especially, represents *the focus* of active unity of members of Church, bearing of care to each in part.

In the Hymn 58, Saint Symeon shows, into a thrilling mode, *the interior profile* of the true priest and *the ecstatic*

*experience* that is asked of one who comes to receive the cheirotonia:

„And the one who *not received in him* on Christ, on His Father and on the Holy Ghost, on the One God dwelling and walking [II Cor. 6, 16] in conscious face in his heart, how will show a *sincere service*? From *who else* will learn the humbleness [, if not *from* the Holy Trinity] or how *will learn* the divine will?

Who will be *intercessor* for him or *will placate him* with God and *will show him* as on a *worshiper*, of God the single clean and taintless, and which not be ashamed, [ie to that One] to Which the Cherubims do not dare *to fix the regards*, for that is *unapproachable* for all Angels?

Who will *guarantee*, that this will keep without sin [κρατεῖν ἀναμαρτήτως] and will serve without doom [ἱεουργεῖν ἀκατακρίτως] the frightening service of Sacrifice the without blemish?

Which angel, which man will can say this or that he can do this? For I say and I give testimony to all – nobody deceive himself and nor delude himself in words! – : anyone *has not left* first the world and *will not hate* from soul the ones of world [I Jn. 2, 15] and will not love in sincere face *only on* Christ and will not lose for Him his soul itself [Mat. 16, 25], not caring of nothing from the ones of man's life, and not is as one, which dies in every instant and will not complain and will not mourn long for Him and will

not have only *His appetite* and will not vouchsafe [καταξιωθῆ], as through many troubles and painstaking *to take* the Divine Ghost, Whom gave the Divine Apostles, as through Him *to banish* any passion and *to realize easy* any virtue and to earn to himself springs of tears – whence come the cleanness and the contemplation of the soul, the knowledge of the divine will, the lightenment of divine brightness and the sight of unapproachable light [I Tim. 6, 16], whence is given *the unpassion* and *the holiness* all those who were vouchsafed *to see Him* and to have on God in heart [καταξιωθείσιν ὁρᾶν καὶ ἔχειν τὸν Θεὸν ἐν καρδίᾳ], to be guarded by Him and to guard His divine commandments – [whoever does not have these] *dare not* to receive the priesthood [ἱερωσύνην] and the leading of souls [ψυχῶν προστασίαν] or to begin something in this regard!

For so how Christ brings on Himself and brings He Himself sacrifice to God, His Father, so He Himself brings us *sacrifice* [προσφέρει] and on us and all He *receives us* [δέχεται].

Because the undertaking of such things will be *to judgment* and *doom*, for that it is worse than the murder, worse than the adultery and the fornication and than all other sins.

For all these are done now towards some mortal, because, without fail, we sin to each other. But the one who dares *to*

*sell* the divine and *to make trade* with the grace of the Ghost, that one sins, without fail, towards of God Himself"<sup>730</sup>.

Symeon shows, after how we can observe, that the ascesis, the road of cleaning, that makes us to see on God and His conscious indwelling in us are *our entitling* to approach to cheirotonia.

Our relation with God, anterior cheirotonia, develops more particularly post factum, then when we see the serving God and on us, as His servants, through the prism of boldness which God *instills* in our heart of to bring Him the taintless Sacrifices and in the living word which *He pours it* in us, as to feed with His word on God's people, the Church.

The ascesis and its ecstatic fruits make us *proper* to priestly ministry, for that through these *leave us led* by God, occupied by the Ghost of God, through Which we speak and we serve the divine.

The profile of true priest, which Symeon *paints us* in words, has nothing to do with ghostual imposture, with the simony and with the priesthood understood as mean of subsistence.

For Symeon, the priesthood means *the separation of all* for the love of Christ and the life in which, the Ghost of God is *the true promoter and supporter* of our initiatives. The Mystery of Holy Cheirotonia, after how emerges of here, puts us

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<sup>730</sup> SC 196, Hymns, LVIII, 206-262, p. 292-298/  
Ică jr. 3, p. 294-296.

in the posture of *servants* of God and of *leaders* of Church's members to salvation, lived in the boldness which brings it the holy life, our deep communion with God.

From this passage and from the following which we will quote, will emerge the fact, that the preparation for the sacramental cheirotonia and the cheirotonia in itself were for Symeon *capital events* in the life of those who receive them and which *change*, in fundamental mode, the interiority and their engagement in the Church's life.

We must observe here and the magistral comparison which Symeon makes it between His Sacrifice brought the Father and our bringing, by Him, at the Father. After how He has brought Himself as *clean Sacrifice* to the Father, all so, those who come at cheirotonia with *a holy life*, clean and Saints, are brought right *clean sacrifices* to the Father and He receives at Himself.

Symeon accentuates the receiving of priesthood's grace *into the cleaning of heart* and the priest's quality of *living intercessor*, who has *the audacity of love* to God and manifests it in the prayer and the intercession for his believers and for entire world, for that he has *a deep communion* with Him.

In the Catechesis 28, Symeon returns on the aspect of personal holiness of the priest:

„Of some as these, [that sanctify their life in continuous mode o.n.], is the fact of *to bind* and of *to loose* [Mat. 16, 19; 18, 18], of *to serve* the Holy and *to teach*, but not of those who received *the vote* and *the cheirotonia* only from men.

For says the Scripture: „nobody takes from itself this honor, but only *the one called of God*” [Heb. 5, 4]. Not said: the one who received the cheirotonia *from men*, but the one who *had previously been decided and arranged* to this by God.

For [the priests] made *by men* and *through men* are *thieves and robbers*, as the Lord said: „I am *the door*. All who have entered and enter *not through Me*, but they jump on elsewhere, they are *thieves and robbers*” [Jn. 10, 7, 9, 10]<sup>731</sup>.

If the passages from the anterior subchapter spoke about *the power of to bind* and *to loose the sins* and, on their base, we established, that Symeon did not refer *at the sacramental power* of forgiveness of sins, but at the power of *to put*, through the Ghost, on disciples, *in the true trajectory* of cleansing of passions, in the passage just quoted we are dealing with *an express reference* at the priesthood and at the sacramental power of to forgive the sins and with *a distinction* between the priests *who feel* the Ghost’s work in them and those *who do not feel it*. In the passage of face, Symeon *does not*

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<sup>731</sup> SC 133, The Catecheses, XXVIII, 291-300, p. 150-152/ Ică jr. 2, p. 300.

*contest* the legal cheirotonia of those who do not feel the Ghost's work in them.

He says that they received the cheirotonia *from men*, but *in illegal mode* from the point of view of mystical experience, which asks as the one that comes at cheirotonia *to be hallowed vessel* of the Ghost through ascesis and divine sight.

The pauline citation and the johan-  
neic from the symeonian text reveals us the fact, that *the cheirotonia is choice and calling* of us by God and that, in the true sense of the word and in fact, *feels* that is *priest* and *serves* the Holy, the one who *feels* in him, in any time and, especially, then when he serves, *the grace* of God in his being.

*The lack of interior dimension* of the priesthood manifests as *lack of boldness* to God, as *blasation*, liturgical routine, effeminacy of liturgical side and of predicatorial of priest, as *packing* of him into a *read and stiff typiconal ministry*, without *the conquering experiencing*, *seizing* of God's glory, *that descends* at each holy service and *fills* all those who senses the His energetics presence in Church.

For Symeon, the priest must be *full of grace*, to have *the boldness of love* in front of God, to know *to lead* in evident mode on men through the Ghost and *to deify*, through the ghostual irradiance of

his being, on the ones who can perceive it.

*The priest is a charismatic Father* for Symeon, a servant of the altar conscious of the holiness and the glory of God and not a *liturgical services provider*<sup>732</sup>, that does not know *the value* and *the deepness* of things which he serves.

Therefore, on good righteousness, Symeon is trenchant in which regard *the demonic boldness* of those which *are approaching* of cheirotonia with unbelieving hearts, that buy the grace on money or that behave indifferent, after what dress, into unconsciousness, with the priestly cassock.

In the Catechesis 34, we have a passage, which we might entitle him: *the pradiem of true priesthood*. Here we find on Symeon in his hypostasis of *servant* of the Holy Ghost.

Symeon recognizes that he is not *at the height* of God's Saints, but he *sees in him* the grace of priesthood, who works with power:

„We, being indigent and unworthy, are away from any holiness and of the Holy men of God. But we cannot deny *the gift* given to us from God [τὴν δωρεάν τῆς δοθείσας ἡμῖν ἀπὸ Θεοῦ], as some what are

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<sup>732</sup> Rev. PhD Student Dorin Octavian Picioruș, *The Priest of the Postmodern World: a Provider of Services or a Charismatic Father?* [Preotul lumii postmoderne: un prestator de servicii sau un Părinte harismat?], in the newspaper *The Bell* [Clopotul], no. 1, 2006, p. 13.

constrained by His grace *to serve you* the words of God and *to discover you* the talent, which we have been given through *tha charism* [χάρισμα], that we have been made *through prophecy* with *the setting of hands* [I Tim. 4, 14] of archiereus [μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως], that *accomplished us* into priesthood [τοῦ εἰς τὴν ἱερωσύνην ἡμᾶς τελειώσαντος]"<sup>733</sup>.

Emerges from here, that Symeon is *conscious* of the power of the Holy Ghost, which cheirotoned priest and that he is *responsible* of serving of his ghostual sons.

He confesses to his audience with respect at *the feeling of grace* in his being and this confession of ghostual understandings, that come from the charism of priesthood which he received it, he considers it *his real contribution* at their ghostual growth.

Symeon knows that *he received* the grace of the priesthood in the frame of legal cheirotonia, ie through *a legal bishop* of the Church, but is *conscious*, in the same time, that God is the One who has cheirotoned through bishop, that He called him to the priesthood, that, through Him, he saw descending the Ghost over the Gifts brought by him and that, without His presence into him, he could not feel *a priest*, a real intercessor, a true liturgist of Church.

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<sup>733</sup> SC 113, The Catecheses, XXXIV, 138-145, p. 282/ Ică jr. 2, p. 350.

*The interior realism* of symeonian priesthood enroll in *the full realism* of any liturgical act of the Church, which promoted it the New Theologian.

The conscientizing of *deifying dimension* of the Holy Mysteries is *the center* of symeonian sacramentology.

If in the frame of matrimony, the Mystery of Church develops married couple towards *a reciprocal interiorization* the increasingly higher, in the frame of priesthood however, the man *called by God* to His service, for that he has renounced and renounces at all for Him, he experiences daily the road of interiorization with the Master of his life.

Saint Symeon surprises, in fundamental mode, *the unifier* character and *communional* of matrimony and of priesthood, that keeps of our real communion with God.

Only in the measure in that *we live* in real mode, tells us, in essence, Symeon, *the immense outpouring of grace* which we receive it in the two Holy Mysteries and we grow, in personal mode, in holiness, we can feel us *one body* with the husband or our wife or feel us *one ghost* with God of our love.

## Ecclesiology

### 2. 7. The Saints as Living Members of the Church

If we talked, anterior, about the Mysteries of the Church and, in the same time, about *the real feeling* of grace in their frame<sup>734</sup>, without just and maybe, *to live as living member* of the Church means *to be recorded* at the sacramentological life of Church, but and at the sight of God's glory through our cleaning from passions.

The authentic ghostual man does not separate *the receiving* of the Holy Mysteries to *the hesychastic life*, of personal ghostual life, as long as he is not one who lived *restrictive* to their, but one who *integrates* the whole unfolding of life of the Church in his person.

The symeonian ecclesiological theology is *most evident expressed* in the

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<sup>734</sup> Father Vasile Citirigă says, into a his article, that the Holy Mysteries „are acts of union between divine and human...[for that they] *actualize always* the saving work of Christ...and through this *they sustain* the Church.

Through Mysteries, the believer receiving the fruits of redemption, *lives anticipated* and *tastes* from the richness of eternal life, on the measure what *he unites with Christ*”, acc. Rev. Conf. D.Th. Vasile Citirigă, *The Dogmatic Grounds of Eternal Life [Temeiurile dogmatice ale vieții veșnice]*, in *The Orthodoxy [Ortodoxia]* LVI (2005), no. 3-4, p. 71.

ethical Discourse 1, but its footprint is *subtly integrated* in all his opera.

But, as and until now, Symeon does not regard the Church from point of view canonical, administrative, organizational, liturgical or historical, but from the point of view *of the interior link* of each, through his life of holiness, *with Christ*, the Head of the Church<sup>735</sup>.

Going on this *personalist lode* with Christ of living members of the Church, Saint Symeon does not approach the ecclesiology from the point of view of a certain christian, who cannot *seize interior* the colossal holiness of the Church, but through the prism *of Saints*, that unite, into consciousness, with Christ.

*The union with Christ* must be *real one* and *not imaginary*. Just therefore Symeon refers at the Saints as at authentic members of the Church. For him, the Saints are *conscious* of their real union with Christ, which is *evident* in their whole being.

The Saints, says Symeon, „are all...*members* of Christ, God the over

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<sup>735</sup> His Eminence Kallistos Ware, talking about *the unity* of the Church, said: „So united is *the bond* of love between members of the Body of Christ, that nobody accomplishes *ruptured* from other. We are saved *as a family*. The Church prays not only for *the completion* of every man in the frame of his time, but and for *the coming* of Kingdom of Heavens for all and in all”, acc. Kallistos Ware, *One Body in Christ: Death and the Communion of Saints*, en *Sobornost* (1981), no. 3, p. 190.

all...[and] they must *to cleave* [κεκολλημένοι] to Him [I Cor. 6, 7] and *to unite* [συνημμένοι] with His body, as the One to be Head [I Col. 1, 18].

For the Saints, from age and until in the day of then, *are members* of Him...[and these] many are made *one body* of Christ, as *a single man*. [...]

[Thus,] some fulfill *the orderliness of hands*, working until now and making His too holy will, making them *again worthy* on the unworthy and saving them for Him; others have *the orderliness of the shoulders*, bearing one another's burdens [Gal. 6, 2] or even the lost sheep and found by them...; others have *the orderliness of the chest*, springing to the thirsty and hungry the righteousness of God, the abyss the too limpid of the word of wisdom and of knowledge the unspeakable...; others have *the orderliness of womb*, receiving on all in the inwardly of them, through love *conceiving* the Ghost of saving and having in them *the disposition*, which comprises His mysteries the unspeakable and hidden; others have *the role of the thighs*, bearing in them *the fruitfulness* of the meanings worthy of God of mystical theology and nascent on earth the Ghost of saving, ie *the fruit* and *the seed* of the Ghost in the hearts of men through their word; and others have *the role of the feet* and of *the soles*, showing *manhood* and *patience* in trials that Job, noway tottering or weak-

ening in their steadfastness for the good ones, but bearing the burden of His gifts”<sup>736</sup>.

From the symeonian passage results, that God is *the promoter of personal diversity* of Saints and that the diversity of charisms received by them *not affect* the unity of the mystical body of the Church, but, on the contrary, this charismatic diversity is *the factor* of interior cohesion of its.

Each Saint is a living *member* (μέλην) of Christ, a member with certain charisms received from God and these are *active*, just due to *the interior unity* between Saints and God.

If the Lord used in Jn. 15, 1-7 *the paradigm of the vineyard*, which supports the branches and Saint Paul *the paradigm of the body* in Eph. 4, 12; 5, 23-32, for to emphasize *the inextricable interior link* between Saints and God, Saint Symeon develops here, after our opinion, the pauline paradigm and he exemplifies *the real mode* in which must be understood Eph. 4, 11-13. When Symeon talks about *the totality of Saints*, which must be *contemplated as a single man* and designates *the personal role*, distinct, of each in the mystical construction of Church, he regards the Church as on a *charismatic institution*<sup>737</sup>, formed from

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<sup>736</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 1-30, p. 224-226/ Ică jr. 1, p. 132.

<sup>737</sup> In the introduction at a study *dedicated to symeonian ecclesiology*, Father Alexander Golitzin said:

people full of the Holy Ghost and who feel living members of Christ and manifest this *interior life* of them through those which they say and do.

The charisms were not received *an unconscious mode*, wants to tell us Symeon, or without the cleaning of passions of every Saint in part and their union with Christ is *a continuous willed annexation* of Him, a continuous effort and a continuous desire *of to be* with Him.

Saint Symeon describes here *a real state* of personal unity with Christ and not *an ideal* of mystical communion.

If some of the Saints have the role of *hands* of Christ, that clean on men, if some *bear*, through their prayers, the infirmities of the many and convert to the faith on the unbelievers ones, if some *feed* the Church through their word and others *born mystic* on the future Saints, through their mystical life and others *carry the wickedness burden* of men and

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„the great trust of Saint Symeon stays just into a thinking of *charismatic type* and – because I have not a better word – into *a christian subjective experience* on the other part, from which is *in objective mode* constituted the Church, both as a historical and eschatological reality, existing under the institutional form received from the Apostles, which has never been *far* from the mind and his heart, for which I find no indication in his operas, through which he would be dreamed, ever, to contest it”, acc. Alexander Golitzin, *The Body of Christ: Saint Symeon the New Theologian on Spiritual Life and Hierarchical Church*, a conference exposed at Bose, september, 2002, conf.

<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/symeon>.

devils, says *in subtext* Symeon, each one received the gift after *the personal ascetic effort* and after *the qualities and the personal interior dispositions*.

Without *the annexation with all* of Him, the Saints cannot stand and cannot function in Church as some *living members* of Christ and any *interior detachment* from Christ means ruin, death, eternal loss of ours.

The Church is the body of Christ [τὸ σῶμα τῆς Χριστοῦ], says Symeon, and it is the place which takes into *a together-harmony* [συναρμολογούμενον] on all the Saints of God and it is *entire* [ἄρτιον] and *harmonious* [ὁλόκληρον]<sup>738</sup>.

With other words, the holiness of the Church is due to *the holiness* of the Head of Church, of Christ and *of interior racordation* of those Saints at Christ and *the unity* of the Church is given by *the charismatic unity* of relation between Christ and the Saints and of Saints among them.

The personal charisms of the Saints *build the unity* of the Church in active mode and *the divine breath*, which every Saint brings in the Church, is *a following* of personal relation, direct, living with Christ God.

The manifestation of Saints as *living members* of Christ, as members in which Christ is *living and active*, is *seized* by the

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<sup>738</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 31-33, p. 226/ Ică jr. 1, p. 133.

faithful, both during their live and after their repose, when they come to their Holy Relics as *to worship* and *to receive* divine power in their ghostual life<sup>739</sup>.

As to argue the affirmation, how that „all the Saints, being members of Christ, make themselves *a body* of Him and they will make still and *in future*”<sup>740</sup>, Symeon brings in its support on Jn. 14, 20; 17, 20, 21, 22, 26<sup>741</sup>.

From the johanneic places cited, results that Christ is in active mode *present* in Saints, that Christ wants the unity of the Church and He realizes it through those who are stuck of Him in interior mode and that He gives those Saints the eternal glory of the Holy Trinity, for that they to be *perfect* into all.

Is observable how Symeon *cites accurate* the Scripture, without *to force* the texts and understands them in their *full scriptural sense*.

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<sup>739</sup> Into an article dedicated to the veneration of Holy Relics, Father Professor Constantin Galeriu said, that the Saints *bear*, „yet from this life *an earnest of immortality*” in their being and that *the veneration* which we give it to the Holy Relics comes from the fact, that „exists *a continuity* between the life from here and the life after death, on the other plane of existence. Is a continuity of dynamic existence, active, not diminished, but always enriched”, conf. Rev. Prof. Constantin Galeriu, *The Veneration of the Holy Relics* [Cinstirea Sfintelor Moaște], in *The Metropolia of Banat* [Mitropolia Banatului] XXX (1980), no. 10-12, p. 643, 648.

<sup>740</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 38-39, p. 226/ Ică jr. 1, p. 133.

<sup>741</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 44-57, p. 226-228/ Ibidem.

He extracts his theology from *the depths of Scripture* and from *the personal revelations* which God provokes in his being.

The symeonian conclusion behind of those texts cited is identifiable in two lapidary affirmations and namely: „*the mode of union* [ἐνώσεως τρόπον] [between God and Saints] is beyond of mind and of all understanding”<sup>742</sup>, for that „*the union* [ἐνωσιν] which [Christ] has it, in natural [φυσικῶς] face, with His Father, on this He promises that we have it in grace [ἐν χάριτι], if we want”<sup>743</sup>.

*The tropos* of interior union, whereof speaks John and Symeon here, is *a real one* for Saints, but both for themselves, and for those who venerate them, is *incomprehensible* due to its depth unutterable.

Symeon not only that *guarantees us* the existence of this real union with Christ, citing the Scripture, but he guarantees us and through *his proper charismatic link* with God, the reality of personal link of Saints with Christ.

If we are attentive at scriptural citations of Symeon and at the interior logic of his discourse, we observe that he has not taken on Saints *as paradigm* of real union with Christ from the cause of a

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<sup>742</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 6, 59-60, p. 228/ Ibidem.

<sup>743</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 6, 62-64, p. 228/ Ibidem.

ghostual elitism or from teological snobism, but for that, in thereof being, this union is real and conscientized into a continuous interior rhythm.

But through this, we believe, he did not create *a dangerous fissure* between members of the Church, dividing *on Saints* from *the regular believers* of Church, for that in his soteriological vision and ecclesial cannot exist *true believers* without having *a certain degree* of interior holiness.

And, after how we have seen, for Symeon *the conscientization* of presence of grace in us from Baptism and *the full union* with God, through the fulfillment of commandments and asceticism, represents *the true ethos* of orthodox life.

Symeon show us here, in the frame of I, 6, that the triadology and the christology are those which explains *the divine-human reality* of the Church.

Without *the real coupling* at the grace of Trinity and without to feel us living members, active of Christ, we do not feel *the real parts* of the body of Christ, of Church and we cannot experience, in personal mode, the relation of great deepness with the Most Holy Trinity, through which we live „the love with which God and the Father loved on His Son, the Only Begotten and [into

which], our God...will be *in us* and Himself the Son of God will be *in us*"<sup>744</sup>.

Symeon reports at the experience of Saints for that they *live* the real union with Christ but they can and *to narrate it* to those who want to listen. Our relation with Christ does not make *from outside of us*, ie this is not *an exterior* relation with Him, but from *our interior*, for He *unites*, in real mode, with us.

We feel *the love* of the Father for the Son from the depths of our being, for that the Son of the Father is *in us* from Baptism and He teaches us *the love* of the Father to Him and of Him to His Father and to the Holy Ghost. Due *to assume* of human nature in His hypostasis, He was „*akin* with us through body...and made us, with true, *partakers* [of His deity]... [being] one body together with Christ into the Ghost"<sup>745</sup>. Each member of the Church is *member* of Christ and each one is given *the showing* of the Ghost toward his personal benefit<sup>746</sup>.

Symeon insists on *the impartation* all of Christ, on the multiple existence of personal relations with Christ, which are *on the measure* of the personal charisms<sup>747</sup>.

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<sup>744</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 73-76, p. 228/ Idem, p. 134.

<sup>745</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 76-77, 81-82, p. 228/ Ibidem.

<sup>746</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 88-90, p. 230/ Ibidem.

<sup>747</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 104-106, p. 230/ Idem, p. 135.

His insistence on the fact of *to comment* and of *the process* the scriptural vision about Church, quoting and commenting pauline ecclesiological texts, shows us on Symeon as on one, which integrates, in creative mode, in the Tradition of the Church.

Symeon *appropriates* and presents in *personal* mode and *personalist* the human-divine principle of unity of the Church, ie *the interior link* of each one in part with God, through the Ghost.

Our entry in Church, through Baptism, as real annexation of the Lord, the reconscientization and its daily deepening in our life, forms *the personalistic coordinate* of symeonian ecclesiology and of the personal soteriology which he propagated it in Church.

Citing Eph. 5, 28-29, in connexion with the Jn. 6, 56<sup>748</sup>, Symeon shows that the Holy Eucharist is *the factor* of the real unity with Christ of the members of Church<sup>749</sup>, naturally alongside the real faith, clean, in Him. For that to have life, we must stand *in direct link* with the Head of the Church, *eating daily* on eucharistic Christ<sup>750</sup>.

*The feeding* with the Body and the Blood of Lord, which presuppose *our*

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<sup>748</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 130-143, p. 232/ Idem, p. 135-136

<sup>749</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 143-144, p. 232-234/ Idem, p. 136.

<sup>750</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 6, 165-171, p. 234-236/ Ibidem.

*continuous sanctification* through grace, is that which makes us to feel in us *the sap of the life-creating* of the Body of Christ.

To be *members* of Christ, in paradoxical mode, means *to have* on Christ in us and *to eat* on eucharistic Christ for *to unite*, in beingly mode, with us.

Changing the ecclesiological paradigm of *the body* with that of *beingly union* with Christ, Symeon speaks about Church as about *a beautified world* [κόσμον ὠραϊσμένον]<sup>751</sup>, but he names it and *Empress* [ἡ Βασίλισσα] of Sovereign<sup>752</sup>, followed by *the virgins* [παρθένοι] from Ps. 44, 16, ie by each of us, which sanctify us the life<sup>753</sup>.

Symeon has in view, in all these images of the union with Christ, *the mystical union*, ecstatic with Christ, not only *the sacramental union* with Christ.

Even if he does not present us, of each date, *the substrate* of an affirmation, the fund of reality as such, he has of each date in view *the full content*, totalizer of ghostual life, which presuppose both *the sacramental union* with Christ but and *the mystical union* with Him. In I, 7, *the real space* of the Church does not looked

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<sup>751</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 7, 4, p. 236/ Idem, p. 137.

<sup>752</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 7, 11, p. 236/ Ibidem.

<sup>753</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 7, 16, p. 238/ Ibidem.

only in the dimension of personal frame, where is highlighted the aspect of *our interior link* with Christ, but Symeon tries to present and *a realistic-integrative vision* of the whole pleroma of the Church: „For as Christ God is Head of the Church, all so He makes for it *temple* [ναὸς], after how and the Church itself was made a temple of Him and *a beautiful cosmos* [κόσμος ὡραῖος]”<sup>754</sup>.

The interior process of sanctification produces per-total an impressive ghostual vision of the Church. The Church appears at a its ghostual contemplation as *a beautiful world*, as a world full of holiness and divine wisdom.

The personal relation of each of us with God creates *a thrilling image* of Church, the image of a living community, total engaged, which produces conquering beauty, both at personal level, but and in its outside.

The image of Church as *temple* of God is used by Symeon as *a direct evaluation* of I Cor. 3, 16, showing that we are, with true, *living temples* of God, for that the Holy Ghost *dwells into us*<sup>755</sup>.

The Church is *the temple, the citadel* and *the cosmos* of the Emperor God, in which speaks God<sup>756</sup>, but is, in the same

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<sup>754</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 7, 22-24, p. 238/ Ibidem.

<sup>755</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 7, 41-42, p. 238-240/ Idem, p. 138.

<sup>756</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 7, 44-47, p. 240/ Ibidem.

time, *body* of Christ, His *bride* and His *upper world*<sup>757</sup>.

But *the members* of the mystical body of Christ, of the Church, are *the Saints* and not just *those baptized* in the Church, which not actualise daily their relation with God, on which God Himself *had initiated* with them and in them from their Baptism.

From the perspective of personal union with Christ, the Church is formed *from Saints* and it *widens continuous* and it will comprise, in definitive, on all the Saints from all ages, fact for which, „until will not come at existence [all the Saints] or until will not arise *all well-pleasing* [of God], nor the body of Christ is *whole*, nor the upper world is *fill* – and this I say that is *the Church* of God – but many are [between future Saints] today, in world, *unbelievers* and between those who believe in Christ many are *sinner*s and *fornicators*, which must *to change* their life through repentance, many are disobedient and will have to make listeners, many are which must to be born and they to be well-pleasing of God until at the last trumpet.

For must *to be born* and *to be brought at existence* all those *pre-known* and to fill the world above the world of the Church of those first-born, the Jerusalem from the heavenly [Heb. 12, 22-

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<sup>757</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 8, 1-2, p. 240/  
Ibidem.

23]. And then will be and *the fullness* of Christ's body by the God of the pre-decided, [of those who have] to make alike *the image* of His Son [Rom. 8, 29]. For these are *the sons* of light and of His day [I Thes. 5, 5]"<sup>758</sup>.

In the passage from here, the Church is presents by Symeon as the number of those Saints *pre-known* by God, who will sanctify the life and will enter in the upper world of the Kingdom of God.

Conformable to the parable of the tares found in the cornfield of wheat or of the fishes from seine, the formation of Saints does not know, in absolute mode, *a linearity* of christian life from one end at other of their life, but the Saints are born through *the conversion* of notorious sinners, while many of the faithful will prove, unfortunately, improper *the entry* in the bridal chamber.

*The intensity* and *the sincerity* of the *living* of interior relation with God is that which *forms the Saints* and their existence is not *prescribed* by a mundane forum but by God Himself.

God is the One who *shows* His friends, Which *glorifies* on the Saints, Which makes them *known* to the believers, and the hierarchy of Church *affiliates* the divine evidence, shown in different modes in the Church.

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<sup>758</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 8, 3-18, p. 240-242/ Idem, p. 138-139.

But we must not confuse *the predecision* of the Saints by God, whereof speaks Symeon here, which is all one with *the divine prescience*, with the predestination or with the pagan fatalism, in which does not exist *real human liberty*, men are *damned* or *absolved* in dictatorial mode and the whole divine oikonomia of Christ is superfluous.

Symeon *does not introduce* in the orthodox faith the heresy of predestination, but he emphasizes the aghiological theology of Paul, in which the Saints are presented as *the prescients* of God and as *the sons* of the Kingdom of God, how show the three places pauline cited by Symeon, from the passage on which we comment it.

The historical dimension of the Church has its decisive role in the creation of the Church of the top, as long as *here* are formed the Saints, on earth, and the historic time precursory of the Parousia keeps just of the formation of this number of prescient Saints by God.

In this perspective of the formation of Saints, *the history, the time and the space* appear as some *forming frames* of the members of Church, as some frames which presuppose *the sanctification* of the members of Church and not as *a major inconvenient*, which would excuse of our lack of personal inghostualization.

The weights of history, the historical pressure of any kind exercised upon us is

not *a wall* in front of personal holiness, but this is realized, with the grace of God, even and when all things seem to be with all *against* of the ghostual development of the living members of the Church.

The Church is not and cannot be *swallowed* by history, as long as *the reality* of real personal union with God proves that *the secularization* or *the devalorization* of church life in the postmodern world and in any other historical paradigm, are not then some *tasteless intellectual presuppositions*, made at writing table and which have nothing to do with *the living longing* after the union with God of believers and with *the unchecked aspiration to holiness*.

The Church is the people of God in which *lives*, in conscious mode, the grace of God and which *witnesses*, without any censorship, *the saving truth* of the Holy Tradition of Church.

The courage of Saints, the monumentality of their life and their *visible* role or *subterranean* in the sanctification of world are *ghostually seizable fingerprints* of deep mystery of the Church.

The mystery of the Church consists precisely in *the greatness* of personal relations of God with the Saints and of the Saints between them and of the Saints with all members of the world.

The perfection of the body of Church through Saints does not make from Church an entity which has nothing

to do with the damned, with the common sinners.

The growth in holiness of each believer in part comprises *the assuming* of whole world once with it and does not mean, any moment, a *desolidarization* of brothers who did not want to believe in God.

The holiness presupposes *the solida-*  
*rization*, the assuming all in our life and in our prayers, and a *painful prayer* for the whole existence.

Talking about *the descent* of God the Word to us, Symeon presents the entire humanity as on *the daughter* of the mutinous against Him, as on a sinful woman, guilty of fornication and killing<sup>759</sup>.

And *the goodness* of God is indicated very expressive by him through the fact, that He preferred a bride fallen, depraved, for that *has staked* on the justification and its sanctification.

In conclusion, the Saints are not for Symeon *some privileged*, which have *primacy* towards others, for that they have certain personal *trumps*. Through Baptism we are with all *privileged*, for that God puts us into *a living relation*, direct with Himself, from which we cannot fall, only if we want to mock us.

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<sup>759</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 9, 22-25, p. 248/ Idem, p. 141.

The Church is just this *complex number* of personal relations with Christ and *our source* of ghostual life means the union with Christ through ecstasy and the impartation with Christ through the Holy Mysteries. And the holiness is *the principal characteristic* of the members of Church and it creates *the unity* of the Church.

As everyone to be *a living member* of Christ's body, he must stand *in the interior unity* with Christ and with the Saints from all ages and from everywhere on earth, ie to stand, through holiness, *in link* to both with the Head of the Church, with Christ, but and with the other members of the Church, ie with the Saints before him but and with the contemporary of himself.

## Eschatology

### 2. 8. The Sight of Light and the Eschatology

The last theme of symeonian theology which we discuss here and namely *the universal eschatology* proves, once again, the eternal validity of personalist theology, as long as the holiness is the interior reality which reveals in perfect mode in the stage of plenary transfiguration of whole creation.

If now, *our interior relation* with God can be put *under the sign of question* by those who have not the ghostual perception of God's presence in believers, then, in the day the one of then, our interior becomes *explicit* for all, the reality of union with Christ will be *incontestable* and the living relation with God will prove our source of joy and eternal fulfillment.

We will begin our discussion all with the ethical Discourse 1, in which Symeon speaks, very concentrated, about the transfiguration of the world through the Ghost.

Symeon, starting from what has done Christ God for us, through His incarnation as man, speaks about *the growth in holiness* and he says that, after the dormition of Saints, their bodies do

not remain „altogether incorruptible, nor again altogether corruptible, but, keeping in them both *the signs of incorruptibility* [τῆς ἀφθαρσίας τὰ γνωρίσματα], but and [on those] of corruptibility, are kept towards being made *incorruptible* in perfect face [τελείως] and renewed [ἀνακαινισθῆναι] at the resurrection from latter”<sup>760</sup>.

The reality of the Holy Relics indicates, on the one part, that has not come *the time of renewal*, of total transfiguration of creation but that it *has begun* still of now.

The personal holiness is a full rallying, assumed, at the process of the transfiguration of creation.

The transfiguration of bodies is reserved, says Symeon, of eschatology, for that „it ought not as the bodies of men to be resurrected and to be made incorruptible before of *the renewing of creatures* [τῶν κτισμάτων ἀνακαινίσεως], but so how this [the creation] has been brought first at existence incorruptible, and after it the man, all so again, first, the creation must *to premade* and so *to change* from corruptibility at incorruptibility, and so, together with it and suddenly with it [σὺν αὐτῇ καὶ ἅμα αὐτῇ], will renew and the corruptible bodies of men, for as the man, making again *ghostual* [πνευματικός] and *immortal* [ἀθά-

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<sup>760</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 3, 115-119, p. 204/ Idem, p. 124.

νατος], to dwell into *a place incorruptible* [ἀφθάρτῳ χωρίῳ], *eternal* [ἀϊδίῳ] and *ghostual* [πνευματικῶ]”<sup>761</sup>.

The sight of divine light has *direct link* with the transfiguration of creation, for that this will renew through the divine light and the sight of light leads to the incorruptibility of soul still of now and of body in partial mode but, in full mode, in the next age.

Symeon speaks about *a concomitance* of the transfiguration of creation and of the man and about *a habitation* of men, which will have a ghostual body, into a transfigured creation, transformed into a place of incorruptibility and of eternal joy, of eternal communion with their Creator.

*The renewal* of creation is at our Father *a its restoration* in the beauty which it had it from the beginning, at the initial beauty [τὸ ἀρχαῖον κάλλος]<sup>762</sup>.

Paraphrasing on the Apostle John, Symeon invites us to believe on full, that will be new heavens and new earth<sup>763</sup> and that will exist a general resurrection of the people<sup>764</sup> and that „the heaven and the earth and all ones from it, ie all crea-

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<sup>761</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 3, 120-129, p. 204/ Idem, p. 124-125.

<sup>762</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 3, 148-149, p. 206/ Idem, p. 125.

<sup>763</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 4, 1, p. 206/ Ibidem.

<sup>764</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 4, 3-5, p. 206/ Ibidem.

tion will be *renewed* and *freed* from the bondage of corruption [Rom. 8, 21], and the things will share together with us of the brightness [λαμπρότης] from there, and in the face in which on all of us *will attempt the fire* [τὸ πῦρ δοκιμάσει], according to the Divine Apostle [I Cor. 3, 13], all so and the whole creation *will be renewed through fire* [διὰ πυρὸς ἀνακαινισθήσεται]<sup>765</sup>.

But this *fire*, which transfigures the world, which transforms it, is none other than *the divine light*, which will cleanse and will prechange all creation, after how *prechanges* and *deifies* on the one who sees it in ecstasy.

From this we deduce, that Symeon unites in his theology *the personal soteriology* with *the transfiguration* of all creation and he considers the transfiguration of the world *an extension*, from part of God, of personal transfiguration, which takes place in the believers.

The determined role of the sight of light is understand on full *only from* eschatological perspective, for that the eternal life presupposes *a permanent remaining* in the divine light, a ours eternalization in the joy of communion with God.

The world will not have part *of an end*, of a its destruction in hollywoodian style, where all creation dissolves into a

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<sup>765</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 4, 5-11, p. 206/ Idem, p. 125-126.

total chaos, but, according to symeonian theology, the world will be *prechanged* through the divine light, having part of a *new beginning*, of its reestablishment in the beauty, into which God had created from the beginning, ie being full of the divine light.

But *the new beginning* of the world will be *everlasting*, the eschatology not dealing with *the final*, in the sense of *the last things* which can be *said* about God's creation, for that it would put point at a moment given, but of the last things which will initiate *an eternal perspective*, non-temporal of creation and of man.

The eschatology, from dogmatic point of view, in paradoxical mode, comprises under its cupola, as we know, both the realities of the second coming of the Lord, the prechanged of world and the resurrection of the dead, together of the last Judgment, but and the two kinds of eternity assumed: the eternal joy with God or the eternal misery in the company of demons.

But at Saint Symeon, the eschatology is not a problem just of those *from future* but is a reality on which you live it *yet of now*, in ecstatic mode, if you see the glory of God, which is just *the real ambience* and *deifying* of everlasting life.

Now, we will continue to present *the variant of future* of symeonian eschatology, for to return us, in the finale of this section, at *the actual* variant,

ecstatic, through which we live already the eschatological reality of creation.

*The actual creation*, continues our Father, being as *an obsolete vessel* and *speckled* by our sins<sup>766</sup>, „will be *remelted* and *remodeled*, and will be made *shining* [λαμπρὰ] and *unlike newer* [καινοτέρα ἀσυγκρίτως] than the one that is seen now<sup>767</sup>. The divine light will produce the transfiguration of creation and of men *instantaneous*. *The renewed creation*, says Simeon, will not be *identical* with the one before of the falling of man in sin, but with much more beautiful and divine on full, for that „all creation will be made, at a *sign* of God, not as it was brought at existence, material and sensible, but will be remade through a *birth from new* [τῆ παλιγγενεσίᾳ], into a immaterial dwelling and ghostual, above all feeling<sup>768</sup>.

*The palingenesis* about which speaks Symeon will be *an instantaneous divine work* and it will consist in *the transformation* of world and of man in *transfigured existences*, ghostual.

The pauline place from I Cor. 15, 51-52 supports *the instantaneity* of transfiguration of creation<sup>769</sup>, without as this

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<sup>766</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 4, 20-25, p. 208/ Idem, p. 126.

<sup>767</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 4, 25-27, p. 208/ Ibidem.

<sup>768</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 5, 10-13, p. 212/ Idem, p. 128.

<sup>769</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 5, 14-16, p. 212/ Ibidem.

to mean *a decorporalization* of men or *an abolition*, aneantization of matter.

The transfiguration of the world and of men means just *the transfiguration of matter*, of entire existence, in so kind that we will inherit „the whole earth spiritual and ghostual...[as some which will acquire] *incorporeal bodies* [οἱ ἀσώματα τὰ σώματα]...[and we will get to have] a feeling beyond of feeling [ὑπὲρ αἰσθησιῶν ἐν αἰσθήσει]”<sup>770</sup>.

The ghostual print of future world, transfigured, is refound in the life of every Saint in part yet of now.

In the anterior sections we have called this state of living of the eternal life *a quotidian life*, a continuous living in the divine light.

*The incorporeal bodies* of transfigured world and *the feeling above of feeling* about which speaks Symeon are *ecstatic prints* of ghostual man, are the consequences of the cleansing of passions and of the sight of light, of continuous sanctification of our life.

And Symeon speaks here not about of eternal existence in light *of all*, but only of those which, still of now, *have sanctified* the life.

He does not elude the existence of contrary will to the one of God and the reality of Hell, but he sees in happy eternity *a ghostual reality*, of which will

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<sup>770</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 5, 20-22, p. 214/ Ibidem.

impart whoever have begun to impart of it, still on when they were *in the flesh*.

And *the entrance* in the eternity of communion with God presupposes the orthodox Baptism and living in the Church, through cleaning of passions, of the sight of God, of His eternal light.

*The resurrection* means for Symeon the achievement of the real state of to be *alike* to the Holy Angels<sup>771</sup>.

The whole creation renewed becomes an immense reliefation and presence of God's glory, for that it, the creation, „reached whole ghostual, together with the Paradise itself [σὺν αὐτῷ Παραδείσῳ], is premade into an immaterial dwelling and incorruptible, unchangeable, eternal and intelligible.

And will be [and] a heaven unparalleled more shining [as this of now], as another new heaven, more luminous than the seen.

And the earth will resume its unspeakable beauty and new and a face of unsear verdure, beautified by bright flowers and by a spiritual diversity, in which, according to the pious word, dwells the righteousness [II Pet. 3, 13].

The Sun of righteousness will shine of seven times more [Mal. 4, 2; Is. 30, 26], and the moon will spark of twice times more than the sun which shines now; the stars will be like our sun, whatsoever will

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<sup>771</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 5, 77, p. 218/ Idem, p. 130.

be they and however are they now looked by the words of those with high thinking.

All will be above of word, as some what will surpass all thinking, and being spiritual and divine, they will unite with the intelligible [ἐνοῦνται τοῖς νοητοῖς] and will make another intelligible Paradise and a heavenly Jerusalem [Heb. 12, 22], likened and united with the heavenly [ἔξομοιωθεῖσα τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις καὶ ἐνωθεῖσα], and an unwavering inheritance of the sons of God, [for] nobody from those on earth will not be, nowise, heirs of it”<sup>772</sup>, but only the Saints.

After how is observed, the transfiguration of the world does not mean a hallowed world, ghostualised, *parallel* with the Kingdom of God or with the Paradise of Saints, but means just *a union* of the transfigured world with the Paradise or *an extension* of the divine life from Paradise in the whole creation of God.

If now the Saints impart of the life of Paradise, of the divine light of Paradise, but they are *surrounded* by the created world, unghostualised in overwhelming mode, from around them, in the world of eschaton the Saints will live the light *in them*, this *will squirt* from them, but it will be and *in the whole* of creation, for that both they, but and the world from around them will be, in its completeness,

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<sup>772</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 5, 84-101, p. 218-220/ Ibidem.

the dwelling of glory of God, another temple full of glory, a world in which the interior communion with God is *of-all-present* and where is not found any infirmity or decadence.

Symeon speaks with accuracy about eschaton for that he had its real experience. All terms of comparison which he uses in the description of the renewable world keep of history, but the reality of the images used are *ghostual contemplations* of eternal realities.

The Saints, says our Father, according to Mat. 5, 5, will inherit this renewed earth<sup>773</sup>. But they will inherit *the future world*, for that their souls, „through the gift and the union of the Holy Ghost, stick to God, still being they in bodies and, *renewed*, they will change, will rise from death and will be restored after dormition, in the unevening light and in glory.

But their bodies *not yet*, for they will be left in graves and in corruption, following to be made and them so at the universal resurrection, as well as and all this earthly creation, seen and sensible, will be changed and will unite with the heavenly, ie with the unseen and above of feeling”<sup>774</sup>.

The ecstatic union with God, about which speaks Symeon, is the one who

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<sup>773</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 5, 107-108, p. 220/ Idem, p. 131.

<sup>774</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 5, 110-119, p. 220/ Ibidem.

brings from the death of sin the souls of Saints and it restores them in the divine light, but their bodies receive the full pneumatization once with the resurrection of all.

The union between body and soul, made through the sight of light and the living in grace, is followed in eschaton by the real union, explicit, overwhelming of the heavenly and of the earthly, ie the transformation of the Heavenly Powers and of the Saints into a single choir, into a single world, in which dwells the righteousness and which glorifies on the Most Holy Trinity, the Source of the whole life and of the entire joy.

The angelo-human unity of the Church or the overwhelming reality of the icon of the Proskomedia, in which the Lamb is in the midst of the transfigured creation, experienced now only in part, then will be *an ecumenical evidence* of the entire uncontainable stretching of the world of God.

All members of God's world will see then on their Emperor, „how will come with glory and more power our Emperor the desired and too-sweet, Jesus Christ God, to judge the world and to give each after his works. [...]

[And], as into a big house or in the imperial palaces are many places of rest and abodes, and in both these kinds of too-divine places is a great otherness, all so and in the new creation He will make

divisions, attributing each the legacy after his worthiness and the brightness and the glory which it is entitled from virtues and his deeds.

But whereas they will be *ghostual* [πνευματικῶν] and *transparent* [διαφανῶν] and *united* with those abodes and divine resting places, the Kingdom of Heaven will be, in general, as *a single hearth*, as and it is, and this will be shown to all the Righteous, of over all, unseeing in it than the Emperor of all, co-present [συμπαρόντα] with each and each coexisting [συνόντα] together with Him, shining in each and each shining in Him [ἐν ἐκάστῳ ἐκλάμποντα καὶ ἕκαστον λάμποντα ἐν Αὐτῷ]<sup>775</sup>.

The eschatological explanations of our Father have an overwhelming realism, after how can be observed.

The final judgment will represent *the entry* of each believer in part, after his level of personal inghostualization, in the Kingdom of God; the eternal life means the union and the living together with the Heavenly Powers and this mode of existence of eternity not means something else than the continuing of interior relation with Christ, the Emperor and our God.

The living in eternity means *the brightness* of Christ God in each of us and ours in Him, as a without end progres-

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<sup>775</sup> Idem, *The Ethical Discourses*, I, 5, 120-137, p. 222/ Idem, p. 131.

sion in the understanding and the communion with Him.

Symeon accents very much this detail of our communion with Christ, for that the ghostual life is an interior reality, the single *legal reality* of man and will be *the true constitution* of the new world.

The reality of the transfigured world has as foundation *the life in the glory of God*, ie just *the content* of this theology of glory, on which we debate it in the pages of this book.

Is from self understood the importance of the eschatological transfiguration of the world in the symeonian theology, if all the energy of this theology was filed in to show *the capital importance* of the mystical life of the Church.

The mystical life *proves* its full relevance for history and for eternity and the absolute primacy in the orthodox life, when we inherit, in personal mode, in eternity, its soteriological consequences.

In I, 12, Symeon talks about *the Ascension of the Lord* and about *the ecstatic report* with us through the prism of His glory: „God descended on earth and ascended again at heaven and He has put *the darkness* right *His hiding* [ἀποκρυβήν].

For it ought not to show us with the glory of His Father before of Judgment. But this will be made at the time on which His Father has put it into His possession [A. Ap. 1, 7]. [...]

[Because] thus are *the hidden mysteries* [τὰ μυστήρια κεκρυμμένα] of the Kingdom of Heaven and is not given to everyone to know them, after the word of the Lord [Mt. 13, 10]<sup>776</sup>.

*The hiding* in which has hidden Christ God is *His light*. But He did not hide *for all*, for those what see His light, they know His mysteries the too mysterious, hidden those who do not have the clean heart through the fulfillment of His commandments.

The glory of Christ will be seen *by all* at His second coming and at Judgment, but each will perceive it *at his level* of ghostual growth or will be *an insupportable fire*, for those who does not love on Him, on the God of the whole world.

Is very evident from the following passage, how that *the interior intimation* of His glory is *real* for those who *rebuild* through faith and the fulfillment of commandments: „before ascending at heaven and to put the darkness His hiding, He has given us His holy commandments, as on some *implements*...and the faith in Him as on *a master*. [...]

[And we being] *vessels*, the faith *master*, and the commandments *the implements*, through which the master Word *remakes* and *renews* on the workers of His commandments, [we can], as

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<sup>776</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 137-144, p. 282/ Idem, p. 154-155.

through their work, cleanse us and to be enlightened us by the Ghost, advancing in the knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven”<sup>777</sup>.

The faith and the asceticism, as fulfillment of commandments, create in us *the cleanness*, where descends God’s light.

The ghostual experience or the knowledge of the mysteries of God *has nothing to do* with the occultism, with the secretomania of caste or with the initiation in perverse mysteries and intellectualist.

*The knowledge* of the mysteries of God means *the sight of the divine light*, of what shown us by God in the divine light, the light on which *we see it* only if *sanctify us* the life.

Any attempt *of dodge* of the sacramental entry in Church, through Baptism or any *misunderstanding* of the ghostual life, unresolved at time with Fathers, which already *have tasted* from the sight of light, with men which know and the joy but and the dangers of ghostual life, it does not lead at *the sight* of divine light, but at *the blackest ghostual deception*, at the falling in the net of demons, which show us *a pseudo-light*, what throws us into a lamentable extremism. The divine sight has *signs* and *clear manifestations* from ghostual point

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<sup>777</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 150-158, p. 282-284/ Idem, p. 155.

of view and the differentiation between *the true sight* and *the sight brought by demons* is reserved those with deep mystical experience and with a great ghostual discernment.

Saint Symeon does not refer in his opera and at what is not *authentic* sight, but other Holy Fathers did it into a magistral mode.

His Holiness was comprised with all of desire of *to highlight* the reality and the divine splendor of the mystical experience, for as each of us can compare our experience with *the truth* of an overwhelming experience.

Returning us at the eschatology for today, after how I promised, Saint Symeon speaks in the ethical Discourse 10 about the link between eschatology and the ecstatic sight, saying: „the coming of the Lord [παρουσία τοῦ Κυρίου] at the believers *was made* and *is made always* [γέγονε καὶ ἀεὶ γίνεται] and was made by all those who will it.

And if He is *the Light of the world* and He told His Apostles that *will be with them* until at the end of the world [Mt. 28, 20], how, being already with us, He will come? Nowise. For we are not sons of darkness and sons of night [I Thes. 5, 5], as the light to take us by surprise [καταλάβη] [Jn. 12, 35], but sons of light and of the day of the Lord”<sup>778</sup>.

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<sup>778</sup> SC 129, The Ethical Discourses, X, 679-686, p. 308/ Idem, p. 343.

*The coming of the Lord* is a *cotidianity* for those who see the light in their being and for they His second coming is no longer expected but *glorified* in their whole being.

The Lord showed into light all His Saints, ie to all those who were thirsty and were hungry for His glory. Just therefore, the Saints are not sons of the night, of unseeing light, but of the day, of communion, in light, with their Master.

For those who *live in light* yet of now, the history has ended already. They live longer in eternity than in history and *the changing* of world means the sight of light and in the matter around them not only in their being.

But the prechanging of world brings *an immense plus* of holiness and of gladness thereof, for that means the everlastingness them in light, their steadfastness, for eternity, in the sight of the glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

Do not understand of here, that the Saints *do not want* the coming of the Lord, His parousia for all. Contrariwise, their daily communion with Christ, His sight provokes them an even greater love and waiting of His coming on the clouds of light of His glory, as to judge the world.

The second coming is an immense mystery, for that it is not known by anyone except God: „The ones what will to be then do not know any the Angels of

God. For given being, that they did not know any of His coming on earth, in what kind and how [it will be], or when He would come down and make Himself man, all the more they must not know His coming from behind with glory. [...]

[For this] showed even and the Lord speaking about His coming, „that the Powers of the heavens *will be shaken*” [Mt. 24, 29], in the sense that they *will be amazing* and they *will marvel* seeing, all at once, [on] those which until then they have not seen at all”<sup>779</sup>.

The waiting is *intense* for the entire Church and *the surprise* of His coming will be overwhelming. Any scenario of His coming we could imagine it will be extreme of fade, of inexpressive and of corporal in that day.

Saint Symeon surprises extraordinarily well the idea of the surprise of His coming and of His transfiguring presence for the entire creation.

The coming of the Lord will not be, rather, *a spectacular event*, which will not engage us in no way, but, contrariwise, will be *a capital event* for us and for the entire creation, on which we will feel it the deepest in our being.

At His coming, He will be *recognized* by His Saints, for that and the Lord *recognizes* His Saints<sup>780</sup>. But and the

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<sup>779</sup> SC 122, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 226-231, 235-238, p. 288, 290/ Idem, p. 157.

<sup>780</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 267-268, p. 292/ Idem, p. 158.

Saints *will recognize* one another, for that Christ *will dwell* in all the Saints<sup>781</sup>.

The books of conscience [αἱ βίβλοι τοῦ συνειδότος] will open<sup>782</sup> and from the being those who will be found with a holy life „*will shine* Christ God, the hidden now in them, as has shone, before of ages, from the Father, and the Saints will be like of the Most High. [...]

[For] if the Saints are like of God and they will know on God as much as God knew on them, and as the Father knows on the Son and the Son on the Father, all so must to see and to know each other and the Saints, nay even and those who have not ever seen in this world. [...]

For as the Father will never be deprived of the knowledge of the Son or the Son of the Father, all so nor the Saints, made gods through adoption...will never be deprived of the knowledge among themselves, but among themselves they will see their glory and of themselves, as the Son sees it on of the Father and the Father on of the Son<sup>783</sup>.

The eschatological symeonian perspective is, according as one can see, one of ghostual knowledge, of profound

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<sup>781</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 268-269, 271-272, p. 292/ Ibidem.

<sup>782</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 273, p. 292/ Idem, p. 158.

<sup>783</sup> Idem, The Ethical Discourses, I, 12, 285-287, 299-304, 307-312, p. 292, 294/ Idem, p. 159.

communion between Saints and God and among themselves.

*The consciousness of relation with God sees here the true value, for that only those who have a real communion, yet of here, of on earth, with God, will have part of His recognition, of the communion with all the Saints and of His glory forever. The ghostual life is our adaptation at the conditions of eternal life, our preparation for to be proper of eternal communion with God.*

Saint Symeon leads us, through his theology, at the abyssal understanding of the fact, that just the ghostual experience can give us *a real and total* gladness and fulfillment, which will not be lost through death, but will be potentiated overwhelming of much.

The postmodern world, which seeks totalising experiences and fulminant, which seeks a rapid knowledge and intensive of our existence, it can find in the symeonian theology *the profound sense of human fulfillment: the ghostual experience of eternal life, the eternal communion with our God, of all.*

### 3. The Receptation of the Theology of Glory in the Orthodox Space and the Importance of its Assuming in the Postmodern World

#### 3. 1. The Sight of God in the Theology of Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae

As to understand the contribution of Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae at the theology of glory of God we must leave from „the ontological aspect and personalist of grace”<sup>784</sup> in his theololgy, to the deep creases of his theological epistemology, which „is both holistic and relational. It includes both *the logical dimension of reason* implicit to the cataphatism, but and *the existential dimension* (experiential or participative) inherent to the apophatism”<sup>785</sup>. In the following we will concentrate the

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<sup>784</sup> Emil Bartoș, *The Concept of Deification in the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae* [Conceptul de îndumnezeire în teologia lui Dumitru Stăniloae], doctoral thesis, Pub. The Christian Book, Oradea, 2002, p. 414.

<sup>785</sup> Silviu Eugen Rogobete, *An Ontology of Love. Subject and Supreme Personal Reality in the Theological Thought of Father Dumitru Stăniloae* [O ontologie a iubirii. Subiect și Realitate Personală supremă în gândirea teologică a părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae], doctoral thesis, trans. by Anca Dumitrașcu and Adrian Guiu, coll. Plural Religion, Pub. Polirom, Iași, 2001, p. 86.

attention only toward *the last step* of mystical apophatism and namely toward *the sight of divine light*, although in his theology blends harmonious the cataphatism and the apophatism and only uniting them on these two, we can speak of an articulated theology of glory.

In OSAM II, 5, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, highlighting the steps of the apophatism speaks about *the divine darkness* described by Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, as about „*a too great abundance of light*”<sup>786</sup>.

Meditating at a text of Saint Gregory Palamas, Father Stăniloae finds that „the sight of the divine light is not *a negative theology*”<sup>787</sup> and that „of the sight of this light is vouchsafed only those like Moses, on when of the negative theology, any worshiper of God”<sup>788</sup>.

We have here *a prime distinction* between *the theology of glory* and the negative theology.

The theology of glory presupposes *the experience of the light* and its articulation *in cataphatic concepts*, anthropomorphic or perceived as such, on when the rational negative theology is *a conceptualization* of the ecstatic confessions or *a commentary* at the ecstatic descriptions of the Saints.

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<sup>786</sup> OSAM [The Orthodox Spirituality. Ascetica and Mystica] [Spiritualitatea ortodoxă. Ascetica și Mistica], ed. 1992, p. 196.

<sup>787</sup> Idem, p. 197.

<sup>788</sup> Idem, p. 199.

If in the frame of the theology of glory the source texts are created by those who *have experienced them* and are commented by those who *are congenial* with these, in the frame of negative theology do not exist *the source texts* created by its promoters, but the theologians from this branch make conjectures on the margin of the source texts created by Saints or by the theologians, which share, in reverent mode, the details of ecstatic theology and they are positioned *critical* or *indifferent* across from them.

The negative theology, says our author, is not *sight*<sup>789</sup>, but „*an anticipative icon of the sight of divine light*”<sup>790</sup>. Only when the mind is „ravished by God, passes beyond, at the sight of light”<sup>791</sup>.

He who sees the light does not enter into *an experiential vacuum*<sup>792</sup>, but he sees *the uncreated light* of God, having the conscience „that it cannot be contained in concepts and expressed in words”<sup>793</sup>, this in the first row and, in the second row, that the light comes from the being of God, „which remains *with all inaccessible* [to us], and that itself the accessible light remains *an infinite reserve* [of experienced]”<sup>794</sup>.

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<sup>789</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>790</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>791</sup> Idem, p. 201.

<sup>792</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>793</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>794</sup> Ibidem.

The light produces in us an „apophatic knowledge”<sup>795</sup> – for that the Holy Ghost „is *the head* of the trinitarian work turned towards the world”<sup>796</sup> – however, in the same time, „the divine light, seen in unintelligible face, remains and for hesychasm *a mystery*, which do not exclude, but implies the apophatism, without to let it only on this in vigor.

What distinguishes this apophatism of sight beyond sight of the light is the fact, that this apophatism is not a *vacuum*, but an overwhelming divine presence; and is not *an intellectual negation* and *a feeling on darkness* of the presence of God, but *an overwhelming experience* of this presence”<sup>797</sup>.

Father Professor Stăniloae highlights thus the fact, that the sight is *a presence of light* in us, that it brings *a divine knowledge* the one which sees it and *a profound communion* with God<sup>798</sup>.

With other words, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae *assumes* the theology

<sup>795</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>796</sup> Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Jesus Christ Pantocrator* [*Iisus Hristos Pantocrator*], op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>797</sup> OSAM, ed. 1992, p 201.

<sup>798</sup> Father Professor Ștefan Buchiu, commenting *the apophatic knowledge* at Father Stăniloae, wrote: „*The divine infinite knowledge* at which accedes the mind in ecstasy, give birth in the human subject at the sentiment of plenitude, of plenary joy, of an unending love”, acc. Rev. Doc. D. Th. Ștefan Buchiu, *The Apophatic Knowledge in the Thinking of Father Stăniloae* [*Cunoașterea apofatică în gândirea Părintelui Stăniloae*], Pub. Libra, Bucharest, 2002, p. 194.

of glory and considers it *an unique* personal event and *savior*.

The knowledge of light „is an eternal progress”<sup>799</sup>, continues his Holiness, and the experiencing of the light gives us the understanding „of absolute unknowability of divine being”<sup>800</sup>.

The experiencing of the light is *an understanding through communion* of the trinitarian God and the one who is full of light „becomes to himself and more full of mysteries, as a deified being, beyond nature, inspiring he himself a continuing self-amazement”<sup>801</sup>.

The sight of light deifies us on measure what fills us of a theological experiential understanding of the dogmas of faith.

The deification is *the foundation* of charismatic theology, of theology of sight, for that is, in the same time, an ontological reality, interior. The light *penetrates* in us and it *remains* in us and it is the one which *personalizes us continuous*, because disinfects us of the irrationality of passions<sup>802</sup>.

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<sup>799</sup> OSAM, ed. 1992, p. 210-202.

<sup>800</sup> Idem, p. 202.

<sup>801</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>802</sup> Father Professor Dumitru Popescu said, into a critical evaluation of Olivier Clément, that „the theology, the spirituality and the eastern ascetica...[considers the passions] *irrational beingly motions*, which alters not only the existence, but and the human ontology”, acc. Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Christ, Church, Society* [*Hristos, Biserică, Societate*], Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1998, p. 131.

In OSAM III, 2, Father Professor develops the discussion about ecstasy, describing *the ecstatic sight* right the event, which occurs *in the link full of love* between man and God<sup>803</sup>.

„God sends *His energy* in man”<sup>804</sup>, says Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, and this *divine energy*, „once communicated to man...it turns towards God, and in this its return, it dresses the form of the affection of human subject, awakened by the divine energy”<sup>805</sup>.

The sight takes place in the frame of personal relation between man and God and it provokes on man at a love and a greater communion with God.

The communion and the reciprocal love between man and God is the frame in which produces the event of ecstasy, for that the divine sight is „just *the smiling irradiation* of divine love”<sup>806</sup> in our being.

The evaluation of sight, on which makes it Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, is extreme of positive: „The light is simultaneously knowledge, and the light of knowledge is the fruit of love. But a light or a knowledge, which springs from love, which is not than an expression of the state of love, is, in the same time, life”<sup>807</sup>.

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<sup>803</sup> OSAM, ed. 1992, p. 260.

<sup>804</sup> Idem, p. 261.

<sup>805</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>806</sup> Idem, p. 280.

<sup>807</sup> Ibidem.

Discussing about *the role of mind* during of ecstasy, Father Professor says, that the mind no longer sees, in this moment, on himself, but it works only through the divine work<sup>808</sup>. The sight is the moment when we live „the love with which God loves us and we love Him”<sup>809</sup>.

Then we experience not an ephemeral love, bodily, possessive, but „an uncreated love, springing from the being of God”<sup>810</sup>.

The central role of ecstasy in our life is shown by Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae in that, that in the frame of sight of light, God gives us His work<sup>811</sup> for as to deify us.

*The exist of mind from itself*, which takes place in the frame of divine sight, is not ontological, he specifies, but is a union of the mind with the divine light<sup>812</sup>, on which he sees it *in himself* but and *beyond himself*<sup>813</sup>.

*The sight* of the divine light means „the supreme step of self-consciousness”<sup>814</sup> and the light of God „is spreading from soul in outside, on the face and on the body the one who *has it inwards*”<sup>815</sup>, deifying the entire being of its seer and luminating and on those who see him

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<sup>808</sup> Idem, p. 281.

<sup>809</sup> Idem, p. 283.

<sup>810</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>811</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>812</sup> Idem, p. 284.

<sup>813</sup> Idem, p. 285.

<sup>814</sup> Idem, p. 286.

<sup>815</sup> Idem, p. 289.

and maintain themselves at discussion with this.

The Saints Dionysius, Maximus, Gregory Palamas and Gregory of Nyssa appear in recurrent mode in the pages of the theology of glory of Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae.

Is observed over all *the personalist mode* of the theology of glory, on which his Holiness has developed it and the heat of communion and of beingly confession, plenary, on which educes it his theology to the one who reads it.

Is observable therefore, that Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae speaks *from within* of the theology of glory and not from outside it. This does not put under the sign of question *the mystical experiences* but he explains them on measure what he assimilates them.

In the introduction and in the commentaries which accompany the translation of the symeonian Hymns, Father Professor returns at the theme of ecstatic knowledge as and *personal communion*, through love, of the man with God. Speaking about *the impossibility* of transmission of proper experience through words<sup>816</sup>, Father

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<sup>816</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Personal Relation with Christ in the Light of Divine Infinity, after Saint Symeon the New Theologian* [Legătura personală cu Hristos în lumina infinității dumnezeiești, după Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog], in *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology Studies* [Studii de teologie dogmatică ortodoxă], op. cit, p. 310.

Professor prepares the ground for the presentation of our capital union with Christ, with the One who „has *the supreme sense or the richness of all senses* toward which tends the man”<sup>817</sup> and through Whom and into Whom „become and us the possessors of all senses, [ie] become gods after grace”<sup>818</sup>.

Therefore he identifies right *the central theme* of the symeonian Hymns *the light*, which irradiates from the person of the risen Christ<sup>819</sup>, saying that „*the sight* of the divine light does not depend...only of *its spread* through the body of Christ, but and of *the voluntary opening for/* toward it of the human persons”<sup>820</sup>. The opening towards the light of Christ means *ascesis* and *breaking* of the crust of the proper egoism<sup>821</sup>. *The absolute positivity* of sight in our life is seen and from the distinction on which our author makes it between the one which only *theorizes* and the one which *experiences it* at proper: „No the theoretician theologian *sees* the divine light and *unites* in love with Christ, but *the ghostual man or the Saint*, which was purified of passions, who has left the egoism and opens with the will toward the love of God and of fellowmen”<sup>822</sup>.

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<sup>817</sup> Idem, p. 312.

<sup>818</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>819</sup> Idem, p. 315.

<sup>820</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>821</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>822</sup> Ibidem.

Through this Father Professor shows that the ascesis is *the integrant part* from theology and that the ascesis, the cleaning of passions, is *the road* toward sight, toward the mystical experiences, mysterious, divine.

The sight of Christ's glory is, in the same time, *knowledge* and *an endless invitation* of deepening in knowledge, in the knowledge as *personal relation* with God: „In union with Christ, the man has the perspective of *an eternal advancement* in the divine light and in his spiritual enrichment.

For the light what is communicated to him from Christ is *the irradiation* of God's infinite being, which is unbounded. The man, as hypostasis of the human being, increases in its knowledge through the energies potential contained in it.

But when he unites with Christ comes from Him and the works or the energies of God's being, which is infinite. He feeds thus from all the divine content, from the infinity itself, from all what is created and uncreated”<sup>823</sup>.

The ecstatic sight is *an anticipation* of the Kingdom of God, where, „united with Him, we will be filled with all of light and all the universe will be in the Kingdom of Heavens a Kingdom of light, a Kingdom of light spread between the persons of the Holy Trinity and from Her

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<sup>823</sup> Idem, p. 316.

between the human persons united with Christ”<sup>824</sup>.

*The divine darkness*, repeats Father Professor, is the too much light which comes from God’s being<sup>825</sup>. At Saint Symeon the New Theologian does not exist „the obscure nights” of John of the Cross<sup>826</sup>, but only the joy of „*the size of divine light*”<sup>827</sup>, which overwhelmed on this.

His commentaries at Hymns show how much he was *familiarized* with *the flame of theology* of Saint Symeon. Over all Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae gives *righteousness* of Saint Symeon, *enthuses* of his words and sees in them *an accurate interpretation* of our faith.

In n. 239 at the Hymn 18, as to give a *single example* of correct evocation and enthusiastic of symeonian theology, Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae wrote:

„Into a time, when in Occident appeared the beginnings of Scholastica, which will pretend to *define rational* on God, in Orient was affirmed, through Symeon, in accentuated mode, *the union of knowledge with the conscience of the mystery* of God and, in general, of reality. It is the testimony of *a spiritual maturity*”<sup>828</sup>. And *the theological maturity*

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<sup>824</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>825</sup> Idem, p. 317.

<sup>826</sup> Hymns, the edition Stăniloae, n. 117, p. 366.

<sup>827</sup> Idem, n. 144, p. 375.

<sup>828</sup> Idem, n. 239, p. 413.

of Symeon, on which observed it Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae, consists just in that, that he does not *attempt* at the mystery of God's life and of living relation with Him, but he presents it right *the target* and *the fulfillment* of the entire humanity.

The sight of God is *the foundation* of salvation and of true joy, for that the eternal life is *a continuous deepening* in the sight and the understanding of the divine light.

In conclusion, we observed how our great theologian has appropriated, with much fidelity, the scriptural ecstatic terminology and on that of the Fathers, and he spoke *in the perimeter of sources*, without as to try to contradict them, but showing himself as one who has learned from them.

The theology of glory at Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae is *personalist* and *communional*, for that *the sight* means the knowledge and the love of God, through our cleaning of passions and through the wish of Him with all our being.

*The centrality of Christ* in our life means *our filling of light*, which flows from His person and the sight is *the preamble* of eternal life, where all *will be one* in the light of glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

### 3. 2. The Mystical Theology and its Receptation by the Orthodox Professor Vladimir Lossky

In the introductory study at romanian edition of archiknown book of Professor Vladimir Lossky, *Essai sur la Théologie Mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient*, Father Professor Vasile Răducă notes the fact, that Vladimir Lossky has demonstrated through this book, „that Theology cannot be separated of Mystica.

The theology is *the rational representation* of mystical experience, of the intimate living of the truth and of the divine mystery”<sup>829</sup>.

Appeared in 1944, this little mystical orthodox dogmatic wanted to restore the truth, how that the theology, in the measure in which „makes *the showing* of the divine mystery, so the data of Revelation, is *a mystical theology*”<sup>830</sup>.

Professor Vladimir Lossky observes very correct, that the Church, naming *its Theologians* the triad of the Saints John the Theologian, Gregory of Nazianzus and Symeon the New Theologian, showed that cannot do theology without mystica<sup>831</sup> and that the mystica is „*the*

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<sup>829</sup> Rev. Vasile Răducă, *Introductory study*, in MTEC [*The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*], p. 25.

<sup>830</sup> MTEC, p. 35.

<sup>831</sup> Idem, p. 37.

*peak of all theology...[or] the theology through excellency*"<sup>832</sup>.

Therefore, *the scope* of theology is *the deification*<sup>833</sup>, which does not mean *the stopping* at a certain stage of knowledge, but the continuous advancement towards God, towards the One who „is beyond of [all] what exists”<sup>834</sup>.

Emphasizing *the role* of mystical experience, our theologian shows, that Saint Dionysius the Areopagite has presented *the ascension towards sight* as on *a road* made through the cleansing of passions<sup>835</sup>.

Putting the equal sign between *apophatism* and *mystical experience*<sup>836</sup>, Professor Lossky speaks about *a personal experiencing* of God, Which is not living as *an object*<sup>837</sup>.

But our author, we believe, is situated *outside* of the truth of experience as such, then when conceives the mystical sight right *a union* with God, which does not mean and *His knowledge* in the same time<sup>838</sup>. As we have seen anterior, *the union* with the light, *the sight* of light, means of fact *the filling* of divine knowledge, of mystical theology.

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<sup>832</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>833</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>834</sup> Idem, p. 54.

<sup>835</sup> Idem, p. 56.

<sup>836</sup> Idem, p. 57.

<sup>837</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>838</sup> Ibidem. He says, literal: „God no longer appears *as object* [in ecstasy], whereas is no longer the word about *knowledge*, but of *union*”.

Evaluating the reality of ecstasy at Saint Dionysius, he says that this divine experience presupposes „*an exit* from the being as such”<sup>839</sup> and that Dionysius, in comparison with Plotinus, has a kindred theology with the scriptural<sup>840</sup>.

The theological cataphatism of the names of God speaks us about His energies, which descends to us<sup>841</sup> but „they do not approach us to His inaccessible being”<sup>842</sup>.

„The conscience of the inability of *to touch* on God”<sup>843</sup>, says Professor Vladimir Lossky, evaluating a fragment from *the Stromata* of Saint Clement of Alexandria, would not be *an appanage* of our mind, if we would not be *comforted* by grace<sup>844</sup>.

The conscience of *the uncognoscibility* of being of God means *a real meeting*, he says, with „*the personal God of Revelation*”<sup>845</sup>.

But the uncognoscibility of divine being does not temper *the fervent seeking* of believers to see God, of to see His glory. The sight of His glory means *the abyssal conscientization* of the uncognoscibility of His being, but and of the infinity of knowledge, on which presupposes it the sight of divine light.

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<sup>839</sup> Idem, p. 60.

<sup>840</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>841</sup> Idem, p. 62.

<sup>842</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>843</sup> Idem, p. 63.

<sup>844</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>845</sup> Ibidem.

Wondering, if not perchance *the radical apophatism* of the Fathers refers only at *a theology of ecstasy*<sup>846</sup>, Professor Lossky reaches, again, at a conclusion *outside* of mystical experience, speaking about apophatism as about „*a disposition of mind, who refuses to form concepts about God*”<sup>847</sup>.

Is observed that Vladimir Lossky wanted *to remove* the theology from the sphere of a rationalist understanding and fractional of academic approach, however not on the base of personal experience eminently mystical, but, more, through the intermedium of the theological concepts pretaken orthodox.

But *the concepts* about God is *shattered* through the ecstatic experience, for that the mind which has not seen the light does not know that thinks *absolute hilarious*, fanciful about God.

*The killing* of the idols of the mind is made through *the sight* of divine light. But our author *gives priority* of negative theology in the detriment of sight, for that, he says: „the negative theology is not just *a theory* [theorizing] of ecstasy itself, but is the expression of that fundamental attitude, which makes from theology, in general, *a contemplation* of the mysteries of Revelation”<sup>848</sup>. Remaining in large part *the prisoner* of

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<sup>846</sup> Idem, p. 65-66.

<sup>847</sup> Idem, p. 67.

<sup>848</sup> Idem, p. 70.

the occidental approach of mystical experience, in which the negative theology does not mean *sight* but *an utopian corrective* of imagination, Professor Vladimir Lossky gives us the impression that *replaces*, sometimes, *the ghostual experience* in the theological approach with *the rationalist approach*, sentimental at the life and the dogmas of the Church.

We understand, however, fairly trenchant from his pleading, that our author wishes to see in apophatism *an expression of ghostual knowledge* and that „the apophatic principle of theology”<sup>849</sup> is for this *a limitation* of the rationalization of God, of the impetus of *to replace* „on God through *the idols about God*”<sup>850</sup>.

The 2nd chapter from book ends with the glorious affirmation and correct of the fact that our God is *the Holy Trinity* and not „the impersonal God of the philosophers”<sup>851</sup>.

The triadology on which our author highlights it in evidence has the declared scope, of *to specify* the relation between the trinitarian God and the faithful man: „*the happiness* of the Kingdom of Heavens is not *a sight of being* [of God], but, first of all, is *the participation* at the divine life of the Holy Trinity”<sup>852</sup>. On the idea of *participation at God* will focus and

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<sup>849</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>850</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>851</sup> Idem, p. 72.

<sup>852</sup> Idem, p. 93.

the 4th chapter, which treats *the reality* of divine uncreated energies.

Starting from the affirmation, that the trinitarian theology asks „*a impartation* from what in what more intimate of human person with the God-Trinity”<sup>853</sup>, the author speaks about *the paradox* „of accessibility at [the divine] nature, which is inaccessible”<sup>854</sup>.

*The participation at the divine nature*, stipulated by II Pet. 1, 4, represents just *the foundation of deification*, for that „*the being* of God or His *nature* proper-said...is inaccessible, uncognoscible, uncommunicable...[on when, through] *the energies* or *the divine works*, ie those natural powers and inseparable of being, in [through] which God proceeds outside, He shows, communicates, gives”<sup>855</sup> on Himself.

Our theologian attracts the attention of its readers, that in the Orthodox Church „*the presence* of God in His energies...[is] understood *in realistic sense*”<sup>856</sup>. The energies that come from God *are not created*, but „are *the overflows* of divine nature”<sup>857</sup>. They come out *from* the nature of God, „without *to separate of it* in this procession, which makes it *known*”<sup>858</sup>.

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<sup>853</sup> Idem, p. 97.

<sup>854</sup> Idem, p. 98-99.

<sup>855</sup> Idem, p. 100.

<sup>856</sup> Idem, p. 102.

<sup>857</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>858</sup> Idem, p. 103.

*To make the experience of uncreated energies of God means to see the light, for „He is fully present in every ray of His deity”<sup>859</sup>.*

From this motive, in the chapter dedicated to the deification (chap. 10), our theologian sees *the scope* of the entire christian life and of virtues, as being *the interior acquirement of grace*<sup>860</sup>, that „fixation in good”<sup>861</sup> of our interiority.

*The grace is not a recompense for merits*<sup>862</sup>, says he, but „o presence of God in us, which asks, fom our part, *steadfast endeavors*. [But]...these endeavors *does not determine*, not in the least, the grace, nor the grace does not move our freedom as a power what would be *foreign*”<sup>863</sup>.

All the preparation for to speak *about sight* at Professor Vladimir Lossky begins with the discussion *about prayer*, which is seen as the interior space, in which occurs *the union with God*<sup>864</sup>.

*The role of prayer is that of interior passage towards the sight of God, for that, „on a certain stage, when leaves the soul sphere, in which the mind is in motion, all motion ceases, the prayer ceases and*

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<sup>859</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>860</sup> Idem, p. 228.

<sup>861</sup> Rev. Marc-Antoine Costa de Beauregard, *Pray Without Ceasing!* [*Rugați-vă neîncetat!*], trans. from french language by Rodica Buga and Rev. Prof. Nicolai Buga, Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1998, p. 271.

<sup>862</sup> MTEC, p. 228.

<sup>863</sup> Idem, p. 229.

<sup>864</sup> Idem, p. 236.

it”<sup>865</sup> and takes place *the rapture of mind*<sup>866</sup>.

In ecstasy, the man no longer belongs, but *he is led* by the Holy Ghost<sup>867</sup>. Appealing at the symeonian theology, our author speaks and him about ecstasies as about the personal events on which live *the beginners* and not *the perfect*<sup>868</sup>.

He appeals, both, at *the paradigm of Tabor*, for to speak about *sight*, but and at that of Lord’s tomb in the Resurrection day, as and the Holy Fathers of Church<sup>869</sup>.

Our inghostualization gives us the capacity *of to see* the light of God<sup>870</sup>. And *the sight* does not occur into a state of *unconsciousness* and *of its interior elusiveness*, for that „*the callousness in the inlying life is an abnormal state*”<sup>871</sup>.

The sight is *a plenary state*, refelt in fundamental mode by us, for that „the divine light appears here, in world, in time”<sup>872</sup>, but is „the beginning of Parusia in the holy souls, the beginning of discoveries from end, when God will show all in His unapproachable light”<sup>873</sup>. Professor Vladimir Lossky *catches* very

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<sup>865</sup> Idem, p. 237.

<sup>866</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>867</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>868</sup> Idem, p. 238.

<sup>869</sup> Idem, p. 252.

<sup>870</sup> Idem, p. 253.

<sup>871</sup> Idem, p. 254.

<sup>872</sup> Idem, p. 261.

<sup>873</sup> Ibidem.

well in his theology *the eschatological dimension of ecstasy*, but and the eschatological dimension of *transfiguration of the world* through the divine light: „The bodies of the Saints *will make the same* with the glorified body of the Lord, as shown to the Apostles in the day of the Change at face. God will be all in all and the divine grace, the light of the Holy Trinity will shine in the crowd of the human hypostases, in all those who have acquired it and which will be make as some *new suns* in the Kingdom of the Father, like the Son, transformed by the Holy Ghost, the Giver of light”<sup>874</sup>.

*The acquirement* of grace, as its interior feeling and the sight of God, are

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<sup>874</sup> Idem, p. 263-264. Father Professor Dumitru Popescu, into an article dedicated of *the centrality of Christ* in theology and in the life of all creation, put a pressed accent on the reality of *interior rationality* of creation and on *its interior dynamism*.

Therefore, said this: „The most efficient path for *the undermining* of the centrality of Christ consists in *the negation* of the interior rationality of creation. [...] The orthodox theology, influenced by scholasticism and aristotelianism, commits a *grave error* then, when identifies *the shape* of things and of beings with *their exterior appearance*, as and how God would be a Sculptor, which is concerned only of *the exterior form* and *unchangeable* of the statue on which he forms it”, and not and of its interiority, acc. Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Centrality of Christ in the Contemporaneous Orthodox Theology* [Centralitatea lui Hristos în teologia ortodoxă contemporană], in *The Orthodoxy* [Ortodoxia] LIII (2002), no. 3-4, p. 14, 15.

In the measure in which *is denied* the interiority of relation of God with the man and with the entire creation, through the divine grace, the deification of man and of creation *is not possible*.

at our theologian *itself the content* of personal holiness.

Only from *the perspective of experience*, he says, can be understand *the dogmas*<sup>875</sup>, and „*the measure of personal exaltation of each*”<sup>876</sup> is that, which determines the theology on which we write it. The theology, for that is, first of all, *experimental understanding* of the life of God, is *the personal dynamism* of our life and represents the level of real communion of us with God.

In conclusion, with his small *sideslips* from the sphere of understanding of ecstatic experience, the theology of Professor Vladimir Lossky reactualises *the need* of a theological writing based on *personal experience* and reminds us that the theology cannot be otherwise *than mystical*, than personal.

Our author shows *faithful* of the triadology of the Scripture and of the Fathers and tells us that *the living God* of the Church is the God, Which comes down, through His energies, until at us, as to deify us and lift us up to Him.

The sight of God is *a ghostual reality* in his theology, a reality which appears in people's lives which cleanse of sins and represents the experience in advance, before of time, of the glory of the eighth day.

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<sup>875</sup> Idem, p. 267.

<sup>876</sup> Idem, p. 277.

### 3. 3. The Interior Dissolution of the Man in Postmodernity and the Consequences of Personal Assuming of the Theology of Glory

In our entire theological pleading of until now, we showed, in essence, that *the ghostual man* and *the seer* of the glory of the Trinity is the man, which personalizes continuous in his relation of great communion with God and that the interior life is *unitary one* at the orthodox christian, which inghostualises, in Church.

The one who *assumes* the theology of glory, the one who goes towards the knowledge what more personal with God, through his cleaning of passions, cannot be than a man, which has *eradicated* in his being „*the opposition* between the sensible world and the intelligible world”<sup>877</sup>, this *presupposes opposition* between body and soul or between man and the glory of Trinity, on which the postmodern ideology recognizes it as on de facto existence.

For Father Professor Dumitru Popescu *the elimination* from our thinking of this opposition between sensible and intelligible means *an abolition* of the shaky foundation of the

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<sup>877</sup> Rev. Prof. Acad. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Jesus Christ Pantocrator [Iisus Hristos Pantocrator]*, op. cit., p. 30.

phenomenon of secularization<sup>878</sup>, which is *the anti-theology* of postmodernity, for that „*estranges the man increasingly of God and transforms him in the prisoner of autonomous material world*”<sup>879</sup>.

His Holiness, seeing the current situation of the postmodern world right a *consequence* of the dehumanizing divorce between God and man in modernity, speaks of *three major mutations*<sup>880</sup>, on which the postmodernity *has inherited* and *has continued* from the sphere of thinking of modernity.

*The first mutation* which this emphasizes it is that *of transferring* of the center of gravity of the world from God at man<sup>881</sup>, fact for which the man *is centered* on its proper interests and closes in himself, is seen as *an autonomous being* in his reports with God, eliminates from his life *any recurrence* at eternity and considers „the will of God, as a kind of *attempt* against of his proper freedom”<sup>882</sup>.

*The second major mutation* is the *artificial separation* between the public life and the private<sup>883</sup>, where the ghostual

<sup>878</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>879</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>880</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Man Without Roots* [Omul fără rădăcini], op. cit, p. 11.

<sup>881</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>882</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>883</sup> Idem, p. 12.

To see and Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *The Orthodoxy and Europe* [Ortodoxia și Europa], in *The Orthodoxy* [Ortodoxia] LVI (2005), no. 3-4, p. 3: „the secularized culture is based on *the radical separation* between the public domain and the private”.

life is *pushed* and *closed* in the sphere of private life and is not permitted to *penetrate* the social life, as personal mode of thinking, what follows of our communion with God. Preponderancing the political interests, economical, financial and of advertising in the public sphere, the interests of *mondaine life* into a word, the religious life is always *disturbed* as long as it reaches, in positive mode, in the forefront of the mass-media.

A *third mutation* on which Father Popescu highlights it is that, that the man becomes *the discretionary master* of the world<sup>884</sup>, which *exploits chaotic* his internal resources and external, being, on the one part, the one who provokes and deepens his proper profound crises of personality and, on the other part, being the one who *spoils the equilibrium* of creation through stunning economical and technological performances, but which provokes, from sins, climatological disorders of planetary proportions.

*The closing* of God in heaven, into a transcendence which does not interest us<sup>885</sup> or *the abolition* of God as *dynamising factor* of human life, makes as the man, which is *tributary* of post-modern ideology, to be into a continuous *deparasitation of self* and *sinking* of him in the life more or less *illusory* of the moment.

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<sup>884</sup> Idem, p. 13.

<sup>885</sup> Idem, p. 15.

The moment of now, the trice, its ephemerality lived sensualist and egoistical in the same time *is preferred* to a life conscientized *as relation* with God and *as personal assuming* of history, for to be *transfigured* in our person.

*The conceitedness* of the post-modern, concretized in that, that we are *the biggest manipulators* of information of until now, for that we are *the most advanced technological*, is manifests, in parallel, with a humanism of nihilistic essence and atheistic, which does not see in man than *a tool of work*, which is *beneficial* to society only in the measure in which *is exhausted* in the benefit of a new technological discovery or of the growth of economic profitability and which is remunerated only for his motric force or for the special efficiency of his neuronal capacities.

The man is seen as *a complex structure* just from anatomic point of view, which is in course of complete knowledge from scientific point of view, as a summum of diseases, of psychoses, of necessities, which will be satisfied, is *a patibulaire* being, proscribed, when exits from the rigid system of the humanism without man and *an insignificant number* as long as is not *a factor of decision* in the actual society.

*The depths* of the man are *censored* and *methodical extirpated* from the secular discourse or they are *stolen* to the

ghostual life and appear right *constitutive elements* for the foils of novel, for the area of a piece of theater or for an advertising generating of a guaranteed profit.

However in culture and art *the bottomless depths* of man are populated only by subliminal monsters, on when, in philosophy and science, the soul is *an enigma* preferable at the level of intellection, but not and at that of *personal recordation* at the life of God.

For that does not give two coins on *the ghostual necessities* of the soul and of the man in his totality, because the interior life is *despised* in postmodernity, the postmodern overplayings the education and the professional preparation, as biographical landmarks of self-standing and he prefers, in the exchange of these, *the retardation or the ghostual backwardness and emotional*, staking on the accumulation of disparate dates, against of his growth in wisdom, of obtaining of the interior equilibrium and of deepening in holiness.

Is preferred, into a word, the identitary discourse based on *a minimal anthropology*, of spontaneous origin, is eulogized, into an exasperating mode, a man who *comes from nowhere* and is driven *chaotic and extremist* in life, but, of most of the time, is not found *something interesting*, in paradoxical mode, into *a maximal anthropology*,

which sees in man a creation *made by* God, from love and *for to be fulfilled* in love, into a responsible life and full of transfiguration, into *a holy life*.

The concept of *life as a jungle* masters the frivolity and the incoherence of deepness of the autonomous post-modern, makes him to be, in false mode, *a dynamic* man and good-willing, with charisma and projects of life, but which do not have nor *the seal* of the grace and nor the dimension of *eternal fulfillment*.

Into a schizophrenic mode, the postmodern *without roots* lives *an active life*, which empties him of enthusiasm and removes him, of most of the time, of the natal places and of his proper family or *a life of the experiment*, extremist of most of the time, in which the violence and the lubricity sends him, always, towards underground zones, occult.

Having in its substance *the nihilism*, as method of intellection and *the deconstruction* as primordial stake, on which is founded always *the new conception* about man, world and existence, the postmodernity refuses to receive *lessons* from history, considers that it *can unravel by itself* and prefers to be *indifferent* or *false traumatized*, panicky traumatized of future into much that to fantasize about him into a depersonalized mode.

If the postmodernity *and could translate* until end the conception about man and existence, from its gnoseologic

mythology in fact, in reality, the future would not have neither any *alternative gods*, the man would transformed into a *performant robot* of a post-human epoch, which would no longer have no christian impress and no identity conscience.

The futurological milenarism of postmodernity, the myth of *perennial happiness* on the face of an earth untransfigured by grace, but full of an architechnologised life and ultra-performant, beats head in head with a future imagined as *unchaining* of energies, as a maladive territory of the anarchism and as a negation of any gnoseology or of personal praxeology.

*The black future*, horror, of *post-humanity* of after postmodernity is *the final vision* of this world, a secular eschatology, which has nothing to do with the perpetuation of life and nor with its everlastingness.

But turning us back in the present, where *we recant* of communism and we opt, more or less energetic, for a *capitalist era* in Romania, we are put in the face of the fact *to analyze lucid* the two ethoses of social life from orthodox perspective.

Thus, the communist ethos of life, which „tends *to sink* the man in the anonymous mass of nature and to speak

of equality”<sup>886</sup>, of a equality which depreciates the personal choice and the human dignity, is an ethos of that we want *to rid*, although it went deep *under skin*, and we live the pathetic fervor of a future capitalist, on which we do not critical review and „which tends *to raise* the individual above nature and to speak *of liberty*”<sup>887</sup>, understood into a discretionary mode and egocentric.

But, says Father Professor Dumitru Popescu, both ideologies, and the one that we want to separate and the one that we want to appropriate, are *impersonal ideologies*<sup>888</sup>, which do not unify interior on man, for that „puts both the freedom but and the equality, *above* the man and of society, as to dominate and to orient the society towards the earthly world, into a total indifference to the heavenly one”<sup>889</sup>. The orthodox perspective upon the world and of man *transpires* from the Holy Scripture and from the Holy and the uninterrupted charismatic Tradition of the Church and makes us to constate, „that are not *important* for us nor the equality and nor the liberty, but *the communion* or *the personal relations* between men”<sup>890</sup>.

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<sup>886</sup> Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Popescu, *Christ, Church, Society* [*Hristos, Biserică, Societate*], op. cit, p. 90.

<sup>887</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>888</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>889</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>890</sup> Ibidem.

*The impersonalism* of the political ideologies cannot integrate in *the communal dimension* of the Church, where the experimental knowledge of the life of God, the impartation of the glory of God makes us to be *proper* of some relations of real communion between us.

The authentic relation with God is the foundation of *real perception* of the human condition, of existence in its ensemble and is the mode through which we obtain an interior clarification over *the blessed future* of humanity, of the future from the perspective of its Creator.

The false dilemma between *the preeminence* of equality or of liberty is seen in that, that in the measure in which we dissolve *the reality* of communion inter-human, *ridding us* of the ecclesial communion and of interior relations and direct of the Church with the Holy Trinity, „both the liberty, but and the equality...[cannot approach us], as long as they are thought *in themselves*.

[For that] *the true liberty* cannot be achieved through the unlimited development of proper powers and wealth, because the human being is not made for *the individualistic autonomy* and for *the frantic course* for material goods, which leads at soulish vacuum and grave social inequalities, but for *communion* and *love*.

And nor *the simple searching* of equality cannot create *the social righteousness*, because this is not accom-

plished through terror and deprivation of liberty, but just *in the reciprocal communion*, in which each gives the other listening and love, for to become thus *man of humanity*<sup>891</sup>.

In the face of the postmodern ideology, the Orthodox Church is not at all *in failure of ideas* and nor it feels that is made to it *a serious competition* to its ontological project from always, that of the deification of the man.

*The sight of God*, being *the foundation* of deification of the man, gives us to understand the fact, that the theology of glory, on which we analyzed in this book, is *the personal solution* of the orthodox christian, through which does not live in his life the danger of *secularization* and nor on that of *relativization* of ghostual life.

The orthodox christian, which makes from his life *an ontological project* of the continuous depassioning, which cleanses and lives *the personal revelation* of Trinity's glory in his life and deepens in the life of holiness of the Church of God, he lives the communion with the Trinity, with those of a being with himself and with the entire cosmos in Church into a personal mode and enthusiastic, as a son of resurrection and of eternity, which lives *on earth* and *in heaven* in the same time and not as a man submerged in the quagmire of history,

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<sup>891</sup> Idem, p. 91.

which is led of the fashion of the time and is exhausted by projects of life, which splits you up interior and does not unify you.

*The mystical life or the theology of glory*, the savior deep of orthodox churchly life, is the reach of any orthodox christian in Church, for that each of us can understand and to love on the trinitarian God in personal mode, at our ghostual level, through the direct experiencing of Trinity's glory, both through the personal prayer, through the receiving of the Holy Mysteries, but and through our entire life of communion and of loving facts of faith.

The orthodox triadology cannot be understood in accurate mode without *the uncreated grace* of which we impart in different modes in Church and nor can we understand personal *the interior unity* of the persons of Trinity and nor *the relation of communion* with the Trinity, without *the personal revelation* of His glory, received as a *gift* of His love for us.

Nor the christology and nor the pneumatology of Church do not have *an interior reality* for us, as long as we do not live *together with* Christ and with the Ghost in our being, as we do not see *the oikonomia* of Christ and of the Ghost as a reality on which we live it effective and nor the Holy Mysteries of Church, the Holy Liturgy, the prayer, the works of almsgiving, the services of Church, the

books of Scripture and of the Fathers cannot be *seised* interior, without as the glory of Trinity to flood us on full.

The personal soteriology is an interesting philosophy, on which we can accumulate it, from *notional* point of view, very easy, but it has *no link* with us, no interior link with our life, as long as we do not understand from ourselves that, without *the grace* of God, the the faith and our acts have no *transforming* sense, transfiguring and if we do not feel, that our premaking of day with day is a reality shattering of beautiful and of perplexing, which makes us ceaseless praise on God, for His mercy with us.

*The dynamism* of angelology, of sanctology, of mariology and of the orthodox culte becomes for us *the personal dynamism* in the frame of the theology of glory, in the measure in which our life is *a communion* with the Saints, lived plenary and, in the same time, is *an assuming* of the entire existence in prayer, for which we come to shed tears for any human drama and even for adjudicated unhappiness of the demons, but and to rejoice for any repentance, wonder and beauty of God.

The orthodox eschatology, as entry of creation in eternity, through its full pneumatization, refinds its beginning in the theology of glory, where *the sight* of divine light, yet from this life, means the

actualised living of eschatology, of eternal life.

The deification of the man, as ontological road, ascetical and ecclesial, as and the sight of God, an integrated part of this interior divine-human process, gains *the capital importance* for our life, if we look to them *from future towards present* or, better said, *from eternity towards our present life*.

The existential project of the Church, being one *of eternal advancement in good*, in the communion with God and with the entire existence, being the project *of absolute fulfillment* of man, cannot be *devanced* by any other project of life and nor can it be *subsumed* to other.

Therefore, in conclusion, *the consequences* of personal assuming of the theology of glory are *the interior human fulfillment*, manifested as interior unity of soul and of body, as integral deification of the man and the living of a state of continuous divine enthusiasm, which does not end once with the death, but he enters, once with it, into a process of eternal acceleration of personal perfection.

The theology of glory is *the experimental knowledge* of the dogmas of the Church, of the culte, of the entire traject of the Church, of the man and of the cosmos in its integrality.

Without *the personal experience* of the sight and of the glory of God, all what we call *churchly life* has a static character, distant, impersonal.

## Final Conclusions

Our doctoral thesis, bearing the title: *The Sight of God in the Theology of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, has debated, in three distinct chapters, from dogmatic point of view and, in synthetic mode, the problem of *the sight of God* in orthodox theology and, with precedence, in the theology of Saint Symeon the New Theologian.

In the first chapter, entitled *The Biblical and Patristic Premises of the Deification of the Man and of the Sight of God in the Orthodox Theology* [p. 10-45], we have presented *the role* of the divine Logos, as Pantocrator of the entire creation.

For that the Logos of the Father is the Creator of the world and for that He is present *from beginning* in world and He sustains and He comprises all things through His uncreated energies, therefore the creation has a rational foundation and spiritual.

We can talk about *a real relation* with God and about *the sight* of the glory of God, only starting from the three biblical and patristic fundamental premises, which are *fundamental* in the experience and the orthodox theology: 1. the divine Logos [p. 12-25]: 2. the rational and spiritual foundation of the world [p.

26-35] and 3. the uncreated energies [p. 36-45].

These three premises have been debated in distinct mode in our work, but they have been seen, in continuous mode, as interdependent and as fundamental starting point towards the debate of experience and of theology of Saint Symeon the New Theologian.

Because, only when we see the entire creation as *work* of the divine Logos, entirely rational and filled of *the source of life* of the uncreated energies of the Most Holy Trinity, we can understand, that *the scope* of our life is *the deification through grace* and the sight of God is the direct experiencing and real of His everlasting light.

The second chapter of thesis – the one that has been the subject, as such, of our doctoral research – bears the title: *The Sight of God at Saint Symeon the New Theologian and its Implications in the Personal Salvation* [p. 46-419] and is formed, outside the introductory subchapter, concerning the symeonian ecstatic terminology [p. 46-76], on the fundamental levels of an Orthodox Dogmatic: 1. Triadology [p. 77-107]; 2. Christology [p. 108-133]; 3. Pnevmatology [p. 134-194]; 4. Soteriology [p. 195-279]; 5. Sacramentology [p. 280-380]; 6. Ecclesiology [381-399] and 7. Eschatology [400-419].

For that Saint Symeon is not a *systematic author* in all theological problems discussed here, our personal effort has consisted in *the systematization* and *the synthesising* of theological problematic discussed.

We have systematized and compressed greatly theological material, for to reproduce, as we could of clear, the experience and his mystical theology.

In our research made at the level of the ecstatic terminology we have concluded the fact, that Saint Symeon *uses scriptural* and *patristic expressions*, for to describe his ecstasies, but and *some personal*, staking on percussive images.

In triadology, Saint Symeon speaks about *the relations* of love and of communion between the persons of the Holy Trinity, he defends *the unknowability* of being of the Holy Trinity, but he teaches, that we can impart, in the ecstatic sight, of His glory, on our personal measure.

The triadology is not *the produce* of human cogitation, but the Son *discovered to us*, in the frame of the oikonomia of salvation, that God is *Trinity of persons*: Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

The Son is born of the Father and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, without to exist any anteriority between the persons of Trinity or rapports of subordination of the divine persons between Them.

The one who sees on Christ in ecstasy, he sees, along with He, and on the Holy Ghost, and Both bring him at the Father, the ecstasy not being something else, than *the lift* and *our inclusion* in the frame of the eternal communion of the Most Holy Trinity.

In christology, Saint Symeon emphasizes *the centrality* of Christ's presence in the mystical experience, but and *the interior link* between the Son and the Holy Ghost in the ghostual experience.

For as we know on Christ, says us Symeon, *we must live* the birth, the death, the resurrection and His ascension at heaven, in real mode, through *the sight* of His glory, the thing which escapes us of a pietist perspective and of the exterior imitation of His life.

Christ is made known to us *on the measure* of our ghostual growth and, through the sight of His glory, He reveals to us and teaches us the ones about Himself.

The christological realism of the symeonian theology consists in that, that we see, in real mode, in the divine sight, *on Christ*, on the Pantocrator of the entire creation and not in idealistic mode, as a desideratum, which is not fulfilled ever.

Our real relation with Christ does not make Him to be *captive* of our subjectivity but, contrariwise, He escapes

us of *loneliness* and of *unloving*, for that He introduces and us, through the Holy Ghost, in the too-divine mystery of His life.

In pnevmatology, Symeon puts at the foundation of the ortodox life *the conscious feeling* of the divine grace and he considers *the sight* of God right a sight, through the Holy Ghost, *of the glory* of the Most Holy Trinity.

From the ecstatic descriptions of Saint Symeon and of his apprentice is observed, that the ecstasy is, at Symeon, *a descend* of the divine light in our being, for as *to ascend us* at God and *to open us* to the continuous relation with the trinitarian God.

Without *this initiative* from the part of God, which is *the divine ecstasy*, we do not have *the exact knowledge* of which may be experienced from the glory of God.

Through the Holy Ghost, we come to see something from *the glory of God's glory*, as says Symeon, on our personal measure and *the ecstasy* is seen as *conscious beginning/ conscientized* of the process of personal deification.

In soteriology, our Father orders the discussion about the personal salvation, under the form of these three classic stairs of salvation and of our sanctification: *the depassioning*, *the unpassion* and *the deification*.

*The point of departure* on the path of personal deification is *the first ecstasy* on which we have it. *The depassioning* or *the cleaning of passions* means, in the same time, the fulfilment of all divine commandments and the acquirement of the holy virtues.

Saint Symeon speaks about a *unpassion of the soul* and of other of *the body*, the unpassion of the soul being assured by the sight of Trinity's glory.

Our deification is, for Symeon, the state in which we see the glory of God *in continuous mode*, it living not only *in our soul* but and *in the entire body*, through the Holy Ghost, each member of our becoming *the hallowed member* of Christ. Therefore he speaks, in maximal mode, about salvation, putting the equal sign between *salvation* and *holiness*.

In sacramentology, Saint Symeon reports at the Holy Mysteries of the Church as at *the sacramental channels*, instituted by Christ, through which *flows into us* the life of the Trinity.

The Baptism is seen by Symeon as *the sacramental gate* through which we enter in Church and which stays at the base of ulterior divine sight.

Holy Eucharist is *the beingly impartation* of the humanity and of the divinity of Christ, Symeon showing, in the extensive mode, that this *union* with the eucharistic Christ must lived in plenary mode by us and that it has

overwhelming consequences in the divine-human process of personal deification.

The Confession restores *our link* with Christ, ruptured by sin and it must give us *the feeling of the forgiveness* of our sins.

The Priesthood and the Matrimony are seen as *sacramental unions* with Christ God, the Church and the family being *the environments* in which God works in mystic mode.

In ecclesiology, Saint Symeon presents the Church from the perspective of the life of those Saints, which form *the mystical body* of Christ.

He approaches the ecclesiological problematic *from eschatological perspective*, seeing the Church *in full forming*, until when will be fulfilled *the number* of Saints preknown by God and God will reveal it, to all, in eternity.

The Saints *is formed here*, in the frame of Church and they will inherit the Kingdom of God, which will be *the Church of all His Saints*.

From symeonian perspective, if each believer of the Church *would be recorded* at the life of Trinity, in real mode, and he would want *to deify himself*, then would not exist the danger of secularization and nor the one of the relativization of ghostual life.

In eschatology, Saint Symeon presents, as happening in concomitant

mode, *the coming of the Lord and the transfiguration of the entire creation*, through the glory that irradiates from His body, and, after the final Judgment, the chorus of the Saints will form *a single chorus* with the one of the heavenly Powers, praising and seeing forever the Trinity's glory.

The sight of God is presented in this frame as an experiencing *of the coming of Christ to us* and as *a preparation* for the existential mode which we will have it, as transfigured beings, in His Kingdom.

The eternal life *will highlight*, in pregnant mode, *the importance* on which has it the sight of God in the life of the believers, for that the eternal life happy means *the continuous sight* of the unspeakable glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

Synthesizing *the themes* of the symeonian theology, of the third Theologian, through excellency, of the Church, alongside Saint John The Evangelist and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, we can say that they *are fully* scriptural and patristic, he accentuating *the presence* of God in creation, through His uncreated energies and *the divine-human trajectory* of man's deification and of the transfiguration of the entire creation, which has rational foundation and spiritual.

The theology of Saint Symeon is constructed, in fundamental mode, *on the centrality* of the person of Christ in the ghostual life, seen in the frame of the interior link between Christ and the Holy Ghost and it has in prime-plan the thorough discussion about *the sight of God*, on the base of personal experience.

Considering the theology as *foundation* of the orthodox spirituality and the spirituality as *experience* of the theology, Saint Symeon talked about the sight of God as *relation* and *conscious communion* with the trinitarian God.

But his mystical experiences, Symeon expressed them in paradoxical terms, the sight of Trinity's light being confessed, in concomitant mode, right *a descent* of uncreated divine light to us for *to ascend us* at the eternal communion with the Most Holy Trinity.

Reiterating often *the reality* of the divine sight in his books, Saint Symeon has specified, in continuous mode, that the ecstasy is not *a closing* of the man in his proper subjectivity and nor *an escape from self* into an impersonal reality, through the uncreated light, in the communion with the trinitarian God.

Putting accent on *the voluntary opening* of the believer towards God, through our cleaning of passions and through a fervent ecclesial life, lived *in the rhythm* of the Saint Liturgy and of *obedience* to a ghostual Father, Saint

Symeon was for his century *an authentic apologist* against the devastating tendencies of secularization in the life of Church and of society.

Accentuating *the importance* of ecclesial ghostual experience in our life, Saint Symeon defended *the relation* of love and of deep communion of the faithful with the trinitarian God, but and *the true reporting* of us, filled of love and of brotherhood, *as real membres* of the same mystical body of Christ.

But all his apology, for the cleaning of passions and for the sight of God, had *eschatological orientation*, for that not only the man but the entire creation *will be transfigured*, through the glory which will irradiate from the person of Christ, then when He will come to judge the world with righteousness.

Symeon does not see *a separation* between history and eternity, nor *an antagonism* between the body and the soul of man, he does not consider the matter as being *opaque* the grace but transparent to it and destined to transfiguration, his theology being *a maximalist one* and full of optimism and escatological dynamism.

Therefore we believe that the importance of symeonian theology for the contemporary world is considerable of great, for that he puts at the foundation of the orthodox life *the ghostual experience* and *the real communion* with

the trinitarian God through His grace, which *escapes us* of the secularization and of the moral relativism, of the dualism between sensible and intelligible, of the closing in our subjectivity and of pantheism.

For that we cannot get out from *the closed circle* of the proper passions and nor can we to find *the real rationality*, than through the person of Christ, the Creator Logos and Saviour of the entire creation.

The third chapter of our thesis, which bears the title: *The Receptation of the Theology of Glory in the Orthodox Space and the Importance of its Assuming in the Postmodern World* [p. 420-455] has three subchapters.

The first two presents [1] the theology of the sight of God at Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae [p. 420-431] and respective [2] the receptation of the mystical theology by the professor and the russian theologian Vladimir Lossky [p. 432-441].

The third subchapter discusses, on the base of theological synthesis of Father Professor Dumitru Popescu, the sideslips of postmodernity and the ideologies which *undervalue* on man and decreed *the absence* of God from creation [p. 442-455].

Father Professor Dumitru Stăniloae has reactualised, like none other in the

orthodox space, a theology of glory or of the mystical sight, on biblical line and patristic, with the specific and in the traditional ecstatic terminology.

He considered on Saint Symeon the New Theologian right *the third Theologian* of the Church and the one who *saved* the orthodox life, for his century, from secularization and theological relativism.

His ecstatic theology is entirely personalist and communal, for that all our efforts of depassioning and of filling by the glory of God have right scope *the eternal advancement* in the relation of love and of knowledge of the glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

His Holiness spoke, with precedence, about *the centrality* of Christ in our ghostual life and about *the interior relation* between Christ and the Ghost in the frame of the oikonomia of salvation and of the ghostual life.

*The sight* of the glory of Christ, yet of now, means *our filling of light*, which flows from Christ's person and which *will transfigure* the entire creation at His coming into glory.

The professor and the theologian Vladimir Lossky tried, also, *a reactualization* of the mystical theology in the life of the Church, during of his exile in Occident.

He spoke, in trenchant mode, about the fact, that the theology cannot be than

*mystical and personal*, that it means *direct experience* and that the ecstatic sight is *a meeting* with the Living God, Who revealed Himself to us and Who is preached in the Orthodox Church.

He stressed in constant mode, that God *descended to us*, through His uncreated energies, for *as to deify us* and *to ascend us* to Him.

But exists and *some sideslips* from the understanding of ecstatic experience in his theology, for that he saw the ecstasy as *a union* with God which does not produce and *knowledge* in the same time and he *did not reveal*, in pregnant mode, *the interior link* between Christ and Holy Ghost.

Father Professor Dumitru Popescu sees *the essence* of secularization in the desire of discretionary autonomy of the actual society towards the natural resources and of environment, based on *the antique dualism* between spirit and matter.

For that *the transcendence* of God was preached, in the occidental heterodox theology, as *an absence* of Him from creation, the matter as a medium which *opposes* the grace and the grace as *antagonistic* or which *encroachs* the freewill, therefore, concludes his Holiness, we assist at *a accentuated depersonalization* in postmodernity and *at the haughty singularization* of the man.

On the base of these considerations of Father Professor Dumitru Popescu but, first of all, on the base of the dates disseminated from the symeonian theology, we concluded, that cannot produce *a salvation* of the man from *the claws* of secularization and of the nihilism, than through *his integration* in the divine-human project of deification.

For the deification of man is *the project of personal perfection*, on which the Orthodox Church preached it from always and on which Saint Symeon has explained it in paradoxical terms, into an exemplary mode.

Because we cannot speak *of the feeling* and *of the sight* of God, *as real means* of the deification of the man in Christ, in his integrality, both *inseparable* from cosmos and *beyond* of cosmos, if we do not see them in paradoxical terms, as it described them, untold of well, Saint Symeon the New Theologian.

## Index of Abbreviations

### I. Sources

1. BW = BibleWorks. The computerized biblical library, v. 07.

2. FR = Romanian Philokalia, Stăniloae edition.

3. Ică jr. 1 = Sfântul Simeon Noul Teolog, *Discursuri teologice și etice*, Scrieri I, studiu introductiv și traducere de Diac. Ioan I. Ică jr. și un studiu de Ierom. Alexander Golitzin, Ed. Deisis, Sibiu, 1998.

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[Saint Symeon the New Theologian, *The Hymns of Divine Love*, p. 329-705, in Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Studies of Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, Pub. Metropolitan of Oltenia, Craiova, 1990]

8. LXX = The Septuagint, Alfred Rahlfs edition, acc. BW.

9. OC 12 = *Un grand mistique byzantin. Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien (949-1022)*, par Nicéas Stéthatos, texte grec inédit, introduction et notes critiques par le Irénée Hausherr, et traduction française et collaboration avec le Gabriel Horn, en col. „Orientalia Christiana”, vol. XII, Ed. Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, Roma, 1928.

10. PG = coll. *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Seria Graeca, Jacques Paul Migne edition.

11. PSB = coll. *Părinți și Scriitori bisericești [Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers]*, Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest.

12. SC = coll. *Sources Chrétiennes*, Pub. Du Cerf, Paris.

13. SC 51 = *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Chapitres Théologiques, Gnostiques et Pratiques*, introduction, texte critique et notes par J. Darrouzès, en SC 51, Paris, 1957.

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19. SC 196 = Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, *Hymnes*, no's 41-58, texte critique par J. Koder, traduction et notes par L. Neyrand et J. Paramelle, en SC 196, Paris, 1973.

20. OSAM = Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Spiritualitatea ortodoxă. Ascetica și mistica*, Ed. IBMBOR, București, 1992.

[Rev. Prof. D.Th. Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Orthodox Spirituality. Ascetica and Mystica*, Pub. IBMBOR, Bucharest, 1992]

21. TLG = *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, computerized library, compo-

ment of the program *Musaios 2002 A*. It contains inscriptions and books written in greek by Holy Fathers, philosophers, scientists, letters, etc. The patristic citations we have written with *their initials* established by us and *the paginal references* contains the chapter, the paragraph and the page of cited edition. When we transcribed, in the subsoil of page, the text in original, the patristic citations contain and the citations from TLG.

22. MTEC = Vladimir Lossky, *Teologia Mistică a Bisericii de Răsărit*, traducere, studiu introductiv și note de Pr. Vasile Răducă, Ed. Anastasia, București, f. a.

[Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, translation, introductive study and notes by Rev. Vasile Răducă, Pub. Anastasia, Bucharest, without year of publication on cover]

23. *Viața*, ed. Iliescu = Sfântul Nichita Stithatul, *Viața Sfântului Simeon Noul Teolog*, traducere de Ilie Iliescu, Ed. Herald, București, 2003. Reproduce OC 12.

[*The Life*, Iliescu edition = Saint Niketas Stethatos, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, translation by Ilie Iliescu, Pub. Herald, Bucharest, 2003. It reproduces OC 12]

## II. Auxiliary Citations

/ = what follows after sign represents *identical textual variants* or *approximate* of the place anterior cited.

( ), [ ], { } = these have been used selective, for to circumscribe *the reproducing* of the verses or of the parts of text, but and of the scriptural citations.

# 001 = *the number* of the volume conformable to the citation from TLG.

10\*\* = in the 10th verse, *appears twice* the expression or the searched word.

chap. = chapter

*Chapters = The 225 of Practical Chapters, Gnostic and Theological*

acc. = according with

conf. = conformable with

The citations of Scripture:

OT) Gen. = Genesis; Exod. = Exodus; Numb. = Numbers; Deut. = Deuteronomy; I Kings = The First Book of Kings; Ps. = Psalms; Is. = Isaiah; Eze. = Ezekiel; Hos. = Hosea; Habak. = Habakkuk; Mal. =

Malachi; Bar. = Baruch; III Maccab. = The Third Book of Maccabees.

NT) Mt. = The Evangel after Matthew; Mk. = The Evangel after Mark; Lk. = The Evangel after Luke; Jn. = The Evangel after John; Acts = The Acts of the Apostles; Rom. = The Epistle to the Romans; I Cor. = The First Epistle to the Corinthians; II Cor. = The Second Epistle to the Corinthians; Gal. = The Epistle to the Galatians; Eph. = The Epistle to the Ephesians; Philip. = The Epistle to the Philippians; Col. = The Epistle to the Colossians; I Thess. = The First Epistle to the Thessalonians; I Tim. = The First Epistle to Timothy; Heb. = The Epistle to the Hebrews; Jam. = The Catholic Epistle of James; I Pet. = The First Catholic Epistle of Peter; II Pet. = The Second Catholic Epistle of Peter; I Jn. = The First Catholic Epistle of John; Rev. = The Apocalypse of Saint Apostle John.

coll. = the cited collection

etc = exists several verses or known texts but unquoted

ed. = the cited edition

Pub. = the publishing house who printed the book

Epistles = The letters of Saint Symeon the New Theologian

Ibidem = same place cited

Idem = same source cited

Hymns = *The Hymns of Divine Love*

o. n. = our note

op. = the cited opera

p. = page.

v. = the computerized version of a program

*The Life* = The life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian written by Saint Niketas Stethatos.

vol. = the volume from which is cited

vs. = versus

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